PROTECT & CONNECT WITH YOUR TEEN

UNITY
United for adolescent vaccination

AS A PARENT, WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS TO YOUR TEEN OR YOUNG ADULT.

From staying up-to-date on vaccinations to preparing your adolescent for conversations with his or her healthcare provider, you can help protect your child by influencing important health decisions and behaviors.

YOUR ROLE AS PARENT

A study from Northwestern University shows that you remain your adolescent's #1source of health information.[1] This means you can guide your child in forming important health habits, such as scheduling annual well visits and staying informed about vaccines.

THE RISKS ARE REAL

Your teen or young adult may encounter different health concerns or conditions than when he or she was younger. Adolescents are more likely to catch and/or spread diseases from common adolescent activities and other risk factors, including[2,3]:

- Sharing drinks, cups, and utensils
- Poor hygiene
- Sexual behavior
- Close-quartered living
- Group hangouts

EMPOWER YOUR TEEN OR YOUNG ADULT

Talking to your teen or young adult about certain health topics can be difficult. To engage in an open conversation with your teen, Health & Human Services' Office of Adolescent Health suggests using these tips[4]:

- Be sympathetic
- Provide the facts
- Keep your composure
- Stress safety

Parents and teens both believe that a lack of knowledge about recommended vaccines is an underlying driver of low immunization rates.[5]

For more information, visit www.unity4teenvax.org

KNOW THE FACTS

Parents and teens who have open communication about health are one step closer to developing important health habits. This includes open communication about vaccinations. Most adolescents and young adults are unaware of vaccines they may need, and often state that their parents were the ones who informed them about upcoming vaccines as necessary. It is up to you to stay educated and share health information with your teen or young adult.[5]

Another tip is to encourage your teen or young adult to feel comfortable speaking with their healthcare professional. Privacy is a concern for many teens. Give your child the option to have 10 minutes to talk alone with his or her physician during appointments.[6]

84% of physicians reported that when teens are joined by a parent in the exam room, it can restrict the conversation.[7]

Remember the 4

The CDC recommends that adolescents receive four vaccines. It is important to ask a healthcare professional if your child is due for any vaccines or boosters.[8]

HPV (human papillomavirus)–The vaccine is most effective at preventing associated cancers in both boys and girls when given during preteen years. All teens should receive the vaccine series at the 11 or 12 year old visit.

Meningococcal–Two types of meningococcal disease vaccines protect against the most common serogroups. Teens should start the ACWY vaccine between 11 and 12 years of age, with a booster dose between 16 and 18 years. They should also consider the serogroup B vaccine between 16 and 18 years of age.

Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis [whooping cough]) and Td Booster (tetanus and diphtheria)–Adolescents should receive a Tdap vaccine between the ages of 11 and 12. Regular boosters of Td vaccine are recommended every 10 years to protect those at risk.

Flu–Flu season typically starts in October, and the virus can mutate each year. All teens and young adults should receive an influenza vaccine each year as soon as the vaccine is available.

References: 1. Deardoff J. Teens turn to internet to cope with health challenges. Northwestern University. http://www.northwestern.edu/newscenter/stories/2015/06/teens-turn-to-internet-to-cope-with-health-challenges.html. Published June 2, 2016. Accessed June 20, 2016. 2. World Health Organization. Adolescents: health risks and solutions. http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs345/en/. Updated May, 2016. Accessed June 20, 2016. 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Meningococcal disease. http://www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/index.html. Updated June 29, 2016. Accessed July 6, 2016. 4. Office of Adolescent Health. Talking with teens. http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/info/parents/conversation-tools/index.html#teachable_moments. Updated May 26, 2014. Accessed June 20, 2016. 5. Gowda, C, Schaffer SE, Dombkowski KJ, et al. Understanding attitudes toward adolescent vaccination and the decision-making dynamic among adolescents, parents and providers. BMC Public Health. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3406969/. Published July 7, 2012. Accessed June 20, 2016. 6. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services: February 2014. Paving the road to good health strategies for increased medicaid adolescent well-care visits. https://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Benefits/Downloads/paving-the-road-to-good-health.pdf. Accessed June 20, 2016. 7. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. Harris Interactive. http://www.nfid.org/newsroom/news-conferences/2013-news-conferences/2013-teen-health/hcp.pdf. Published April 2013. Accessed June 20, 2016. 8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccines for preteens and teens: what parents should know. http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/pl-dis-preteens-parents.pdf. Updated June 2014. Accessed June 20, 2016.