COMBATING VACCINE MISINFORMATION:
ONLINE
About

The National HPV Vaccination Roundtable is a coalition of ~70 organizations working at the intersection of immunization and cancer prevention.

We were founded in 2014 by the American Cancer Society and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Our funding is provided by the CDC and ACS. Supplemental funding has also been awarded from NCI and the Office of Infectious Disease and HIV Policy.
OUR MISSION:

Prevent HPV-associated cancers and pre-cancers by increasing and sustaining HPV vaccination.
Combating Vaccine Misinformation Takes All Of Us
COMBATTING VACCINE MISINFORMATION
ONLINE

Meet Our Guests

Katherine Nicol, MS
Senior Vice President
Hager Sharp

Jennifer Zavolinsky
Director, Public Health Education and Communication
Vaccinate Your Family

Robyn Correll, MPH, CHWI
Public Health Consultant
Vaccinate Your Family
OVERVIEW

• Trust in our public health agencies is at an all time low.

• The rampant spread of misinformation, particularly on social media, is a primary contributing factor.
"… a significant portion of the population might reject vaccines…because of distrust, misinformation, or some other factor. Government and public health officials at every level…face the difficult task of restoring a level of trust in science that prevailed in our recent past."

- American Medical Association (AMA) 
  December 2020

An ‘epidemic of misinformation’ is eroding trust in institutions and media.

- Edelman Trust Barometer 
  January 2021
The World Health Organization warned of an ‘infodemic of false information about COVID-19,’ aka, a ‘misinfodemic’—deliberate attempts to disseminate wrong information to undermine the public health response and advance alternative agendas of groups or individuals.

While targeted misinformation efforts are occurring every day, misinformation is not always rooted in conspiracy.

Regardless of source or intent, misinformation has resulted in confusion and mistrust.
CALL TO ACTION

The AMA, among many other public health organizations, calls for the media, including social media platforms, to **consistently convey factual information from credible sources, while challenging and rejecting misinformation.**
HOW DO WE DO THAT?

Our partners at Vaccinate Your Family will show us how to:

• Identify misinformation in social media
• Call out false information
• “Stop the Spread”

Together, we can stem the tide of vaccination misinformation and hesitancy, rebuild trust in our public health agencies, and ultimately save lives.
Combating Misinformation Online
March 11, 2021
Jennifer Zavolinsky and Robyn Correll, Vaccinate Your Family
Vaccinate Your Family’s (VYF) Mission

Vaccinate Your Family protects people of all ages from vaccine-preventable diseases by:

- Raising awareness of the critical need for timely immunizations
- Increasing the public’s understanding of the benefits of vaccines
- Increasing confidence in the safety of vaccines
- Ensuring that all families have access to lifesaving vaccines
- Advocating for policies that support timely vaccination
Fighting Vaccine Misinformation

We combat misinformation about vaccines and vaccination by:

• Dispelling myths & sharing science-based information on social media pages and Vaccinate Your Family website
• Engaging media
• Presenting at conferences and on virtual meetings/webinars
VYF on Social Media

Facebook: @Vaccinateyourfamily
Instagram: @Vaccinateyourfamily
Twitter: @Vaxyourfam
YouTube: Vaccinate Your Family
Brief History of Vaccine Opposition

Vaccine Misinformation and Opposition to Vaccines is Not New. Reasons for Opposition are Always Changing.
Misinformation Vs. Disinformation

**Misinformation**

• ACCIDENTAL falsehood. Wrong or misleading information with the power to dilute, distract or distort.

**Disinformation**

• DELIBERATE, ENGINEERED falsehood circulated with malicious intent or for the purpose of serving a personal, political or economic agenda.

The Difference is INTENT

Source: UNICEF’s Vaccine Misinformation Management Field Guide
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

Look at the Message

- Uses simple narrative with vivid imagery to elicit strong emotions like fear, anger and/or disgust.
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

- Uses anecdote or personal story.
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

Look at the Message

• Implies doctors, public health and scientists can’t be trusted because they are paid by pharma (“follow the money”)
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

Look at the Message

• Vaccine requirements or recommendations are taking away your “rights.”
• Connecting vaccines with worldviews/politics.
• “Us” vs. “Them”
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

Look at the Message

• Correlation means causation. Connecting events because of timing, not cause.
Example of COVID-19 Vaccine Disinformation
(Source: Voices for Vaccines: https://youtu.be/m3zPPX9QwUg)
Tactics Used to Spread Misinformation

Check the Source

• Are they trying to sell you something? Do they have something to gain?
• People make money by playing on people’s fears.
• If the source is a doctor: Are they licensed? What kind of doctor?
• Not every doctor or researcher - even those with PhD, MD or DO - is an expert on vaccines.
• Not all opinions are the same. Intuition ≠ science.
How to Identify Good Science Vs. Bad Science

Just because a medical or scientific study was reported by the media or promoted through a person’s or organization’s website or social media page, it doesn’t make it a good, credible or “valid” study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD SCIENCE</th>
<th>BAD SCIENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study is reviewed by other researchers in the same field before publishing.</td>
<td>Researcher starts with a conclusion instead of theory and then designs a “study” to prove their conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study is published in a respected journal.</td>
<td>Researcher includes opinions into their study observations and treats them as “facts.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study results can be reproduced by other researchers if they use the same study methods.</td>
<td>Researcher highlights one result of their study, but ignores other study findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher gives all information needed for others to judge the value of their research, not just the information that leads people to agree with their study results.</td>
<td>Study is self-published.</td>
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Known Sources of Vaccine Misinformation

Don’t get fooled by the names.

- Children’s Health Defense (RFK, Jr.)
- National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC)
- Energetic Health Institute
- Many others.
Targeting Vulnerable People/Minority Populations with Misinformation

Since 2015, Larry Cook has made a business out of the anti-vaccination narratives of distressed parents. Source: NBC News Story

Taking advantage of people’s distrust of the government or medical system.
Social Media Algorithms and Misinformation

The algorithms that power social media platforms help determine what we see on our newsfeeds.

The more you engage with misinformation, the more likely you are to see it.
Responding to Misinformation

There’s no "One Size Fits All" approach to misinformation.

How you respond will depend on the context and your comfort level.
Responding to Misinformation

Push back* on disinformation when you see it.

*Can be as simple as posting "That's not true."

Be proactive about sharing* science-based vaccination information.

*Post, like, comment on & share science-based content online

Share stories* and personal experiences with vaccinations and vaccine-preventable diseases.

*Need suggestions? Check out VaccinateYourFamily.org/personal-stories
Responding to Misinformation

Report misinforming posts on the different social media platforms.

Push back* on disinformation when you see it.

*Can be as simple as posting “That’s not true.”

Look for the dots
Reporting Misinformation on Facebook

Get show notes and links here: https://www.greenmedinfo.com/.../zero-evidence-covid...
Get our breaking updates via our new Telegram channel: https://t.me/savereanami

1. Find support or report post
   I'm concerned about this post.

2. Snooze Sayer Ji for 30 days
   Temporarily stop seeing posts.

3. What kind of false information?
   Health

4. Other steps you can take
   - Block Sayer Ji
     You won't be able to see or contact each other.
   - Hide all from Sayer Ji
     Stop seeing posts from this page.
Reporting Misinformation on Twitter

Children's Health Defense @ChildrensHD · Mar 6
Birth rates in the U.S. started their decline in 2006 — the same year the CDC recommended every American girl between the ages of 9 and 26 get Merck's Gardasil HPV vaccine. #fertility #BigPharma

Report an issue

Help us understand the problem. What is going on with this Tweet?

I'm not interested in this Tweet

It's suspicious or spam

It's abusive or harmful

It expresses intentions of self-harm or

How is this Tweet suspicious or spreading spam?

Learn more about reporting violations of our

The account Tweeting this is fake

Includes a link to a potentially harmful, malicious, or phishing site

The hashtags included seem unrelated

Uses the reply function to spam

It's something else
Reporting Misinformation on Instagram
Reporting Misinformation on Youtube
Reporting Misinformation

Here’s how to do it

- **Facebook**
  - How do I mark a Facebook post as false news?

- **Instagram**
  - Reduce the spread of false information

- **LinkedIn**
  - Recognizing and reporting spam, inappropriate, and abusive content

- **Twitter**
  - Report a tweet, list, or direct message

- **YouTube**
  - Report inappropriate content

- **WhatsApp**
  - How to report a contact or a group

- **TikTok**
  - Report inappropriate content

- **Viber**
  - How to report inappropriate content

- **VK**
  - How do I report misleading information
Responding to Misinformation

Signal to onlookers that they should be skeptical.

“This headline is misleading. Here’s an article explaining more.

“I know this sounds scary, but it’s not the whole story. Every death after a COVID vaccination is investigated, and none have been found to be caused by the vaccines.”

“Did you happen to see the fact check on this? It offered some important context. Here’s the link:

Push back* on disinformation when you see it.

*Can be as simple as posting “That’s not true.”
Responding to Misinformation

When responding:

- Consider the onlookers.
- Start a new comment thread if you can.
- Show empathy.
- Use a mix of data and anecdote.
- Know when to pause, walk away, or take the conversation to DM or offline.

Push back* on disinformation when you see it.

*Can be as simple as posting “That's not true.”
Responding to Misinformation

The CASE Method:

Corroborate
Acknowledge concerns and find common ground

About Me
Share what you’ve done to educate yourself on the topic

Science
Describe what the science says about the specific concern.

Explain/Advise
Explain what you would do or would recommend, based on the science.

Source: Autism Science Foundation
Lower the volume of misinformation by amplifying science-based content.

Be proactive about sharing* science-based vaccination information.

*Post, like, comment on & share science-based content online.
Responding to Misinformation

✓ Engage with science-based posts and comments when you see them.
✓ Post science-based information on your own timeline.
✓ Prebunk or “inoculate” others against misinformation.
✓ Debunk misinformation that is actively harmful and has traction.

Be proactive about sharing* science-based vaccination information.

*Post, like, comment on & share science-based content online.
Debunking Misinformation

Start with a fact
Make it sticky

Warn about the myth
Repeat it only once

Explain why it’s false
Say why some believe it and how we know it’s not true

Repeat the fact
End with what you want them to remember

Source: The Debunking Handbook 2020
Example 1. Debunking the “HPV vaccine causes injury” myth

**FACT**

Large scale studies find no link between the HPV vaccine and auto-immune symptoms. All the scientific evidence tells us HPV vaccines are safe and effective.

**MYTH**

One common vaccine myth is that they cause negative health impacts. The evidence cited is often specific examples where a child received a vaccination then suffered adverse health impacts afterwards.

**FALLACY**

Anecdotes like this mistake correlation for causation. Just because a vaccination and an injury happen close to each other doesn’t mean one causes the other. This logic is the same as thinking that wearing lucky colours at a sports game led to your team winning.

This argument also employs anecdotal thinking, relying on isolated examples rather than scientific evidence. While stories can be persuasive, they can also mislead if a single experience is not representative of the general populace.

**FACT**

This is why scientists look at large samples rather than single cases before coming to conclusions.
Debunking Misinformation

✓ Pick your battles
   Not every piece of misinfo needs debunking

✓ Avoid jargon and acronyms
   Use language people will understand

✓ Match the message to the audience
   Speak to what matters to them

✓ Consider the messenger
   Who does your audience trust?
Combating Misinformation

Stories can be powerful:

✓ Normalize vaccination experiences
✓ Humanize vaccine-preventable diseases

Share stories* and personal experiences with vaccinations and vaccine-preventable diseases.

*Need suggestions? Check out VaccinateYourFamily.org/personal-stories
Share stories of people impacted by vaccine-preventable diseases

Families Fighting Flu
March 7 at 9:22 AM

32 years ago today, Flo and her husband were forced to make a decision that no parent should have to – the decision to let go of their precious, six-year-old daughter. Amy passed away on March 7, 1979 with her parents by her bedside.

Amy and her family were not vaccinated against the flu the year Amy died because their doctors had not recommended the flu vaccine. Today, her family advocates for flu awareness and annual vaccination in hopes that no other family has to experience...

Vaccinate Your Family
Published by Amy Arbuckle Pisani
March 2 at 3:41 PM

So happy to see people getting their COVID-19 vaccines. Thanks to this former Rotary of Mystic President for sharing his pic with us.

Post positive experiences with vaccination
Protect Yourself

- Be prepared for push back
- Mute/block/hide/ban comments and people if necessary
- Mute notifications
For More Info on Addressing Misinformation Online

**UNICEF’s Vaccine Misinformation Management Field Guide**
- [unicef.org/mena/reports/vaccine-misinformation-management-field-guide](unicef.org/mena/reports/vaccine-misinformation-management-field-guide)

**Stronger**
- [stronger.org/resources](stronger.org/resources)

**Voices for Vaccines**
- [voicesforvaccines.org](voicesforvaccines.org)

**WHO’s How to Report Misinformation Online**
- [www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/how-to-report-misinformation-online](www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/how-to-report-misinformation-online)

**2020 Debunking Handbook**

**FactCheck.org (Reputable Fact-Checking Website)**
## Credible Organizations for Vaccine and Vaccine-Preventable Disease Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccinate Your Family*</th>
<th>Vaccinateyourfamily.org</th>
<th>Vaccinateyourfamily.org/covid19faq</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HPV Vaccination Roundtable</td>
<td>HPVRoundtable.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)</td>
<td>Healthychildren.org</td>
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<td>American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)</td>
<td>Familydoctor.org</td>
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<td>American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)</td>
<td>Aco.org/womens-health</td>
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<tr>
<td>American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM)</td>
<td>Ourmomentoftruth.com/your-health/importance-of-vaccines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)</td>
<td>Cdc.gov/vaccines</td>
<td>Cdc.gov/coronavirus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families Fighting Flu*</td>
<td>Familiesfightingflu.org</td>
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<td>Immunization Action Coalition</td>
<td>Immunize.org</td>
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<td>Voices for Vaccines (VFV)</td>
<td>VoicesforVaccines.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Foundation of Infectious Diseases</td>
<td>Nfid.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaccine Education Center at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia</td>
<td>Chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center</td>
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*Personal stories about vaccine-preventable diseases for sharing.
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info@vaccinateyourfamily.org

Robyn Correll  
Consultant  
info@vaccinateyourfamily.org

Website: Vaccinateyourfamily.org  
Blog: Shotofprevention.com  
Facebook: Vaccinate Your Family  
Twitter: @Vaxyourfam  
Instagram: Vaccinate Your Family  
YouTube: Vaccinate Your Family
Please Complete the Survey (link in chat box)
Time for Q & A
Find Us Online

HPV Roundtable

Visit: hpvroundtable.org

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• Facebook - HPV Vaccination Roundtable
• Twitter - @HPVRoundtable
• Instagram - hpv.vaccination.roundtable
• YouTube - youtube.com/hpvroundtabletv
Get In Touch

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Thank You!