THE IMMUNITY COMMUNITY: A COMMUNITY BASED STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING VACCINE HESITANCY

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Immunization Rates in WA: 2016-17

- **5.3%** of kindergarteners are exempt from one or more vaccines. This has decreased from 7.6%, but has flat-lined in the last four years.

- **8.2%** of kindergarteners are out of compliance, and this number has been increasing.

- **75.7%** of 3-year-olds are up to date.
• Partnership founded in 2008
  • Exceptionally high exemption rates
  • Needed creative, nimble strategies
  • Needed robust, well-evaluated research evidence
  • 2 major projects to date

• Partners include:
  • WithinReach
  • WA State DOH
  • Kaiser Permanente WA
  • WA Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics
  • BestStart WA
  • Seattle Children’s Hospital
Communities can influence vaccine hesitancy

- Parents want to do what’s best for their child.
- Parents gather information & form opinions through social networks.
- Most parents immunize their children.
- The voice of immunizing parents is unheard.
- Immunizing parents understand & recognize the value of a healthy community.
- When given compelling information, immunizing parents become activated!
Community Intervention

Strategies
- Activate parents who immunize
- Reinforce value of a healthy community
- Engage volunteer advocates
- Provide tools & resources
- Use media to support parents’ engagement

Tactics
- Direct engagement
- Local data & expertise
- Child care & schools
- Messages, toolkit & support
- Social media, earned media

Outcomes
- Attitudes supporting vaccinations
- Local policy change
- Fewer exemptions
Tools and Tactics

- Training & Technical Assistance
- Communications
- Materials
Parent advocate in action: Alisson B.

- 17 conversations
- 11 emails
- 2 events
- 11 dissemination of IC materials
- 5 meetings
- 30 planning activities
- 11 social media posts
Evaluation Aims

• Document the specific details of the intervention to facilitate the spread of the intervention
• Provide formative feedback for continuous improvement in each phase of the pilot
• Gather evidence that the intervention contributed to the desired outcomes
• Identify best practices and factors that contribute to successful implementation
## Intended intervention outcomes (logic model)

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- Short term goals:
  - Recruit/train sites and parent advocates
  - Sites take action to increase awareness
  - Parents more aware of immunization issues
  - Campaign messages reach community at large

- Intermediate goals:
  - Attitudes supporting vaccinations
  - Changed behaviors: Decreased refusal/delay, fewer exemptions
  - Local policy change: community level

- Long term goals:
  - Improved immunization rates in targeted communities
  - Hesitancy not a major contributor for those not immunizing
Parental attitudes more supportive of vaccination

Percent agreeing or strongly agreeing with statement

I am concerned about other parents not vaccinating their child(ren)

Vaccines are given to children when they are too young

Individual people are responsible for choosing whether or not to vaccinate their child(ren)

Average rating
(1 = not confident/concerned, 10 = extremely confident/concerned)

How confident are you that vaccinating your child is a good decision?

How concerned are you about the safety of vaccines?
Successes & Lessons Learned:

• Success factors included:
  – Support from leadership and staff at sites
  – Responsive technical assistance from program staff
  – Having sites where parents are actively engaged in a shared community

• This intervention was resource intensive and we need to work to create a sustainable, low-cost model
Results published in Health Promotion Practice journal

Hesitancy focus groups

Prenatal hesitancy project(s)

Immunity Community website
THANK YOU!

For More Information:

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www.immunitycommunitywa.org
Kindergarten Exemption Rates

Kindergartners with school immunization exemptions by county
Washington, school year 2016-2017

Data source: WA State Department of Health, Office of Immunization and Child Profile, 2016-2017 school data
Created March 2017.
Parental knowledge of vaccine-related issues increased

Percent answering “yes”

I have heard/read that some parents are refusing or delaying vaccinations for their child(ren)

Pre: 98.3  Post: 99.2

77.5  79.4

I have heard/read information about "vaccine hesitancy"

29.6  30.7

I know the vaccination and exemption rates in my state

18.1  24.4

I know the vaccination and exemption rates in my child's childcare/daycare/school

9.6  8.4

I personally know children who were harmed by vaccines

Percent answering correctly

What percentage of people in your community do you think need to be vaccinated for everyone to be protected from disease?

75.9  78.4
Parental attitudes more supportive of vaccination

Pre

- Very hesitant: 3.8%
- Somewhat hesitant: 18.8%
- Not too hesitant: 38.7%
- Not at all hesitant: 38.7%

Post

- Very hesitant: 3.1%
- Somewhat hesitant: 10.9%
- Not too hesitant: 45.0%
- Not at all hesitant: 41.0%

38% decrease in parents reporting vaccine hesitancy