Boosting the Public Discourse
Evidence-Based Strategies for Reframing Child and Adolescent Vaccination

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I do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device in our presentation.
FrameWorks is on a mission...

to advance the nonprofit sector's capacity
to *frame the public discourse* on social and scientific issues
Justice says he hasn’t decided yet about bill loosenning some school vaccination requirements

Defunding Biden’s vaccine mandates is worth the risk of a government shutdown

By Rep. Lauren Boebert

March 8, 2022 6:05 am

CDC sending team to Chicago amid measles outbreak

Did Trump Really Vow to Defund Schools With Vaccine Mandates?
our project is about changing the cultural surround sound
Opinion
Today I’m sharing the work of a team

Patrick O’Shea, PhD
Mia Assar
Nana Baffoe
Luis Hestres, PhD
Jennifer John, PhD, MSW
Cameron Lopez
Abby Rochman
Kirsten Vierra

Conducted in partnership with AAP
Our multi-method approach queried over 9500 ordinary Americans

**Descriptive research**
- Expert Interviews
- Literature Review
- In-Depth Interviews with Public

**Reframing research**
- Tool Design
- Peer Discourse Sessions
- On-the-Street Interviews
- Controlled Survey Experiments
Examples of communications outcomes we tested for

A vaccine is effective if it prevents a vaccinated person from getting seriously ill with the disease.

We, as a society, are responsible for making sure that all children get vaccinated.

We should set up federally funded vaccination centers that operate year-round in every community in the U.S.
Less of this

- benefits outweighing risks
- low rates of uptake
- protection from disease
- how vaccines fight disease

More of this!

- benefits to the common good
- our responsibility for access
- preparation for healthy childhood
- how immune systems prepare themselves
Key recommendation

Talk about the benefits of vaccination for the common good.
people think about health in highly individualistic ways
to make the case for a public response, we need to talk in terms of public health
As pediatricians, we are speaking up about the facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We know the decision can be emotional, but should you have doubts, please discuss these with your primary physician.

As pediatricians, we want to speak up about the importance of developing “community immunity” through vaccination. When our immune systems are prepared to immediately recognize and resist highly contagious diseases, it is harder for illness to spread.
Vaccines are not only safe, they are highly effective, protecting your children from dangerous, disabling, and even deadly diseases. To keep ourselves, our children, and our loved ones safe, we need all families to vaccinate their kids. Talk to your doctor if you have questions.

In our state, we have a proud tradition of looking out for each other. We take our responsibility to care for our neighbors seriously. It’s important we translate that into making sure that everyone — especially children — has full access to vaccination services.
Thanks to vaccines, we can maintain stronger immune systems to protect against serious, often preventable illnesses like measles, flu, COVID and more. Protecting more than just our own bodies, vaccines keep us healthier as a family, community and state allowing us to build stronger immunities that lead to stronger communities.
COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

“We have a shared responsibility to children and to each other. That translates to a responsibility to ensure that immunization services are accessible and affordable for everyone.”
Key recommendation

Talk about improving vaccination access as a preventive public health measure.
people don’t see the practical barriers to getting kids vaccinated
It matters how we talk about what “we” should do

We are failing to get vaccinated

We are failing to provide access

We have a responsibility to provide access
“When everyone can access the recommended immunizations on time, it stops preventable diseases from spreading through our communities.”
REMOVE PRACTICAL BARRIERS TO ACCESS

“We must make sure that childhood vaccinations are widely available, easy to find, and affordable to everyone. Whether this means changing clinic locations or changing insurance reimbursement policies, we need to remove the barriers that families run into when trying to get kids vaccinated.”
Across the nation, health care providers are getting more and more questions from families about whether vaccinations are safe for their children. Doctors, nurses, and researchers agree: the answer is yes, in general, vaccinations are safe and effective. (Some children have severe allergies or immune system conditions that make them the rare exception to the rule.)

Across the nation, health care providers are hearing more and more stories from families about practical difficulties in keeping up or catching up on routine immunizations. Issues range from a lack of insurance coverage to the ability to attend multiple appointments. We have a responsibility to make vaccinations for children affordable and accessible.
Key recommendation

Talk more about the long-term child wellbeing that vaccines promote.
people think about vaccines in terms of risk - reward
right now, the ‘rewards’ are intangible for the public
Framed with ‘protection from disease’

On-time vaccination throughout childhood is essential because it helps provide immunity before children are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases.

Reframed with ‘preparation for development’

Vaccinations prepare children’s immune systems to recognize and resist contagious diseases, keeping them healthy so they can keep growing, learning, and thriving.
PLATFORM FOR CHILD HEALTH

“When kids stay healthy, they can focus on growing, learning, and doing the things they love to do. By keeping kids on track developmentally, immunization sets young people up for long-term health and wellbeing.”
SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

As a pediatrician, I specialize in keeping children healthy. Nothing brings me more joy than seeing my young patients thriving, growing, and learning. That’s why I think of vaccinations—as routine as they may be—as a vital part of my service to children, families, and our community.

Vaccinations prepare children’s immune systems to recognize and respond to serious diseases, and they also protect society at large.
Key recommendation

Shift the focus from vaccines fighting disease to the immune system preparing itself.
When we rely on **military language**, people conclude that any transmission of disease indicates a failure of the vaccine.
When we compare childhood vaccines to *medicine*, we heighten people’s concerns about side effects.
When we **compare vaccinations to computer updates**, we call up productive associations like prevention, ongoing maintenance, and protection against “network” threats.
“Just like our digital devices perform better after we’ve updated the software, our immune systems work more effectively in response to vaccines. When we prepare children’s immune systems to detect and resist a virus, it protects them and the entire network of people they come into contact with.”
# Example Narrative: Vaccines for Children Program

## 1. Principle

**Child Development**

When children are healthy, they can focus on learning and just being kids. Infectious diseases can pull them away from developmental tasks.

## 2. Process

**“Network”**

Just like the latest anti-virus software protects our computer networks, widespread vaccinations keep kids from getting and spreading serious diseases.

## 3. Problem

**Access Barriers**

But too many families run into challenges keeping up with recommended schedule. They may delay due to cost. Others have questions, which pediatricians want to answer—but that takes time.

## 4. Proposal

**Expand Access**

Support & encourage doctors to answer families’ questions by updating reimbursement policies. Ensure that cost is never a barrier for families.
**Example Narrative #2: School Entry Requirements**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Development</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Network”</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Network Vulnerability”</strong></td>
<td><strong>Require vaccinations to enroll</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When children are healthy, they can focus on learning and just being kids. Infectious diseases can pull them away from developmental tasks.</td>
<td>Just like the latest anti-virus software protects our computer networks, widespread vaccinations keep kids from getting and spreading serious diseases.</td>
<td>In schools and child care centers, every child’s immune system should be up-to-date with recommended vaccines. Otherwise, the group is vulnerable to outbreaks.</td>
<td>Support strong immunization requirements, with only medically necessary exemptions.</td>
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When we compare gaining immunity to gaining literacy, we tap into beliefs that the ability to read benefits both individuals and society, and that it’s best to gain literacy in childhood.
"When we immunize children, it’s a lot like helping them learn to read. Vaccines are beginner texts that our immune systems use to practice comprehending a disease. With that literacy, they can read a disease more quickly when they encounter it—and respond and resist right away."
After exposure to the *Literacy* metaphor
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Keep learning with us!

Access our...

- Reports
- Toolkit
- Recorded webinars

...and let AAP know what else you want and need!
Access our three applied research reports

1. **What the American Public Thinks About Vaccines and How Framing Can Help. A Literature Review.**
   - **April 2021**

2. **Communicating About Vaccination in the United States: A FrameWorks Strategic Brief**
   - **September 2021**

3. **Reframing the Conversation about Child and Adolescent Vaccinations**
   - **April 2023**
Get guidance from two communications toolkits

**Boosting Public Discourse: Reframing Childhood Immunization**
Find guidance and resources to advocate for expanding access to childhood and adolescent vaccination.

**Building Family Confidence in the COVID-19 Vaccine**
Framing Strategies for School Nurses
The advocates’ message tends to be complicated rather than simple, longer rather than shorter, and contrary to rather than consistent with popular understanding…

For the most part, this means that we have to explain, our opponents just have to state; we need to change people’s minds, they just need to reinforce what people already think; we need to emphasize shared responsibility, they just need to highlight personal choice.

Thank you!
Let’s continue the conversation.

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