

Recently, a [group of experts](#) in adolescent health and immunization met to discuss the development of a 16-year-old immunization platform. Supported by the [National Foundation for Infectious Diseases](#), the [Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine](#), and the [Association of Immunization Managers](#), an immunization platform at 16 years of age has the potential to improve the adolescent health landscape by:

- Creating the expectation that adolescents are routinely immunized at this age, consistent with existing recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- Ensuring that health care providers review MenACWY, meningococcal B (MenB), and (during flu vaccination season) influenza immunization with 16-year-olds, and immunize accordingly, thus increasing unacceptably low vaccination rates and helping protect older adolescents as they enter a key risk period for meningococcal disease
- Providing a chance to catch up on missed immunizations as appropriate for routinely recommended vaccines and to assess for vaccinations based on high-risk conditions
- Increasing preventive care visits
- Improving comprehensive care, including screening and reduction of risk behaviors
- Allowing for immunization before the adolescent becomes ineligible for coverage under the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program
- Empowering adolescents to embrace a greater role in their own lifelong wellness, including adherence to vaccination recommendations

On July 11, 2017, the [Unity Consortium released results](#) from a national survey of parents, teens and healthcare providers that revealed some major areas for improvement in preventive health communications to teens. Nearly all parents say it's important to address "hot topics" to help their teens stay healthy, such as keeping them safe from STDs (92%), avoiding alcohol/drugs/smoking (95%), and getting enough sleep (94%), but put less emphasis on discussions around vaccination. While a vast majority of parents (92%) and teens (88%) believe it is important for all teens to be vaccinated, in reality teen vaccination rates are far lower than where they should be. The survey showed that both parents' and teens' attitudes towards preventive health may keep them from prioritizing important health strategies, like vaccination.

According to new data from the [C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health](#), parents are not keeping up with teen vaccines. Among parents of teens 13-17 years of age, most parents think their teen has received all recommended vaccines, despite national data suggesting otherwise. Over one third of parents do not know when or if their teen is due for another vaccine, and parents expect child health providers to guide them on teen vaccines, by scheduling appointments or sending reminders.

Please utilize these resources to communicate with parents of adolescents about the importance of timely immunizations.

We are sending this message in partnership with the MDHHS Division of Immunization. For questions about this email, contact Courtney Londo at [LondoC1@michigan.gov](mailto:LondoC1@michigan.gov).