

Less than half of parents plan to get COVID vaccine for youngest kids

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Parents have had to wait a long time to have access to a COVID-19

vaccine for their kids under the age of 5, but a new survey shows many still won't get a shot for their children.

About 43% of U.S. parents of children aged 6 months to 4 years said they would not get their children a coronavirus shot, while another 27% said they were not yet certain what they will do, the Kaiser Family Foundation found in its July poll.

Most of the parents in the survey said they had greater concerns about potential risks to their children from the [vaccine](#) than from the virus.

Still, it's not yet clear how individual children will do if they contract the virus.

"We have no marker for that," Patricia Stinchfield, president of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, told *The New York Times*. "Half the kids who come down with severe COVID are healthy kids, with no underlying conditions. So the idea of saying 'I'm going to skip this vaccine for my kid, we're not worried about COVID' is really to take a risk."

Parents of the youngest children may be the most hesitant, with only 2.8% getting their children vaccinated since they became eligible on June 18. That's compared to 18.5% of children aged 5 to 11 who by the same time in their rollout had been vaccinated, the *Times* reported. Those children have been eligible since last October.

Reasons that parents are choosing not to vaccinate their young [children](#) vary. A majority said they found the information shared by the federal government to be confusing.

But politics played a part: Republican parents were three times more likely than Democratic parents to say they would definitely not have

their child vaccinated.

Others said lack of access was a significant barrier. This concern was expressed by more Black and Hispanic parents than white parents, the findings showed.

About 44% of Black parents said they worried about taking time off work to get their kids the vaccine and to care for them if they had side effects. About 45% of Hispanic [parents](#) surveyed expressed concern about finding a trustworthy location for the shots, while about one-third were worried about having to pay a fee for shots.

Overall, about 70% of those surveyed said they had not talked with their pediatricians about the vaccine, but only 27% of those considering the vaccine said they would make an appointment to talk about it.

Stinchfield's grandchildren, ages 1 and 3, received their vaccines, but she noted their mom had to take time off work to get them.

"The message to clinics is, make the vaccine for [kids](#) available in the evenings and on weekends," Stinchfield said.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [COVID-19 vaccines](#).

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