

# Younger moms hesitant to vaccinate kids against COVID, study finds

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Fathers older than age 34 were more open to having their child vaccinated against COVID-19, while younger Black and white mothers were the least open to it, finds a new survey of Medicaid recipients from

the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis.

"Helping younger parents in all ways should be a priority," said Matthew Kreuter, the Kahn Family Professor of Public Health. "They were the most negatively affected by all aspects of the pandemic and worried more about financial needs than avoiding COVID-19. They also had the most negative views of COVID-19 vaccinations for their [children](#)."

Kreuter is first author of the paper "Intention to vaccinate children for COVID-19: A segmentation analysis among Medicaid parents in Florida," being published online in the journal *Preventative Medicine*.

To understand how racially and ethnically diverse parents of young children enrolled in Medicaid feel about getting a COVID-19 vaccine for their children, Kreuter and his co-authors administered an online survey to a statewide sample in Florida.

They found that the youngest Black and white mothers (those ages 30 and under) were least likely to intend to vaccinate their child (24%), followed by Black and white mothers in their early 30s (36%), younger Hispanic and mixed-race or other race parents (45%), older mothers (48%) and older [fathers](#) (71%).

"Fathers appear to be more favorable than mothers toward vaccinating their children, but our study did not consider who makes health-related decisions in the family," Kreuter said.

The youngest Black and white [mothers](#) were more likely to report their lives being worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, were far more negative and less positive about a COVID-19 vaccine, and were more concerned about paying bills than preventing COVID-19, Kreuter noted.

Younger Hispanic and mixed-race parents were less negative about

getting their children vaccinated, but more likely to use emotional language (e.g., scared, nervous, worried) talking about a COVID-19 [vaccine](#), and more likely to report that protecting their child's health was their top concern.

The researchers determined that parents' intentions to vaccinate a child declined as financial strain and harm from COVID grew.

"The findings suggest the importance of bundling vaccination information and services with other forms of help for parents struggling during the pandemic," Kreuter said.

**More information:** Matthew W. Kreuter et al, Intention to vaccinate children for COVID-19: A segmentation analysis among Medicaid parents in Florida, *Preventive Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ypmed.2022.106959](#)

Provided by Washington University in St. Louis

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