



The National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) Standards for Child and Adolescent Immunization Practices represent the most desirable immunization practices, which pediatricians should strive to achieve. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) endorses the NVAC Standards and encourages pediatricians to fully implement the recommendations. In an effort to address implementation challenges, the AAP Childhood Immunization Support Program collects best practices from pediatric offices and shares them for adoption in your office!

NVAC Standard #3 states that:

### **Barriers to Vaccination are Identified and Minimized**

Barriers to receiving vaccines include delays in scheduling appointments, requiring a well-care visit, long waiting periods in the office, and lack of culturally and age-appropriate educational materials. A physical examination, although an important part of well care, should not be required before administering vaccines: simply observing the patient and questioning about the patient's health status, immunization history, and vaccine contraindications are sufficient. In addition, vaccination-only visits should be available. Health care professionals should seek advice from parents/guardians and patients to identify ways to make vaccination services easier to use.

## **Pediatric Implementation Strategies:**

### **Review Standing Orders to Ensure that Vaccinations are Available During All Visits**

- Ensure immunizations are available at all visits, sick or well, regular hours, or weekend clinics.
- Utilize [standing orders](#) to allow staff to independently screen patients, identify opportunities for immunization, and administer vaccines under physician supervision (in accordance with local regulations).

### **Review Office Policy on Physical Exam Requirements for Immunization Administration**

- Discuss current office policies with practice staff. Clarify that a physical exam is not required when scheduling an immunization appointment or other in-office opportunities. Review procedures for questioning patient's health status, immunization history, and vaccine contraindications.
- Change written policy if necessary.

### **Create Vaccination-only Appointments or Dedicate Certain Office Hours to Vaccination**

- When parents receive a [reminder](#) that their child is due for vaccinations, they may be assured of timely available appointments. A parent may be reminded of these available appointments and encouraged not to wait until her child is sick to make another appointment that includes vaccination.
- Hold flexible office hours at non-traditional times, such as weekends, evenings, early mornings, or lunch hours in keeping with the schedules of working parents or those who are at home full- or part-time.
- Increase the number of vaccination-only appointments during periods of peak demand, such as the month prior to the first day of school, [flu season](#), or other cases where demand may be higher than usual.

### **Provide Culturally-appropriate Educational Materials at the Necessary Literacy Level**

- Display culturally diverse pictures, posters, magazines, etc.
- Provide written materials, including [Vaccine Information Statements](#), in the family's [primary language](#) and at the appropriate literacy level; supplement with visual aids or videos if necessary.



## Discuss Reasons for Delayed Immunization with Parents

- Identify any [financial barriers](#) and suggest [Vaccines for Children's Program](#) or other health clinics if appropriate.
- Offer a flyer of public transit options that are close to the office.
- If a parent calls for an appointment with one child, offer a block of appointments to see other children in the same family for well care or immunization visits.
- Keep a variety of visual and written information to address vaccine hesitancy at all literacy levels.
- Ask if any other barriers exist and [address them openly](#). Provide resources when possible.

## Include All Recommended Vaccinations at Every Visit

- Use sick-child and chronic care visits as a time to immunize.
- Be sure to check what vaccinations, if any, are due every time a patient is in the office.
- Always screen for contraindications. Most vaccines can be given even if the child has a mild illness.

## Resources:

### AAP

- **Communicating with Families**  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/communicating.html>
- **Featured Best Practice #1**  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/NVACStandards/NVACStandard1.pdf#page=3>
- **Healthychildren.org**  
<http://www.healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Immunization in a Medical Home Training Tool**  
[www.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/ImmunizationTrainingTool.ppt](http://www.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/ImmunizationTrainingTool.ppt).
- **Immunization Training Guide**  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/training-guide.html>
- **Parent Resources on Paying for Vaccines**  
[www.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/FAQ\\_PayingforVaccines.pdf](http://www.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/FAQ_PayingforVaccines.pdf)
- **Periodicity Schedule**  
<http://brightfutures.aap.org/pdfs/AAP%20Bright%20Futures%20Periodicity%20Sched%20101107.pdf>
- **Posters**
  - Immunizations are More Effective in Breastfed Babies  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/multimedia/posters/Breastfeeding.pdf>
  - Breastfeeding: Baby's First Immunization  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/multimedia/posters/BreastfeedingIZ.pdf>
  - Immunized Baby  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/multimedia/posters/PedAd2011.pdf>
  - Earn Your Stripe  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/multimedia/posters/Stripe.pdf>
- **Risk Communication Videos**  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/riskcommunication-VIDEOS.html>
- **Strategies for Addressing Concerns of Vaccine Hesitant Parents**  
[www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/pdf/Vaccine-Hesitant%20Parent\\_Final.pdf](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/pdf/Vaccine-Hesitant%20Parent_Final.pdf)



## CDC

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Vaccine-Preventable Diseases: Improving Vaccination Coverage in Children, Adolescents, and Adults. Report on Recommendations from the Task Force on Community Prevention Services.**  
[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr4808a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr4808a1.htm)
- **Providers' Guide: Helping Parents Who Question Vaccines**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/hcp/conversations.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/hcp/conversations.htm)
- **Vaccines For Children Provider Information**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/default.htm)
- **Vaccine Information Statements**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm)

## Additional Resources

- **Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) Free Print Materials**  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/free.htm>
- **IAC Non-English Materials**  
<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/noneng.htm>
- **IAC Standing Orders**  
[www.immunize.org/standingorders/](http://www.immunize.org/standingorders/)
- **Vaccine Information Statements in over 30 Languages**  
[www.immunize.org/vis/index.htm](http://www.immunize.org/vis/index.htm).
- **Vaccinate Your Baby**  
[www.vaccinateyourbaby.org](http://www.vaccinateyourbaby.org)
- **Videos Available from the Vaccine Education Center (CHOP)**  
<http://www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/home.html>
  - **Vaccines and Your Baby Video-** A parent education video for providers to share information about vaccine preventable illnesses, how vaccines work, and vaccine safety.
  - **Vaccines: Separating Facts from Fear Video-** A 27-minute video that answers questions many parents have about vaccines. It also contains the stories of several parents whose children suffered vaccine-preventable diseases.

## Additional Reading

- **Book: AAP and National Perinatal Association. *Transcultural Aspects of Perinatal Health Care: A Resource Guide.*** Shah MA, ed. National Perinatal Association; 2004

Other installments in this series can be found on the Childhood Immunization Support Program Web site at:  
<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/nvacstandards.html>



Please send your ideas on cost-effective and sustainable practices to [cispimmunize@aap.org](mailto:cispimmunize@aap.org).