Vaccine Hesitancy: Building solutions for Washington state and beyond
Parents face a conundrum: What to believe?
Media Environment

- Hesitancy stories tend to present both sides
- Science vs. emotion
- Dr. vs. parent
- Activated opposition
- Opinion pieces in major news outlets consistently support science
- Hesitancy treated as a social or political issue vs. other public health/prevention issues
  - Tobacco
  - Healthy eating active living
  - Car seats – seat belts
  - Bike Helmets
Vaccine Hesitancy Trends

**Aug 2011 – Reuters/NPR Survey**
- 21.4% said they believe vaccines cause autism
- 26.6% report they were concerned about value and safety of vaccines
  - 47% had concerns about long-term impact on health
  - 46% had concerns about side effects
- 23.5% said their opinions had changed in the past five years
  - 59% said their opinion had become less favorable

**Pediatrics – Oct 3, 2011**
- 1 in 5 parents following recommendations agreed that delaying vaccine doses was safer
- 1 in 4 disagreed that the best vaccine schedule was the one recommended by experts
- 1 in 3 parents using alternative schedules had initially followed the recommended schedule
Audience Insights

Providers

• Conversations around vaccine hesitancy are taking increasing amounts of time

• Fighting emotional battle with science

• Media noise and confusion coming into the clinic

• Feel unprepared for challenging interactions

Hesitant Parents

• Changing demographics

• Active researchers - online and peers

• Perceive bias of providers

• Distrust of pharma extending to physicians

• Public Health “not for them”
Communities can influence vaccine hesitancy

Parents want to do what’s best for their child.

Parents gather information & form opinions through social networks.

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!
Providers can influence vaccine hesitancy

Parents want to do what’s best for their child.

Providers have great influence but have limited time and tools. They want help.

No evidence-based interventions to support providers’ interactions with hesitant parents.

Vax Northwest has developed a promising, innovative tool.
Let’s turn the tide on vaccine hesitancy

**The need**
Vaccine hesitancy threatens the health of children and our communities.

**The opportunity**
Public-private partnership working with providers and communities.

**The results**
Innovative tools, fewer exemptions, and more children immunized on time.
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 & advertising

**Outcomes**
- Attitudes supporting vaccinations
- Local policy change
- Fewer exemptions
The Immunity Community – Phase I complete

- **4 Pilot Sites**
  - Elementary School
  - Childcare Center
  - Montessori Childcare
  - Preschool Co-op

- **Parent Advocates**
  - 1-2 per site
  - Training
  - Technical Assistance

- **Community Advisory Board**
  - 11 members
  - Input and Feedback
Short-term Outcomes: Achievements

Recruitment / Training

• Recruited 4 sites and 6 parent advocates

• Trained and provided technical assistance to the PAs

• PAs report strong support from WithinReach
Short-term Outcomes: Achievements

Taking action to raise awareness

• Monitor vaccination rates at sites
• Educate parents
• Generate conversation via social media
Intermediate Outcomes: Achievements

Policy Change Site-Level:
Co-op Preschool

Policy Change Community-level:
Relationship with Shoreline Community College and the Organization of Parent Education Programs (OPEP)
The AAA Approach

- Ask
- Acknowledge
- Advise
Provider intervention: Randomized controlled trial

**Intervention clinics**
- Identifying, engaging, & responding to vaccine-hesitant parents

**Participants**
- 50 Practices that provide childhood immunizations

**Outcomes**
- Primary
  - ↓Parent hesitancy
- Secondary
  - ↑Provider self-efficacy
  - ↑Parent trust

**Control clinics**
- Current practice
Prenatal Care Providers

Providers (OB, CNM) have a key opportunity to address vaccination before the patient delivers the baby

• Many pregnant women make their immunization decisions before birth

• Yet many women don’t know about the Hep B birth dose

• Providers already talking with parents about infant health decisions; discussing infant immunizations is a natural fit
Vax Northwest Website:
http://www.vaxnorthwest.org
Thank you!

Contact info:

Ginny Heller, MSW
Immunization Program Manager
WithinReach

ginnyh@withinreachwa.org
206-830-5168