

Motivational Statements about HPV Vaccination

Research with physicians and parents found that these statements would help parents agree to HPV vaccination.

For “Ease main concern” step

Statements developed by CDC

Is HPV vaccine necessary?

“HPV can cause cancers of the cervix, vagina, and vulva in women, cancer of the penis in men, and cancers of the anus and the mouth or throat in both women and men. There are about 26,000 of these cancers each year—and most could be prevented with HPV vaccine. There are also many more precancerous conditions requiring treatment that can have lasting effects.”

Is HPV vaccine safe? What are the side effects?

“HPV vaccine has been carefully studied by medical and scientific experts. HPV vaccine has been shown to be very effective and very safe. Like other shots, most side effects are mild, primarily pain or redness in the arm. This should go away quickly, and HPV vaccine has not been associated with any long-term side effects. Since 2006, over 75 million doses of HPV vaccine have been distributed in the U.S., and in the years of HPV vaccine safety studies and monitoring, no serious safety concerns have been identified.”

My child is not sexually active. Why should he or she get HPV vaccine?

“HPV is so common that almost everyone will be infected at some point. It is estimated that 79 million Americans are currently infected, with 14 million new HPV infections each year. Most people infected will never know. So even if [child’s name] waits until marriage to have sex, or only has one partner in the future, he/she could still be exposed if his/her partner has been exposed.”

Why should 11-12 year olds get HPV vaccine?

“We’re vaccinating today so [child’s name] will have the best protection possible long before the start of any kind of sexual activity. We vaccinate people well before they are exposed to an infection, as is the case with measles and the other recommended childhood vaccines. Similarly, we want to vaccinate children well before they get exposed to HPV.”

For “Recommend” step

Statements developed by UNC and CDC

- *“I strongly believe in the importance of this cancer-preventing vaccine for [child’s name].”*
- *“[Child’s name] can get [anal/cervical cancer] as an adult, but you can stop that right now. The HPV vaccine prevents most [anal/cervical cancers].”*
- *“There will be many things in [child’s name]’s life that you can’t control. But you can control whether he/she gets some dangerous kinds of HPV.”*
- *“In clinical trials of boys and girls, the vaccine was shown to be extremely effective. In addition, studies in the U.S. and other countries that have introduced HPV vaccine have shown a significant reduction in infections caused by the HPV types targeted by the vaccine.”*
- *“I strongly believe in the importance of this cancer-preventing vaccine, and I have given HPV vaccine to my child. Experts (like the American Academy of Pediatrics, cancer doctors, and the CDC) also agree that this vaccine is very important for [child’s name].”*

Materials for parents to take home

Information for parents who are still hesitant after you use the strategy: tinyurl.com/HPVvaccinefacts

Handout for promoting adolescent vaccines in your practice: tinyurl.com/ProtectMeWith3

Many of the statements above are from the CDC’s Tips and Time-savers for Talking with Parents about HPV Vaccine.