

Consistent messaging is key to combatting young people's COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy

May 18 2021, by Angela Arnold Go



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Consistent messages about the safety and need for COVID-19 vaccines are key to overcoming young people's reluctance to get inoculated, researchers at Georgia State and New York universities say.

Regena Spratling, associate dean of nursing at Georgia State, and Donna Hallas, director of the pediatric nurse practitioner program at New York University, analyzed three major COVID-19 [vaccine](#) producers' clinical trial results. The analysis was used to create talking points health providers could use with vaccine-hesitant patients. Spratling and Hallas, pediatric nurse practitioner-researchers, have published their findings in *Contemporary Pediatrics*.

Spratling and Hallas concluded pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners should use consistent messages to youth and parents about the safety and need for vaccines, particularly in those adolescents heading to college. Many private and some public universities require vaccination for enrollment.

"Pediatricians and PNPs need to share one forward-thinking message for adolescents and parents, Spratling said. "Vaccines recommended by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the new EUA COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and everyone who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine should take the vaccine without hesitation."

People who are hesitant to take a vaccine may seek a primary care specialist's advice—pediatrician or pediatric nurse practitioner. Vaccine hesitancy has varied from concern about the vaccines' safety due to rapid development and testing to questions about which vaccine had the highest effectiveness rating.

Spratling and Hallas previously reviewed the randomized trials of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, using these data to compare the two-dose vaccines to the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Data from this review could assist in convincing parents to get a vaccine, but neither Moderna nor Johnson & Johnson has been studied at length for use in children.

Pfizer studied the use of its vaccine in children aged 12 and older beginning summer 2020 and by March 2021 was researching the use on children as young as six months old. Pfizer has asked the FDA to amend its emergency use authorization to include 12- to 15-year-olds. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson are also beginning research on [young people](#).

Provided by Georgia State University

Citation: Consistent messaging is key to combatting young people's COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy (2021, May 18) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-05-messaging-key-combatting-young-people.html>

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