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# Parents' Vaccine Hesitancy a 'Major Contributor' to Disease Outbreaks, CDC Warns

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6/19/24, 10:54 PM Parents' Vaccine Hesitancy a 'Major Contributor' to Disease Outbreaks, CDC Warns • Children's Health Defense  
agency said. However, the CDC said the numbers in its latest study, published last month, reflect changes in demographic groups, including economic status, race and the ages of the children whose parents were vaccine-hesitant.

The authors of the CDC report called **vaccine hesitancy** — defined by the **World Health Organization** (WHO) as “the reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccines” — a “major contributor” to disease outbreaks.

The WHO in 2019 proclaimed vaccine hesitancy to be one of the **top 10 threats to global health**, suggesting there were high levels of vaccine hesitancy before the March 2020 start of the **COVID-19** pandemic.

The study authors noted in their report that during the pandemic, many people were hesitant about the experimental COVID-19 **vaccines**.

## The Vaccine Safety Project

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Parental hesitancy toward routine childhood vaccinations may have increased when COVID-19 vaccines were recommended for various child age groups, they said.

It’s “critical,” the CDC researchers wrote, to understand the “current climate” around vaccine hesitancy “for the development of tailored programs to mitigate parental VH [vaccine hesitancy] and consequently increase vaccine uptake in children and adolescents.”

For the study, the authors analyzed **National Immunization Surveys** to assess parental hesitation toward routine vaccination of their **children ages 6 months through 17 years** for 2019 to 2022.

The authors also noted a decrease (21.6% to 19.4%) in vaccine hesitancy among parents of children 6 months to 5 years after the FDA on Dec. 9, 2022, authorized COVID-19 shots for children **6 months up to 5 years**.

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## **'Parental acceptance and confidence in routine childhood vaccines may have been altered'**

Parents living below the poverty line exhibited a gradual increase in vaccine hesitancy throughout the study period.

"Due to concerns about COVID-19 vaccine safety and increased misinformation about vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic, parental acceptance and confidence in routine childhood vaccines may have been altered," the study authors wrote.

The largest decrease in vaccine hesitancy during that time was among parents of non-Hispanic Black children. However, that group's level of vaccine hesitancy still was higher than that of non-Hispanic white children.

The authors declared they had no competing financial interests or personal relationships that influenced their research.

The Defender asked lead author **Kushagra Vashist** to comment on the study's findings, but he did not respond by our publication deadline.