



UNDERSTANDING HOW PARENTS MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN'S VACCINATIONS



Emily K. Brunson
Texas State University

Methods

□ Data:

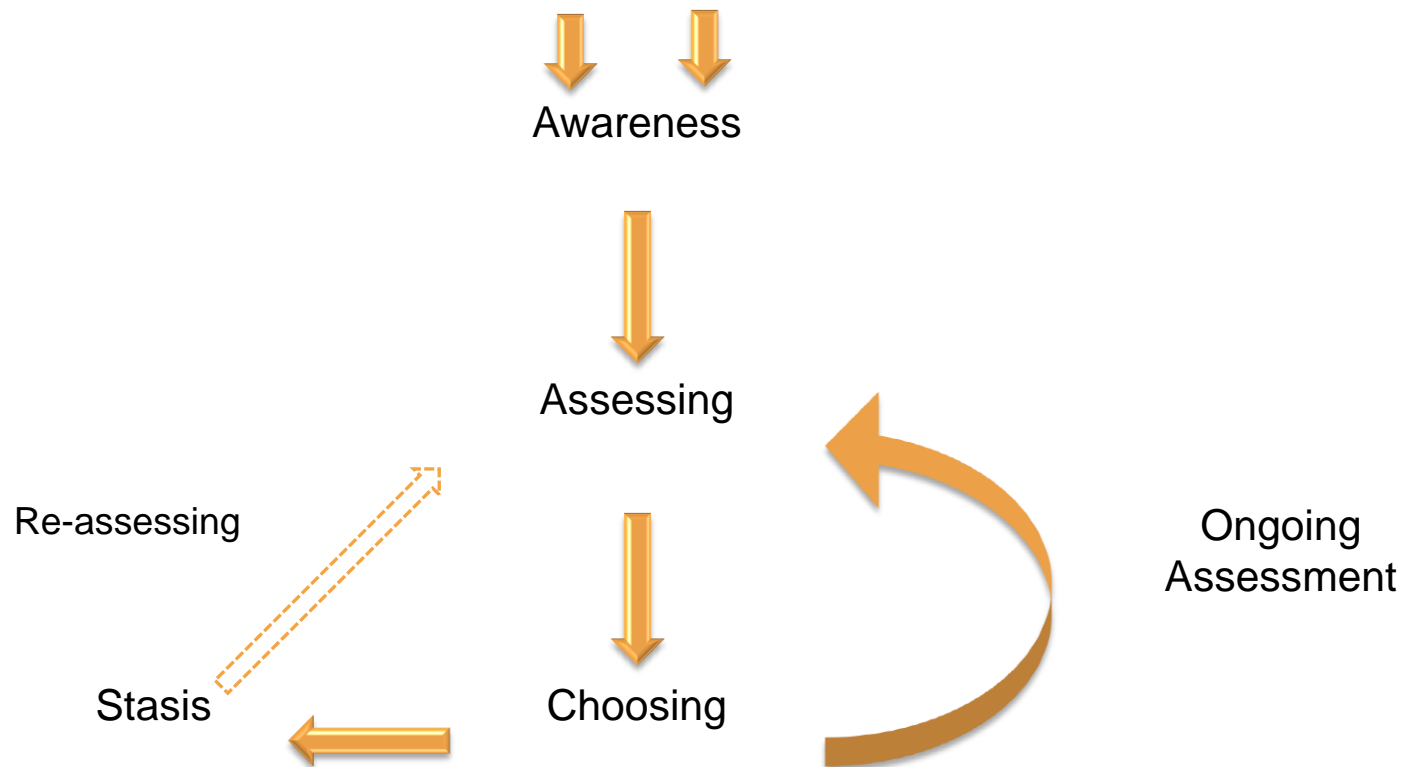
- Formal interviews with 18 sets of parents (15 mothers, 3 couples)
 - US-born parents with children ≤ 18 months of age
 - Residents of King County, WA

□ Analysis:

- Grounded theory
- Results verified with 8 sets of parents (4 participants, 4 non-participants)

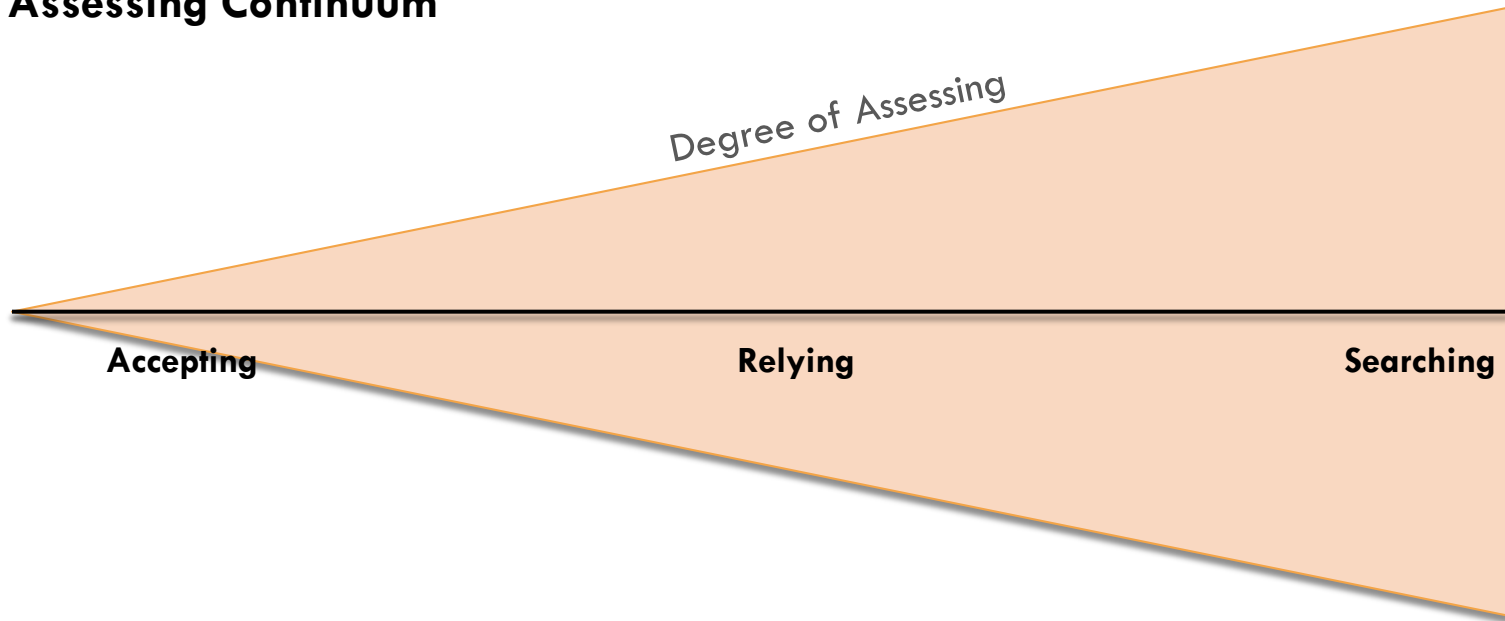
The decision-making process

Pre-decision Making Factors



Assessing

Assessing Continuum



Accepting group

- Assessing is minimal
- Primary consideration is the general social norm of vaccination
- Do not investigate vaccination per se, instead assume there is one option:

It wasn't something that I spent a lot of time thinking about because I just assumed that it was a no brainer I knew I was going to do it and I knew I had to do it.

Relying group

- Social norms are still important

Everyone I know has gotten their kids vaccinated . . . and that's kind of a big influence, you know, just seeing that everyone else is doing this.

- Assessing primarily focuses on relying on others— friends, family members, health care providers, etc.— for information and advice
- Not often critical of information or advice received

Searching group

- Not concerned about social norms

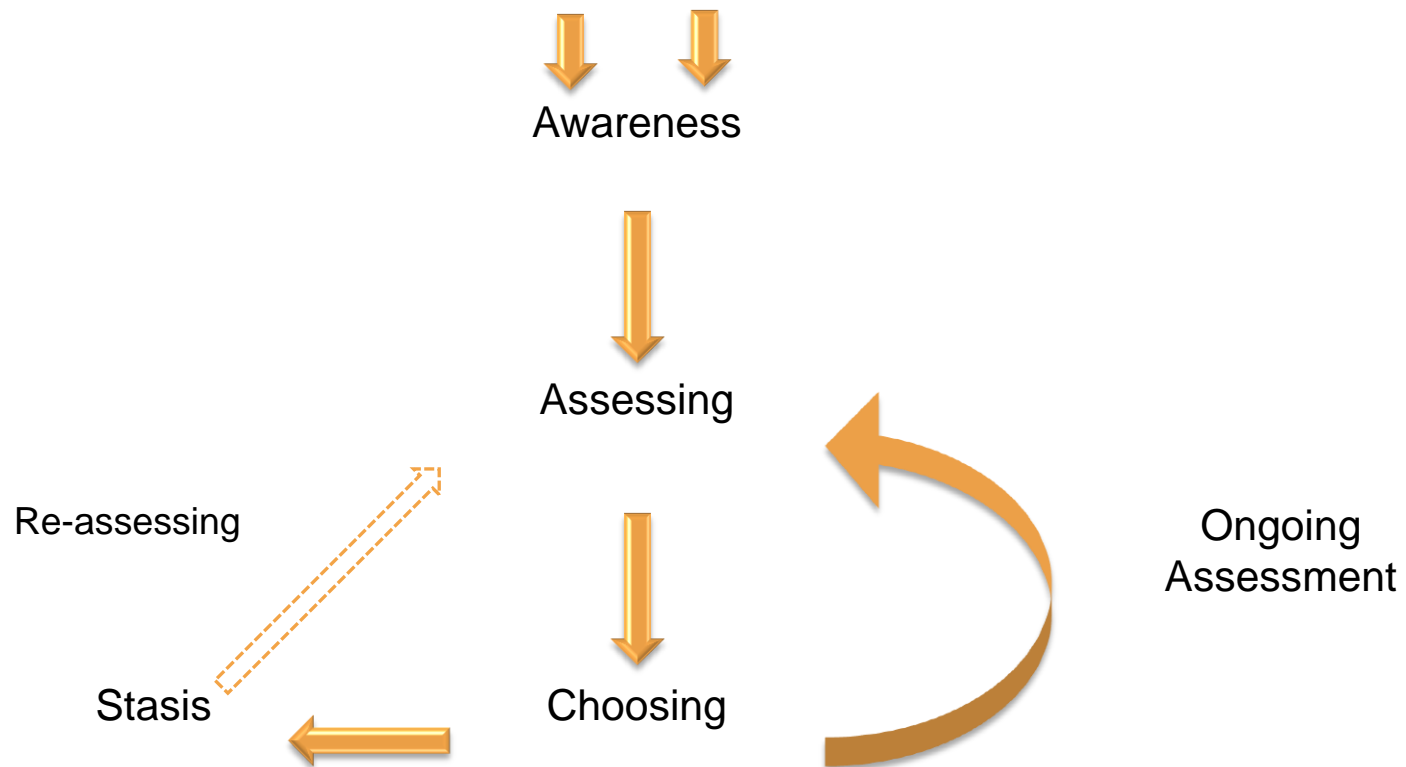
Parent 1: People tell us that we're privileged to make this decision, that we shouldn't do it. But I'm like he's our kid so we're going to make the best decision we can for him.

Parent 2: Yeah and not because of any society pressure.

- Research themselves
 - ▣ Rely less on others for advice, insights or information
 - ▣ Focus on published resources
- Consider multiple perspectives and are highly critical of the information they consider

The decision-making process

Pre-decision Making Factors



Implications

- Suggests that heterogeneity exists in *how* parents make vaccination decisions
 - ▣ Assessing group membership is important
 - ▣ Different interventions will be needed for the different groups
- Common reasons for reassessment should be targeted

Individual-level assessment

- Ask parents
 - ▣ Have you made a decision about vaccinating your child?
 - ▣ How have you made that decision?
- Any concerns can then be addressed at the appropriate level of assessment

Community-level assessment

□ Survey

▣ Results for King County

	acceptors	reliers	searchers	total
conformers ¹	16	108	2	126
nonconformers ¹	0	62	8	70

□ Guesstimate based on knowledge of community

▣ Trends

- Younger, less educated, single parents are more likely to be acceptors
- Searchers are more likely to be older, better educated and stay-at-home parents
- Clustering may suggest large presence of reliers

Tailoring interventions to specific groups

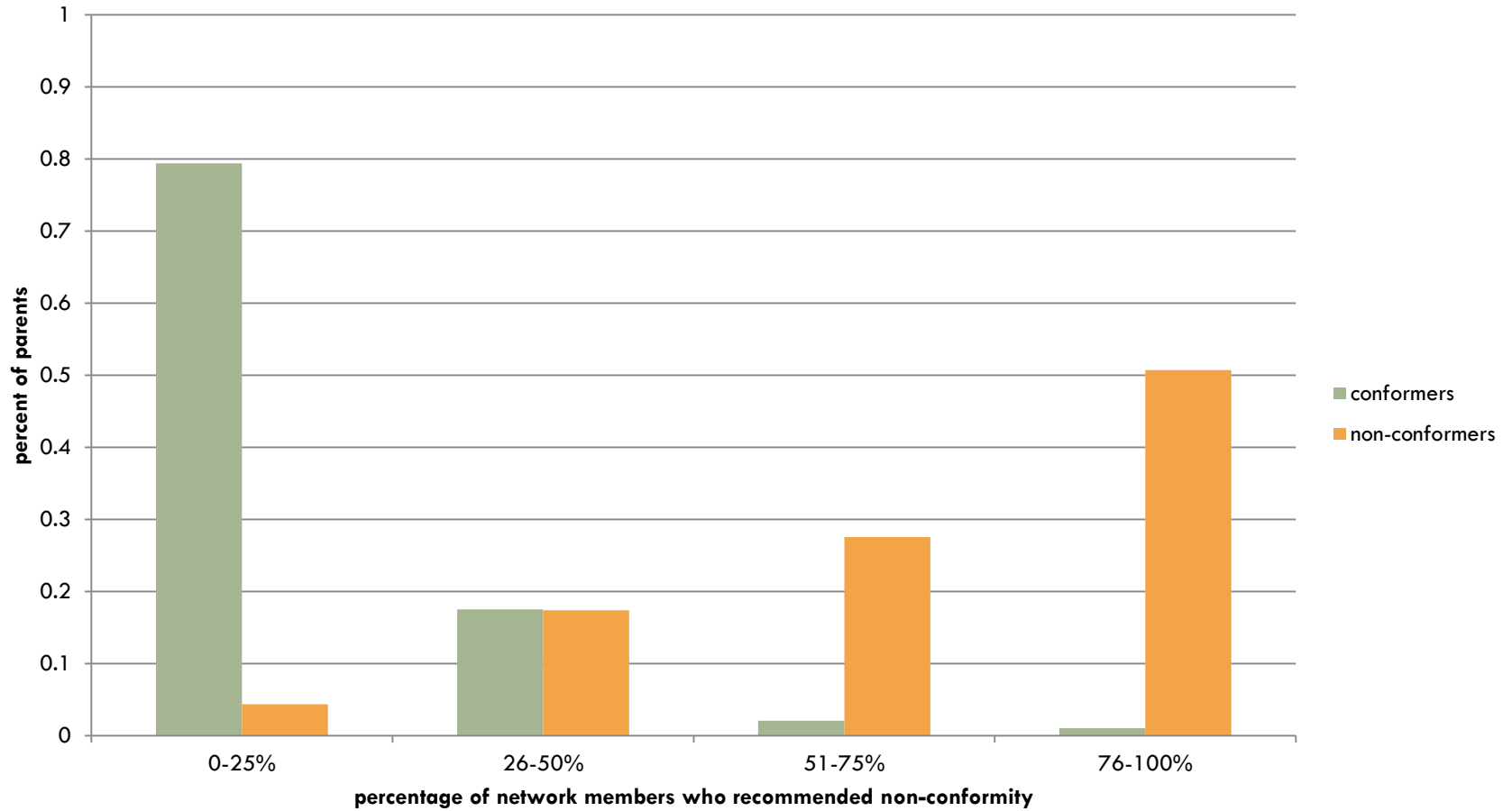
□ Acceptors:

- Both health care providers and public health agencies can reinforce social norms

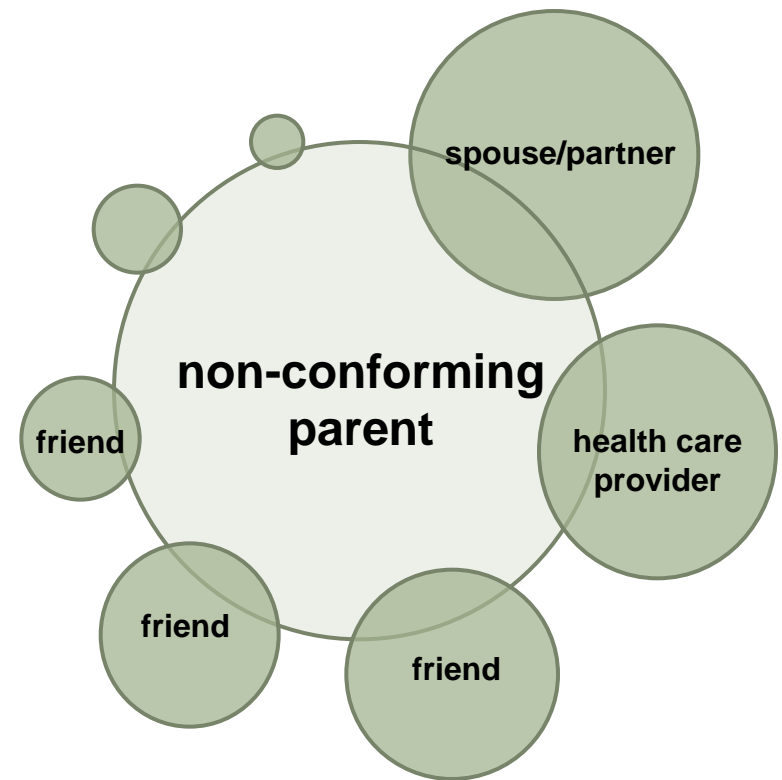
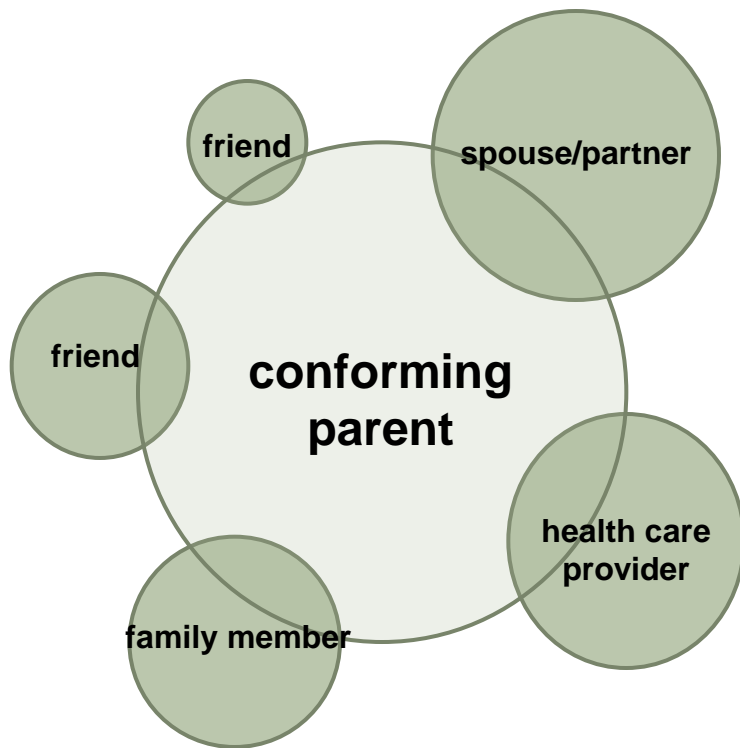
□ Reliers:

- Health care providers can become members of parents' networks
- Public health agencies can target messages to the larger community and specific groups

Influence of others



People network characteristics



Tailoring interventions to specific groups

- **Acceptors:**
 - Both health care providers and public health agencies can reinforce social norms

- **Reliers:**
 - Health care providers can become members of parents' networks
 - Public health agencies can target messages to the larger community and specific groups

- **Searchers:**
 - Health care providers can act as resources
 - Public health agencies can provide resources

Reasons for reassessment

- Transitioning to vaccinating
 - ▣ School entry
 - ▣ Travel to foreign countries
 - ▣ Health scares (pertussis outbreak, H1N1 outbreak)

- Transitioning to not vaccinating
 - ▣ Having children experience bad reactions to vaccines
 - ▣ Concerns about the number or timing of vaccines

Questions?

