

**Joint Statement on the Secretary of Health and Human Services' Decision to Remove COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations for Healthy Children and Pregnant Women**

As organizations committed to protecting the health of all Americans through access to vaccines, we are concerned by the announcement made last week by Secretary Kennedy to eliminate the recommendation for COVID-19 vaccination for healthy children and healthy pregnant women. While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the recommended immunization schedule on Thursday and included shared clinical decision making between clinicians and families for children, there is no recommendation for pregnant women. The implications are serious: without the official recommendation for routine use, the announcement has created uncertainty about insurance coverage and payment for COVID-19 vaccines, potentially impacting affordability and making it less accessible for many families.

Secretary Kennedy previously assured the public that he would not take away vaccines. Last week's action does exactly that – limiting access to a potentially life-saving intervention and removing the ability of millions of families to make informed decisions about how best to protect themselves and their loved ones. This decision was made without input from the public or the scientific community and one month before the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) was scheduled to vote on updated COVID-19 vaccine recommendations.

This action sets a troubling precedent, undermining the established vaccine recommendation process, excluding expert and public input, and casting doubt on the transparency and scientific integrity of future immunization policy decisions. It raises the possibility that access to other routine vaccines could similarly be restricted at the discretion of the Secretary, without expert input or scientific justification.

The implications of this policy shift also remain unclear. The lack of information about implementation timelines, impacts on programs like Vaccines for Children, and inconsistencies with recent FDA guidance – particularly regarding the well-documented COVID-19 risks during pregnancy – will create confusion among families and healthcare providers.

We urge the Department of Health and Human Services to immediately clarify its position committing to a transparent, science-driven process that includes input from public health experts and the families these decisions affect.

Alliance for Aging Research  
Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Lung Association  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Caregiver Action Network  
Cervivor, Inc.

Families Fighting Flu  
Gerontological Society of America  
Global Coalition on Aging  
HealthyWomen  
Immunize.org  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
March of Dimes  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Consumers League  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
National Medical Association  
National Minority Quality Forum  
NTM Info & Research, Inc.  
Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease  
Partnership to Fight Infectious Disease  
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society  
SAFE Communities Coalition  
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
STChealth  
Vaccinate Your Family  
VAX 2 STOP CANCER