

Measles and MMR Vaccine Communication During NY Outbreak: CDC Lessons Learned

Modified deck for vaccine hesitancy workgroup

April 22, 2019

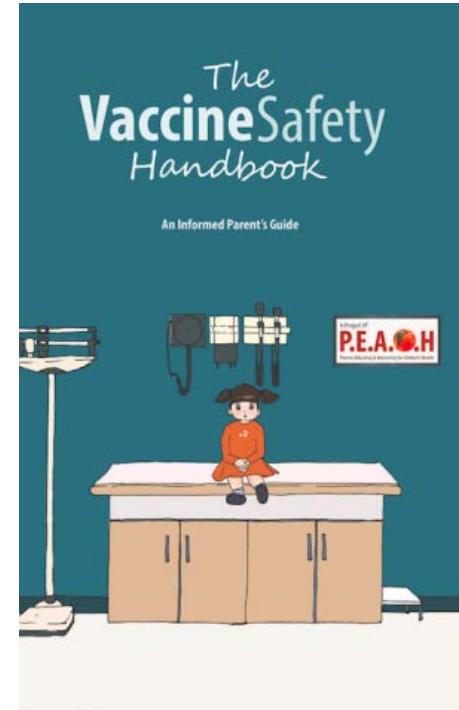
Meetings we attended

- **Monday, April 8: Albany**
 - New York State Department of Health initial briefing
 - Data and Surveillance
 - Anthropology
 - Communications and media
- **Tuesday, April 9: Rockland County**
 - Refuah Health Center
- **Wednesday, April 10: Rockland County**
 - Weekly NY state measles call with affected counties
 - Rockland County Department of Health
- **Wednesday, April 10 continued**
 - Rockland County communications and media
 - Shoshana Bernstein
 - Rabbi Horowitz
 - Hillcrest Pediatrics
- **Thursday, April 11: Orange County**
 - Orange County Department of Health
 - Dr. Werzberger
 - Hudson Valley School Administrators
 - Ezra Cholim Health Center
- **Friday, April 12: Brooklyn**
 - Blima Marcus



In this community, vaccine perceptions look like this...

- Jewish-affiliated group Parents Teaching and Advocating for Children's Health (PEACH) heavily promotes anti-vaccine materials in the Orthodox community
 - Their handbook includes sections such as “How to Prevent Your Children from Being Damaged by Vaccines” and “Halachic Points of Interest”
- Local newspaper headlines:
 - *Anti-Vaccine Myths Among Ultra-Orthodox Help Fuel Historic Measles Outbreak* (The Forward, April 9th)
 - *Health Department Issues Commissioner’s Orders to All Yeshivas in Williamsburg to Exclude Unvaccinated Students to Face Violations and Possible Closure* (The Jewish Voice, April 9th)
 - *No, Jews Aren’t Anti-Vaccination* (Jewish Week, April 10th)
 - *Anti-Vaccine Pamphlet Targeting New York Parents Cites Leading Orthodox Rabbis* (The Forward, April 10th)
 - *Lawsuit Planned to Challenge NYC’s Vaccination Order* (Yeshiva World News, April 11th)



What we have learned about health care providers and parents about vaccine attitudes and information sources

Audience profile

- Women are the sole decision-makers about kids' health
- Arranged marriage occurs beginning at age 18; child rearing begins immediately
- Family size often up to 10-14 children
- Younger mothers more vaccine-hesitant than older mothers
- Some delay vaccines until school-age requirement
- Community values treatment but does not prioritize prevention
- Values
 - Children's marriageability
 - Kids being in school (having all the kids home all day is overwhelming)

Beliefs about measles and MMR vaccine

- About measles
 - “Like chickenpox with a runny nose”
 - Can cure eczema
 - Prevents cancer
 - Vitamins can help prevent measles
- Fears about MMR vaccine
 - Autism
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Toxic ingredients
 - Doctors are paid by CDC
 - Live vaccines aren’t safe
 - “Children who got vaccinated aren’t as clever”

Influencers

- Other moms in their communities
 - In some cases, they were listening to friends about not vaccinating, but not to their own mothers about vaccinating
- Conference calls and call-in lines
- Local newspapers/magazines
- Healthcare professionals
- Rabbis
 - Mostly in urgent situations, but not for preventative care
- Robo-calls

Health care professional insights

- **Guiding principles and lessons learned**

- Many kids initially got immunized, but “final holdouts” are not vaccinating
- Discussion and education are taking longer than in the past. Physicians starting to feel burned out
 - Some practices have stopped taking unvaccinated patients
- Health care professionals are still the most trusted source of vaccine information and advice for most parents
- Parents may delay vaccines, especially when child is ill
- Refuah Health Center has taken on a comprehensive approach to “attack this from all angles”
 - Empowered all staff to talk about vaccines
 - Educated staff on motivational interviewing and presumptive approach
 - Pulled providers’ vaccination rates and shared

Parent insights

■ Guiding principles and lessons learned

- Some parents in these communities might have vaccinated older children, but have decided not to vaccinate younger children
- Many parents have vague/general worries or concerns about vaccines
- There are some anecdotal reports of families with cases not seeking medical attention—leading health professionals to believe that this outbreak is much larger than it appears
- Teachers may be advising girls in high schools against vaccinating
- Some moms are delaying MMR or may get MMR, but refuse other vaccines (long-term implications involved)

Take away messages

Take Away Messages

- Parents fall along a continuum; this is usually not an “either/or” decision
- The healthcare professional is the most important source of information, but don’t ignore other social influences
- Questions and concerns do not equal lack of confidence; vaccinating is still the norm
- There is no quick fix message; one-on-one education and grassroots partnerships are the key
- Need more scientifically accurate information about vaccines
- Need data about measles complications in this outbreak

Next steps

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- Reaching out to medical, rabbinical, and camp associations
- Meeting of HCP groups in the area
 - Connecting pediatricians to print outlets to help spread credible information
 - Providing CDC resources
- Material repackaging
 - Making more of our digital resources print friendly, plain language, and culturally appropriate
 - Providing audio resources or scripts
 - Making CDC MDs available for interviews/information as requested
 - Zip drive of measles disease and vaccination resources
 - Matte articles for local newspapers/magazines

Next steps (continued)

- Supporting FQHCs and community leaders in efforts to spread accurate information
- Providing assistance (PHAs) to Rockland County
- CDC in Incident Command structure
 - Additional resources available
 - Coordinating with additional states with large Orthodox Jewish population
 - CDC call regional meeting of affected states
 - CDC to share NY city information/resources with NY state