**I Vaccinate Catch-Up Messaging**

**Letters to the Editor**

To lend your voice on the issue of vaccination, a simple and effective method for doing so is by submitting a letter to the editor to your local newspaper. A letter to the editor is a brief opinion piece, usually less than 300 words, that anyone can write and submit to a newspaper. Using the templates below, personalize your letter with your perspective and name, to submit to your local newspaper by contacting the editors.

Below are templates for General Healthcare Providers, Doctors, Nurses, and Parents. These templates can also be found at [IVaccinate.org/Toolkit](http://www.ivaccinate.org/Toolkit) (*password: ivaccinate*).

**GENERAL PROVIDER**:

As a healthcare provider, my top priority is keeping Michigan families safe and healthy. This includes making sure parents know the importance of keeping their children up to date on vaccinations, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of June 2023, fewer Michigan children are up to date on their routine vaccines because of postponed well-child visits during the pandemic. The most recent data from the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) shows that only 65.8% of children aged 19 to 36 months have completed their recommended doses in the primary childhood vaccine series – the lowest rate Michigan has seen since 2020. This means that many young children in Michigan are vulnerable to potentially dangerous diseases. With fewer Michigan children up to date on their routine vaccines, it’s easier for potentially serious diseases, like measles, whooping cough and the flu, to spread.

To assist parents with childhood vaccinations, the CDC has created a vaccination schedule to follow from birth to 18 years old. This schedule has been tested, studied and reviewed by medical experts, and is approved by every major medical organization in the country. Those who do not follow the schedule are at risk for developing diseases.

Vaccines are safe, effective, and one of the easiest and most important things parents can do to protect their kids against disease this fall. The health of our communities depends on high immunization rates to protect us from serious diseases.

I encourage parents to speak with their doctors and seek out credible sources based on science and medical research for their vaccine questions, like [www.IVaccinate.org](http://www.ivaccinate.org), to keep their families safe and healthy.

**DOCTOR:**

As a doctor in the X community/city/town, my top priority is keeping Michigan families safe and healthy. This includes making sure parents know the importance of keeping their children up to date on vaccinations, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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To assist parents with childhood vaccinations, the CDC has created a vaccination schedule to follow from birth to 18 years old. My practice encourages parents to follow this schedule. It has been tested, studied and reviewed by medical experts, and is approved by every major medical organization in the country. Those who do not follow the schedule are at risk for developing diseases.

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I encourage the parents in my practice to speak with me about their vaccine questions, and use credible sources based on science and medical research, like [www.IVaccinate.org](http://www.ivaccinate.org), to learn more. We all have the same goal: to protect children and keep them healthy. And I’m here to help with that.

**NURSE:**

I have been a nurse for X years and throughout my career I have witnessed thousands of children getting vaccinated. Yes, it can be hard to watch anyone receive a shot, but the temporary discomfort is not what worries me. What worries me is that more parents are choosing to delay vaccinations or skip them altogether, especially during a global pandemic.

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Health and safety is my number one priority for you and your family. That is why I encourage all parents to follow the CDC vaccination schedule. It is approved by every major medical organization in the country, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians. This schedule makes it easy for parents to determine when their child needs what vaccine. From birth to 18 years old, it lays out what vaccines your child needs.

It’s normal to have questions—it makes you a good parent! Make sure you are getting answers from medical professionals and from credible sources, like [IVaccinate.org](http://ivaccinate.org/). Don’t put your child at risk of something that’s preventable. Take it from a nurse: talk with your healthcare provider to make sure your child is up to date on vaccinations to prepare for this coming fall.

**PARENT:**

As a parent, it can be especially difficult trying to balance working, keeping the house clean, and taking kids to school and other activities. But something that has been able to ease my mind in this time of chaos is that my kids are protected this fall because I made sure our family was up to date on vaccinations.

We all want to do what’s best for our children. Fortunately, vaccinating your children is the safest and easiest thing you can do to protect them against vaccine-preventable diseases.

One resource I have utilized is the CDC vaccination schedule. It lays out which vaccines your child needs, and when, from birth all the way to 18 years old. I trust this schedule as it has been approved by every major medical organization in the country, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Children who miss a vaccine are at risk for contracting a disease, and no parent wants that.

I am also grateful to have access to resources like IVaccinate.org, where I was able to find answers to my questions about vaccines backed by credible science. Asking questions to protect my child is what makes me a good parent – and it’s what makes you a good one, too!

I encourage all other Michigan parents to go to IVaccinate.org and learn how they can best keep their children safe this fall and for the rest of their lives.