

# Engaging parents to advocate for immunizations : Results from an evaluation of the Immunity Community program



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# Today's presentation

Background  
Program description

Evaluation aims &  
methods

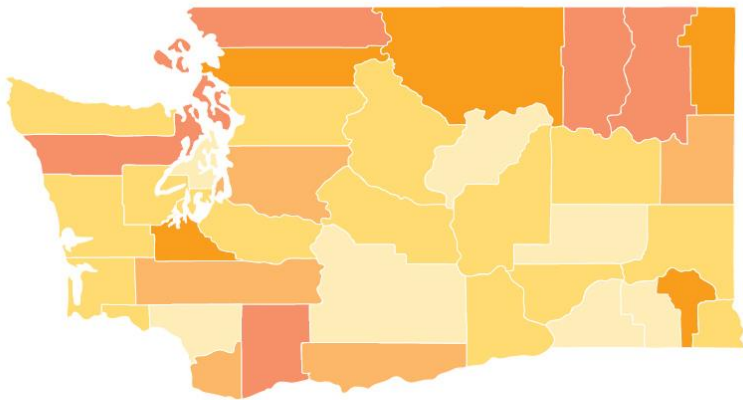
Key findings

Related work &  
Next steps

# Background and program description

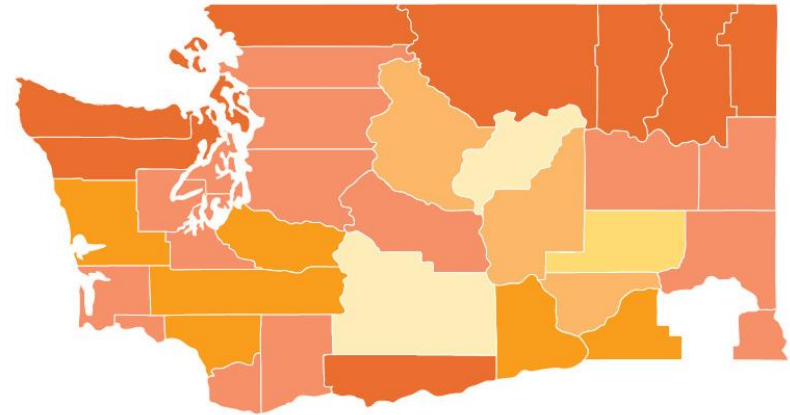
# The problem – vaccine hesitancy

1999



<2%   2–2.9%   3–3.9%   4–4.9%   5%–5.9%   >10%

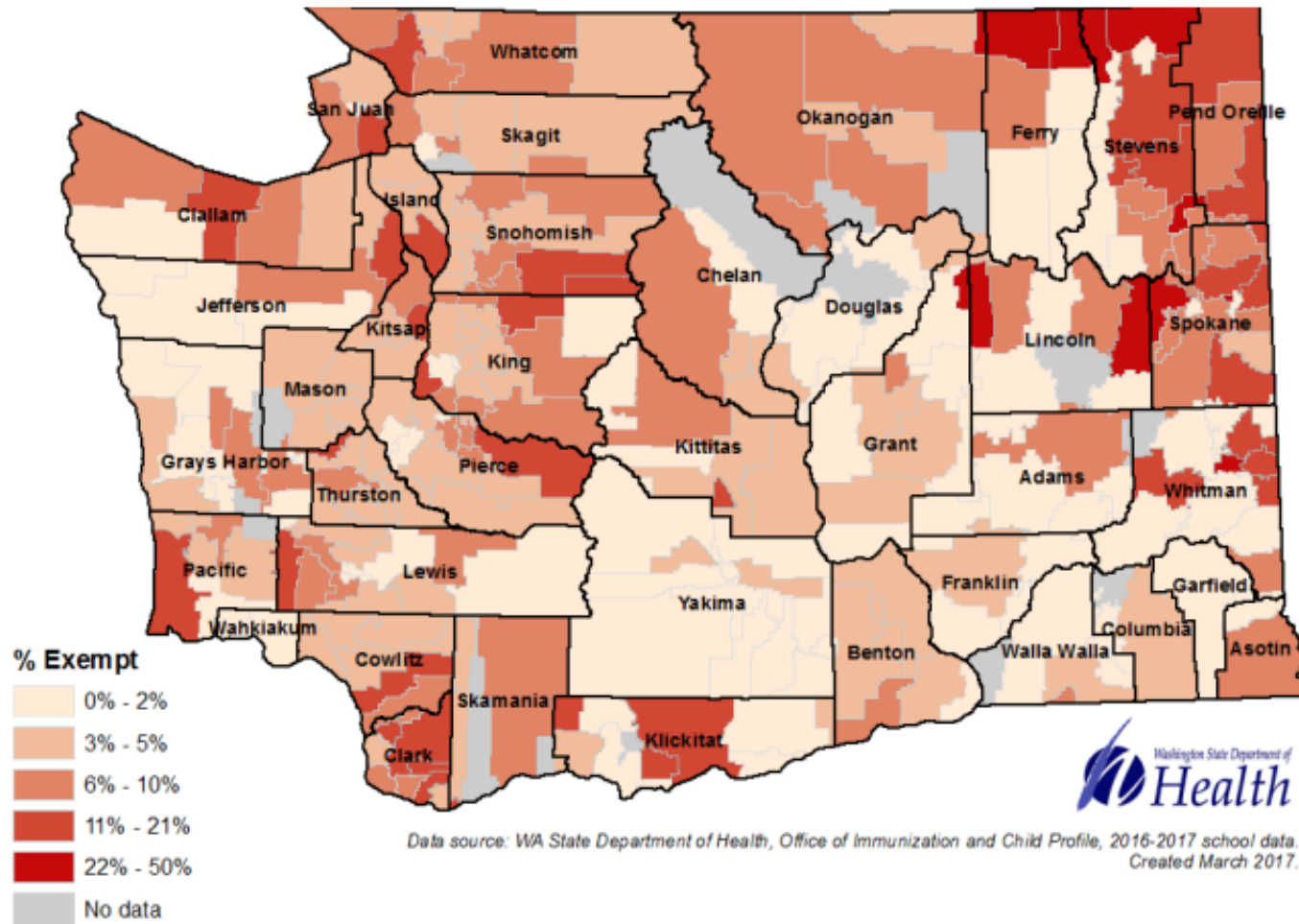
2010–2011



<2%   2–2.9%   3–3.9%   4–4.9%   5%–9.9%   >10%

# Update

## Kindergartners with school immunization exemptions by school district, Washington, school year 2016-2017





# Communities can influence vaccine hesitancy



Parents want to do what's best for their child

Parents use social networks to gather information

Most parents immunize their children

The voice of immunizing parents is unheard

Given compelling information, immunizing parents become activated

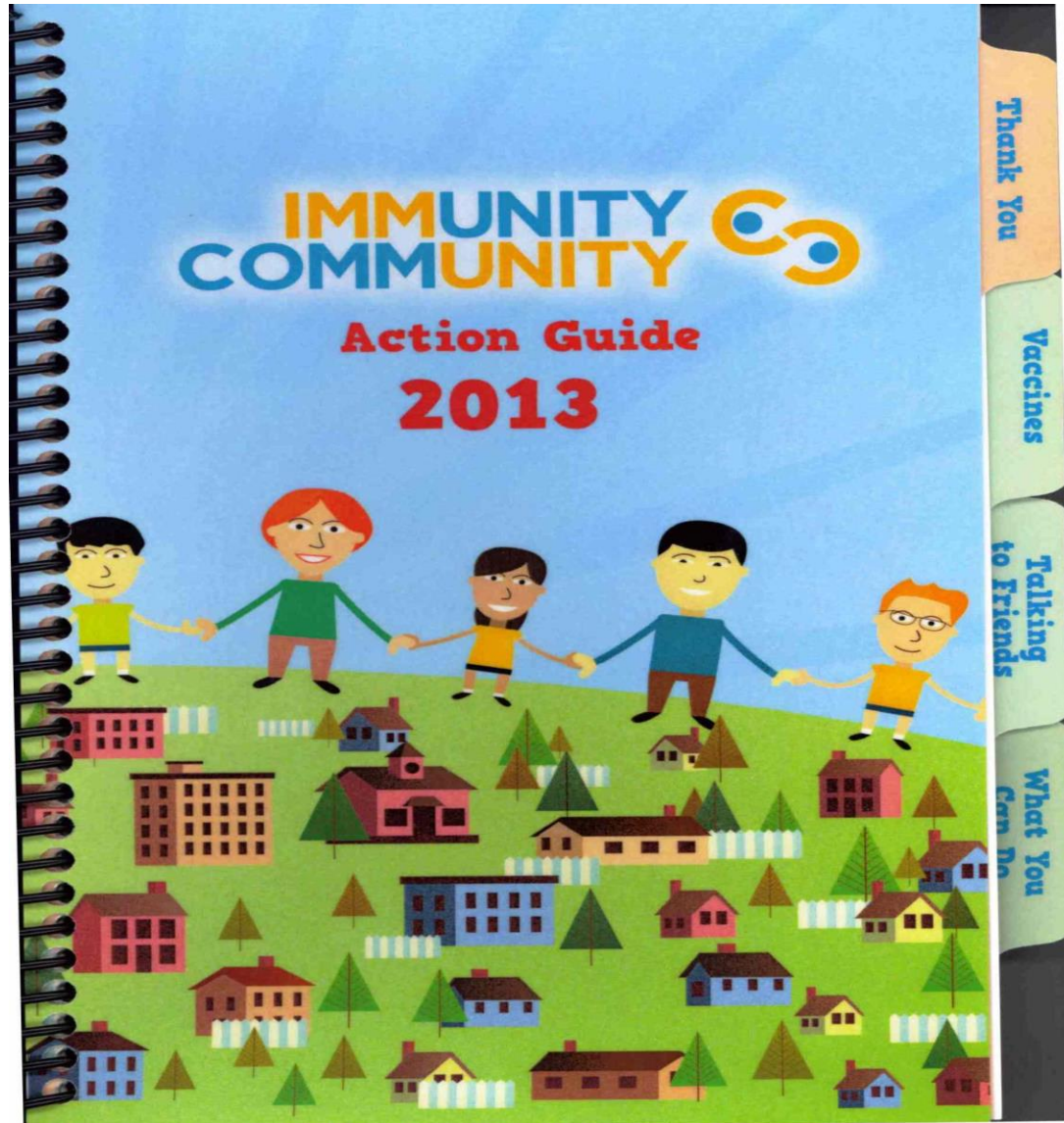
# Immunity Community brand & logo

IMMUNITY  
COMMUNITY

The logo icon consists of two stylized, overlapping circular shapes. The top shape is yellow with a blue dot in the center, and the bottom shape is also yellow with a blue dot in the center. They are positioned to the right of the text.

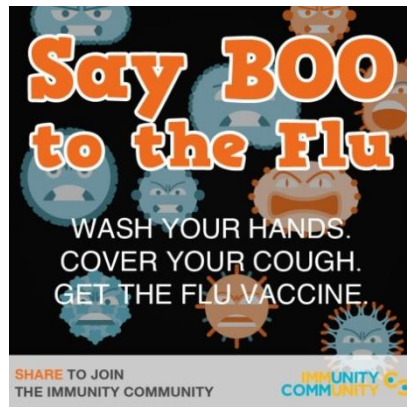
bc dc ideas

# Parent Action Guide





# Viral images



# Evaluation aims & activities

# Evaluation - Aims

Document the specific details of the intervention to facilitate the spread of the intervention

Provide formative feedback for continuous improvement in each phase of the pilot

Gather evidence that the intervention contributed to the desired outcomes

Identify best practices and factors that contribute to successful implementation

# Evaluation activities

Observation & document review

Activity & media tracking

Parent survey

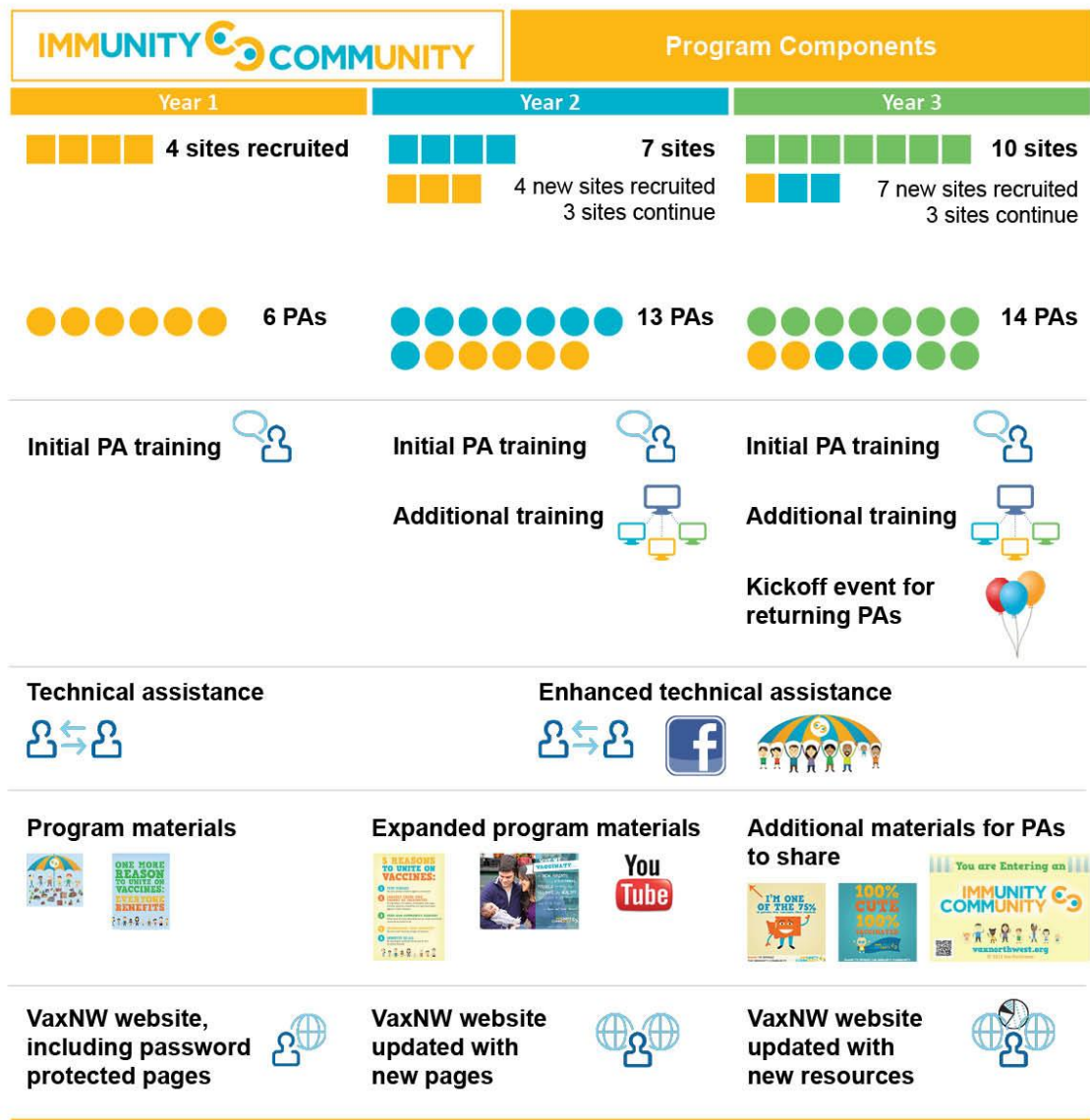
Key informant interviews

Parent focus groups

# Evaluation findings

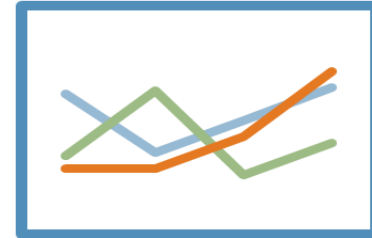


# Successful implementation & expansion



# Parent advocates take action to raise awareness

Sites monitor  
vaccination rates



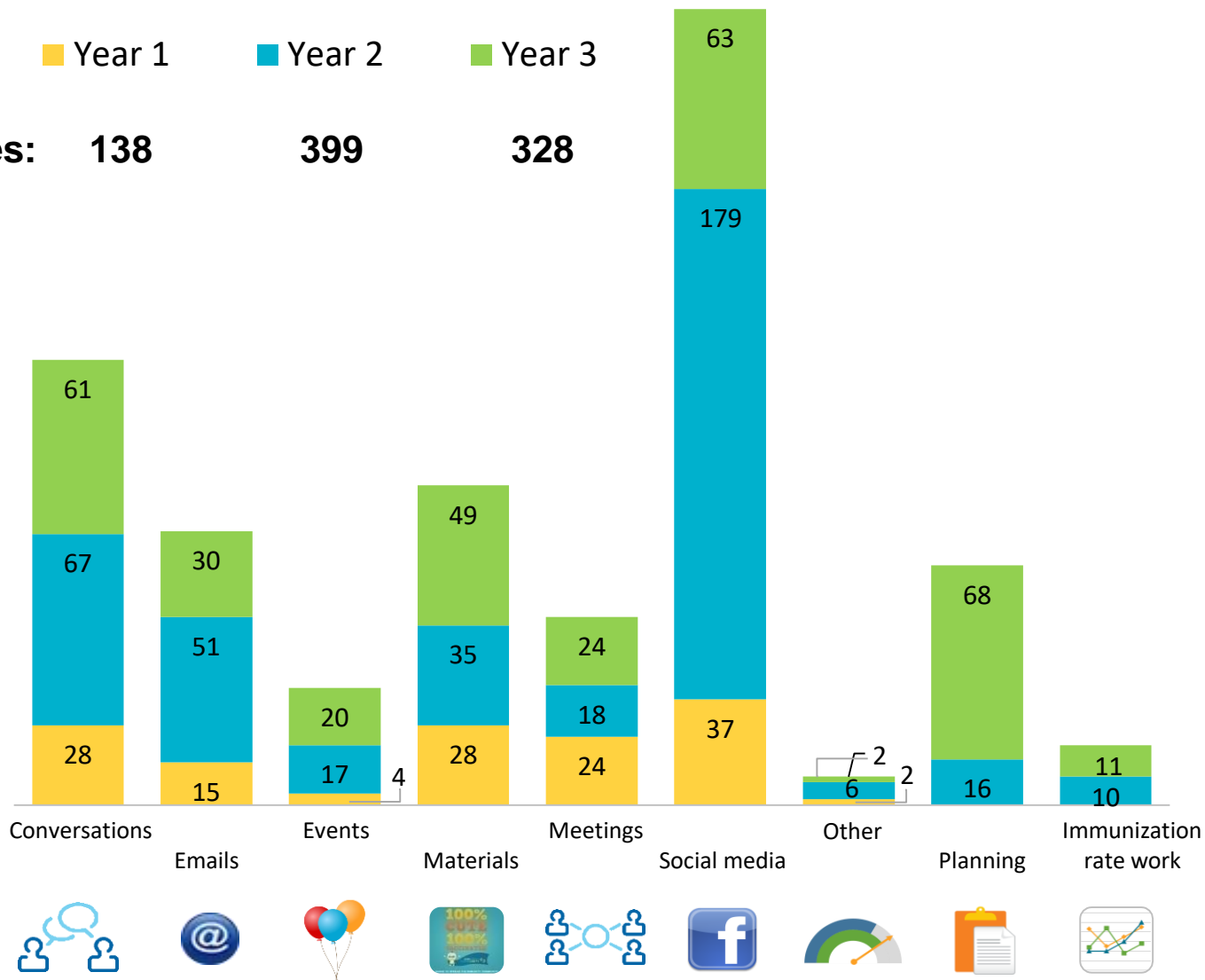
Educate parents

Generate  
conversation via  
social media



■ Year 1
 ■ Year 2
 ■ Year 3

**Total activities:**      **138**                      **399**                      **328**





17 conversations



11 emails



2 events



11 dissemination of IC materials



5 meetings



30 planning activities



11 social media posts



# Outcomes – parent survey methods

Pre/post, cross-sectional web-based survey

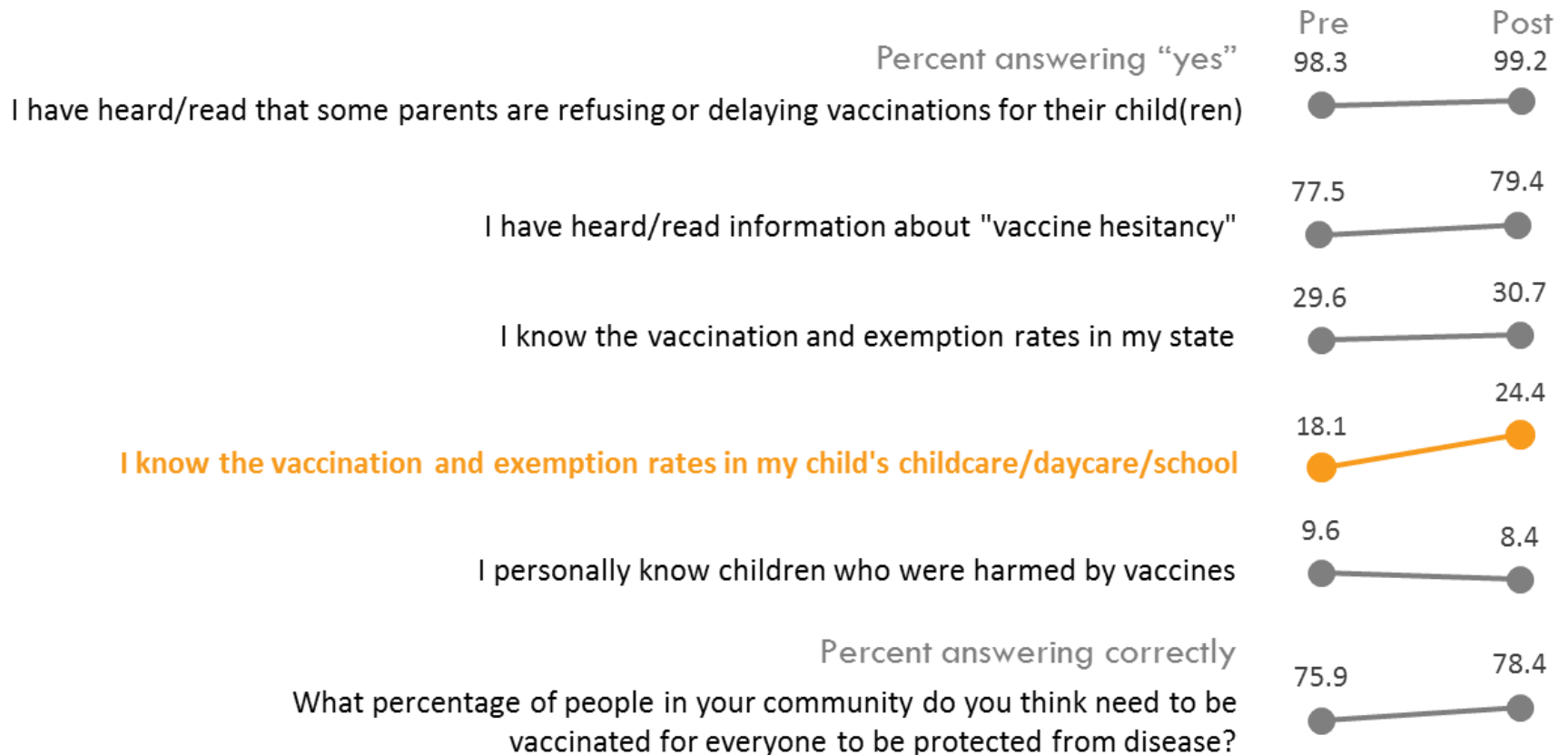
Purpose

Response rates

Analysis



# Parental knowledge of vaccine-related issues increased



# Parental attitudes more supportive of vaccination

Percent agreeing or strongly agreeing with statement

I am concerned about other parents not vaccinating their child(ren)



Vaccines are given to children when they are too young



Individual people are responsible for choosing whether or not to vaccinate their child(ren)



Average rating

(1=not confident/concerned, 10=extremely confident/concerned)

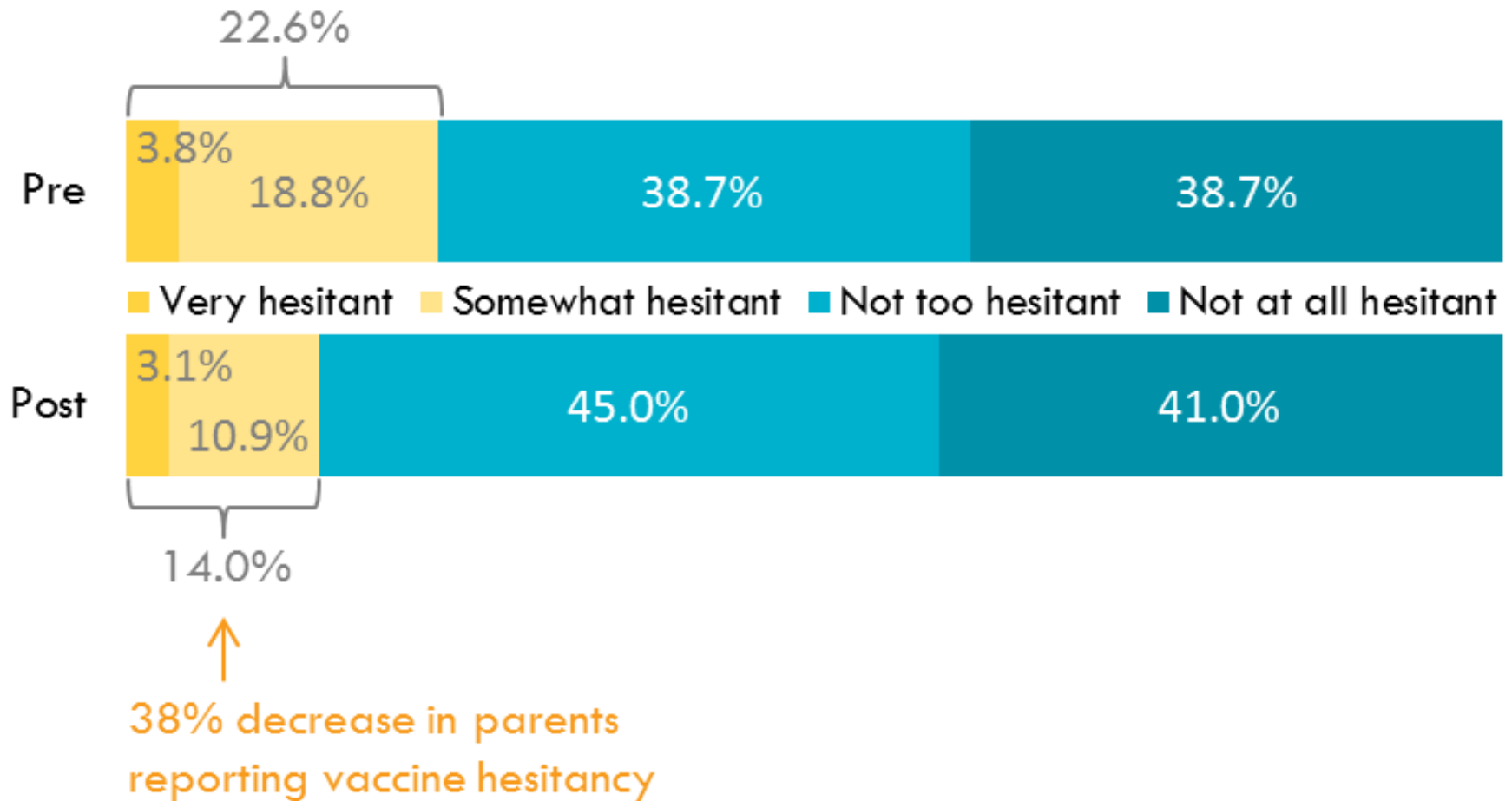
How confident are you that vaccinating your child is a good decision?



How concerned are you about the safety of vaccines?



# Parental attitudes more supportive of vaccination



# Messages reach community at large



TIME



**Family Matters**  
By Bonnie Rochman

VACCINES

## How Social Networks Influence Parents' Decision to Vaccinate

A small group of parent advocates is mobilizing "gentle propaganda" against vaccine naysayers

By Bonnie Rochman @brochman | April 15, 2013 | 0

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Read Later

At her son's preschool near Seattle, Robin Haight is a foot soldier in the vaccine wars. She arranged for a pediatrician to speak about vaccines at the home of a school parent. She put up posters — she calls them "gentle propaganda" — that touted the importance of immunization in stopping the spread of disease. Her husband helped create a spreadsheet to track which children at the school are missing which vaccinations.

Some parents have said that Haight's provaccination message has no place at preschool, that it's disrespectful and patronizing, that the decision to vaccinate a child is nobody else's business. One mother got so emotional that she broke out in hives. But Haight thinks a conversation is critical, and the latest research published in the journal *Pediatrics* backs her up.

"I'm just trying to let people know that if you don't vaccinate your children, it might affect other children's health," says Haight. "It directly affects a community of young children. How do we not talk about this?"

(MORE: Jenny McCarthy, Vaccine Expert? A Quarter of Parents Trust Celebrities)



Getty Images / Getty Images

### RELATED

Experts Argue to Keep Thimerosal in Some Vaccines

Parents Wary of Childhood Vaccines? Here's How to Persuade Them

Vaccines: They're Not Just for Kids (But Too Few U.S. Adults Are Getting Immunized)



# Policy change with state-level impact



Community-level  
policy change

OPEP (Organization of Parent Education Programs) adopted changes to risk management manual → Potential to impact 10,000 Washington state families



# ***The Immunity Community: A Community Engagement Strategy for Reducing Vaccine Hesitancy***

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*Parental concerns about vaccine safety have grown in the United States and abroad, resulting in delayed or skipped immunizations (often called “vaccine hesitancy”). To address vaccine hesitancy in Washington State, a public-private partnership of health organizations implemented and evaluated a 3-year community intervention, called the “Immunity Community.” The intervention mobilized parents who value immunization and provided them with tools to engage in positive dialogue about immunizations in their communities. The evaluation used qualitative and quantitative methods, including focus groups, interviews, and pre and post online surveys of parents, to assess perceptions about and reactions to the intervention, assess facilitators and barriers to success, and track outcomes including parental knowledge and attitudes. The program successfully engaged parent volunteers to be immuni-*

**Keywords:** *vaccine hesitancy; community engagement; social marketing*

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years parental concerns about vaccine safety have grown in the United States and abroad, resulting in delayed or skipped immunizations (often called “vaccine hesitancy”). When fewer children are immunized, more people are at risk of getting dangerous infectious diseases. In 2011, Washington State’s school entry exemption rate was 6.2%, a figure that had doubled over the previous 10 years and was 3 times the national average (Immunization Program CHILD Profile, Statewide Summary of Immunization Coverage for Kindergarten SY 2009-2010, 2010).

# Related work & next steps

# Provider Intervention

- **Randomized controlled trial**
  - 56 clinics in Western Washington
- **Models an evidence-based approach to provider communication with vaccine hesitant parents**
- **Based on three years of needs assessment and pilot work in western Washington**
- **Testing**
  - Physician confidence
  - Parent attitudes



# Past, present and future

## Past

- Test of multipronged, local health department driven approach (mobile immunization clinics, IC, and school nurse toolkit)

## Present

- Immunity Community continues
- Vaccine Hesitancy Focus Groups
- Revamp of Immunity Community website


## Future

- Prenatal provider assessment and development
- Incubate/support other innovative approaches


# www.immunitycommunitywa.org

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**Activate passionate parents!**  
Become a vaccine advocate in your community →

**Get vaccinated**  
Find a clinic near you

Enter street address

Zip code

[FIND CLINIC](#)

**Find your school's immunization rate**

Enter school name

[GET RATE](#)



# Acknowledgements

**Co-author:** Jennie Scheoppe, Research Associate  
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**Group Health Foundation**

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This report is based on research funded in part by the Group Health Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



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# Lessons learned

# Success factors

Organizational/  
leadership support

Strong TA and  
support from  
program staff:  
responsiveness,  
resources and  
materials

Site with culture of  
active, engaged  
parents



# Challenges

Recruitment

Implementation

Replication &  
sustainability

