



Voices of Child Health in Chicago REPORT

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

41% of children under 5 years old were very likely to get vaccinated when they are eligible, 22% were somewhat likely and 34% were not likely per their parent's report.

Children in the Central (79%) and North (78%) city regions were most likely to receive a vaccine, whereas those from the West and South city regions were least likely (52% and 43%, respectively).

Rates of child vaccination against COVID-19 in Chicago indicate broader acceptance by parents than predicted before vaccines were available.

Update on Youth COVID-19 Vaccines in Chicago

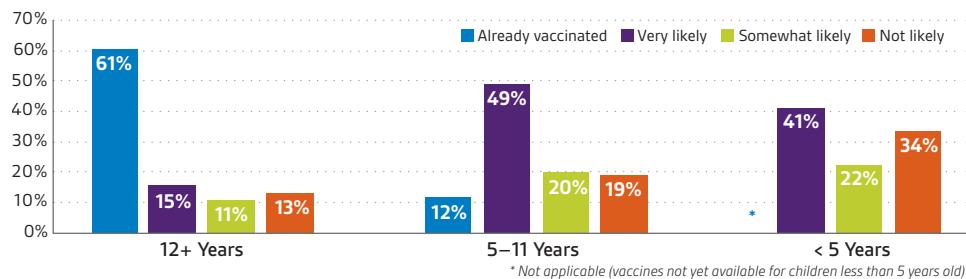
Public opinion about COVID-19 vaccinations in the United States is constantly changing, with experts relying on vaccines as the main line of defense against the ongoing pandemic. According to the City of Chicago's COVID-19 Dashboard, as of February 2022, 69% of the population had completed the vaccine series. In Chicago, 41% of children 5–11 years old have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, with about 51% receiving at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as of February 2022.¹ The authorization of the COVID-19 vaccine for 6-month-old to 4-year-old children may be forthcoming in Spring 2022 pending review of trial data and Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA. Since the authorization of vaccines for children 5 years and older last year, parent perspectives have been varied — many have felt confident vaccinating their children, while some remain hesitant or unsure about the vaccine. Healthcare providers have been working to hear and address parents' concerns by discussing the importance of the protection vaccines offer as well as the strong safety data for the available COVID-19 vaccines.

In this month's *Voices of Child Health in Chicago Report*, we revisit the topic of COVID-19 vaccines for children. We asked 1,142 Chicago parents from all 77 community areas in the city whether their child(ren) were vaccinated against COVID-19 or not, and if not, how likely they are to get the child vaccinated. We also asked parents other questions about themselves, their families and the COVID-19 pandemic. Surveys were administered from October–November 2021, when the COVID-19 Delta variant was the dominant variant and before the recent surge of the Omicron variant.

COVID-19 vaccination rates and vaccine intentions

With the potential for vaccines becoming available for the youngest age group, we explored COVID-19 vaccination rates and parents' intentions to vaccinate their children by child age. In the oldest child age group (12 years and older), parents reported that 61% of children and adolescents were already vaccinated against COVID-19. In the middle child age group (5–11 years old), only 12% of children were already vaccinated at the time of data collection. This may be because these data were collected October–November 2021, shortly after the COVID-19 vaccine became available for this age group (more recent estimates from the City of Chicago show a 41% vaccination rate in this age group). For the youngest age group (children 0–4 years old), COVID-19 vaccines were not yet available at the time of data collection; however, 41% of children in this age group were "very likely" to be vaccinated (according to their parents), 22% were somewhat likely and 34% were not likely (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Child COVID-19 vaccination and parent-reported vaccination intentions (%), by child age group



Vaccinations and intentions by city region

We found that among all children in surveyed households, 61% were either already vaccinated against COVID-19 or were very likely to be vaccinated (per their parent's report). Specifically, among all kids in surveyed households, 25% were already vaccinated, 36% were "very likely" to be vaccinated, 18% were "somewhat likely" to be vaccinated and 22% were "not likely" to be vaccinated. The proportion of children who were either already vaccinated or very likely to be vaccinated differed by city region. For instance, children in the Central (79%) and North (78%) city regions were most likely to receive

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a vaccine, whereas those from the West and South city regions were least likely (52% and 43%, respectively) (see Figure 2). This was consistent with the City of Chicago's COVID-19 dashboard's vaccination rates for Chicagoans of all ages by community area.¹

Disparities in vaccine coverage

When we explored whether or not child race (as reported by their parent) was associated with child vaccination, we found that there were differences in COVID-19 vaccination across child race and ethnicity. White children were most likely to either already be vaccinated or be "very likely" to receive a vaccine (75%), followed by Asian/other race children (70%), Latinx/Hispanic children (60%) and Black children (47%).

Socioeconomic variables such as household income and parent education level also were associated with child COVID-19 vaccinations status and intentions. Children in households with a high annual income (400% federal poverty level [FPL] or higher; in 2021 the FPL for a family of four was \$26,500)² were most likely to either be already vaccinated or "very likely" (75%), followed by children in households with middle income (60%; 100–399% FPL), and least likely were children in households with low income (45%; <100% FPL). In regard to parent education level, children of parents who had a college degree or higher were more likely to either already be vaccinated or be "very likely" to receive a vaccine (75%) compared with children of parents with some college or high school or below high school (both 51%).

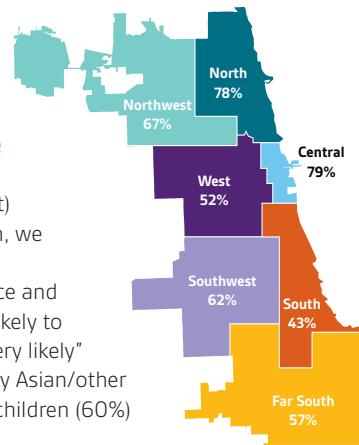
COVID-19 vaccine trends over time

We assessed vaccine trends over time by comparing data from our previous VOCHIC Parent Panel Surveys. In Survey 1 (May–July 2020), 48% of children were very likely to be vaccinated.³ In Survey 2 (Nov. 2020–Feb. 2021), 37% of children were very likely to be vaccinated. In Survey 3 (May–July 2021), 63% of children were already vaccinated or very likely to be vaccinated. Lastly, in the current survey (Survey 4, Oct.–Nov. 2021), 61% of children were already vaccinated or very likely to be vaccinated.

Chicago parents remain concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic

Many parents still view COVID-19 as a large concern in their daily lives. We found that 50% of parents said they were very concerned about COVID-19 affecting their family, 65% of parents were either extremely or very

Figure 2. Proportion of children in each city region who have either received the COVID-19 vaccine or whose parents were "very likely" to get them vaccinated



concerned about a new variant of the coronavirus leading to a worsening of the pandemic in Chicago and 63% of parents were either extremely or very concerned that their children would get sick from a new variant of the coronavirus. In regard to their children's education, 52% were either extremely or very concerned that schools would switch to remote learning due to a worsening of the pandemic. These perspectives were evident among Chicago parents even before the Omicron surge in late 2021.

REFERENCES

- <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home/covid-dashboard.html>
- <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines>
- Davis MM, Heffernan ME, Smith TL, Bendelow A, Bhatti PK, Casale M. Chicago Parents' Intentions to Vaccinate their Children Against COVID-19, *Voices of Child Health in Chicago Report*. Vol 2, Number 10. November 2020. Available at luriechildrens.org/voices.
- <https://www.luriechildrens.org/en/specialties-conditions/2019-novel-coronavirus-ncov/vaccine/>
- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Ask-the-Pediatrician-COVID-19-Round-Up.aspx>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

This report is based on data from the Voices of Child Health in Chicago Parent Panel Survey. The survey is administered to a sample of Chicago parents by Lurie Children's and NORC at the University of Chicago via internet and telephone. The survey is administered to the same panel of parents three times each year. The data in this report was collected from October through November 2021. The sample consisted of 1,142 Chicago parents, step-parents, or guardians who had at least one child under 18 years of age in the household (referred to as "parents" in this report). Parents were from all 77 community areas in Chicago. The survey completion rate was 25.4% and the cumulative survey response rate was 1.8%. All analyses were conducted with statistical weighting so that the results are representative of the parent population in the City of Chicago during the time period of data collection. For more information about the VOCHIC Parent Panel Survey, visit luriechildrens.org/ParentPanel and our page on Open Science Framework at <https://osf.io/cjz82/>.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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Resources for Parents about COVID-19 Vaccines
[Lurie Children's COVID-19 Vaccine Information⁴](https://luriechildrens.org/voices)
[American Academy of Pediatrics: Healthy Children COVID-19 Vaccine Information⁵](https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-topics/immunizations-and-vaccines/Pages/Healthy-Children-COVID-19-Vaccine-Information.aspx)
[CDC COVID-19 Vaccines⁶](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html)

NOTE: Survey 1 and 2 asked parents about their likelihood of vaccinating their child/children against COVID-19 at the household level, and responses were applied to each child in the household. Response options were: very likely, somewhat likely, not likely and not sure. Surveys 3 and 4 asked about this at the child level, with response options updated with updated vaccine authorizations. Response options were: very likely, somewhat likely, not likely, and already vaccinated.