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### Overview

COVID-19 vaccines provide strong protection against the SARS CO-V 2 for children and youth. Although they have been approved for youth of ages 12 and older since May 2021, and for children between the ages of 5-11 since November 2021, vaccination rates among youth are low. As parents view their child's clinician as a trusted partner in caring for their children, a key to increasing rates could be involvement of the clinicians. The purpose of this study was to explore the thoughts and experiences that clinicians have in talking about the vaccine with parents, setting up clinical workflows to vaccinate children, and strategies to address the logistical challenges of vaccinating youth in the clinic.

### Main Questions

- What experiences do clinicians have in talking with parents about the COVID-19 vaccine?
- What challenges do clinicians face in providing this vaccine in their clinic?
- What strategies do clinicians recommend for discussing and providing COVID-19 in the clinic?

### Study

This study explored the views of pediatric and family medicine clinicians about efforts to vaccinate pediatric patients against COVID-19, challenges and recommendations. Researchers at the Prevention Research Center at UMass Chan Medical School conducted 16 interviews with family practice and pediatric clinicians in central and western Massachusetts between October and December 2021. Clinicians were asked about their strategies for talking with families about the COVID-19 vaccine and other pediatric vaccines, experiences and recommendations for providing the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines in clinic, additional resources needed to provide the vaccine in clinic, and strategies for encouraging hesitant parents. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed according to the rapid qualitative analysis method.

### The Bottom Line

Clinicians recommended sharing personal stories about vaccination, recognizing parents' fear about the vaccines, and being persistent with recommendations. While they recognized success with these practices in their own clinics, clinicians identified a need to better define best practices and training for conversations about the vaccines, and for integrating them into routine practice.

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### Source

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### Spotlight on Results

Clinicians reported:

- Experiences: Clinicians reported that parents typically fall into three groups: vaccine-accepting, hesitant but potentially accepting, and refusers.
- Challenges: Dedicated staffing, space, educational materials.
- Recommendations: When talking with parents, share personal vaccine stories, acknowledge parents' fears about the vaccines, and be persistent over time with hesitant parents. Clinicians also recommended training for having individual conversations with parents and integrating vaccines into routine practice.

### Call for Action

Clinicians are on the front lines of efforts to improve vaccination rates through parental education, vaccine delivery or referral to community vaccine sites. Training on giving strong, presumptive recommendations, directly addressing misinformation, developing effecting messages, and integrating vaccine delivery best practices into routine practice are needed.

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