

Report shows vaccines for children program has increased coverage, but gaps remain

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The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, which provides recommended vaccines at no cost to eligible children, has increased childhood vaccination coverage, but coverage is still lower than among

non-VFC-eligible children, according to a "Vital Signs" report [published](#) Aug. 13 in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Madeleine R. Valier, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed data from the 2012 to 2022 National Immunization Survey-Child to assess trends in vaccination coverage with one or more doses of the measles, mumps, and [rubella vaccine](#) (MMR), two to three doses of the rotavirus vaccine, and a combined seven-vaccine series by VFC program eligibility status.

About 52.2 percent of U.S. children were VFC-eligible. The researchers found that for VFC-eligible children born during 2011 to 2020, by 24 months, coverage was stable for at least one MMR dose (88.0 to 89.9 percent) and for the combined seven-vaccine series (61.4 to 65.3 percent).

By age 8 months, rotavirus vaccination coverage was 64.8 to 71.1 percent and increased by an average of 0.7 percent annually. Compared with non-VFC-eligible children, VFC-eligible children had lower coverage for at least one MMR dose, two to three doses of rotavirus vaccine, and the combined seven-vaccine series (3.8, 11.5, and 13.8 percentage points lower, respectively) among all children born in 2020.

"The data presented in this report demonstrate long-term program results for multiple birth cohorts of [children](#)," the authors write.

"As new vaccines are added and immunization schedules become increasingly complex, maintenance and evolution of the VFC program could help sustain and further increase vaccination coverage."

More information: Valier MR, et al. Vital Signs: Trends and Disparities in Childhood Vaccination Coverage by Vaccines for Children

Program Eligibility—National Immunization Survey-Child, United States, 2012–2022. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2024). DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7333e1](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7333e1).

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