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## Childhood Vaccinations Are Seen as Important, but Parental Worries Persist

Nearly all Americans (97 percent) think that it is somewhat or very important for all children to receive vaccinations according to the results of a new Harris Interactive poll of 2,093 adults conducted online between August 18 and 20, 2004 for the Wall Street Journal Online's Health Industry Edition.

Three of four adults (77 percent) also believe that while nearly half of all children in the U.S. are vaccinated today, it is not good enough to offer protection to all children.

Even though Americans believe in the importance of vaccinating children, they also have concerns; and these concerns are greater for parents than they are for the general public. Thirty-eight percent of all adults vs. 46 percent of parents are somewhat or very concerned about the short-term side effects of vaccinations such as fever, nausea or pain at the injection site. Somewhat larger proportions (43% of adults vs. 53% of parents) are concerned that a child might get the disease for which the vaccination is intended to provide protection. Likewise, parents are somewhat more concerned than adults in general about the likelihood that a child might develop a long-term serious medical condition as a result of the vaccination (43% of adults vs. 52% of parents).

One in ten parents feels uncomfortable vaccinating his or her children because of health concerns. By contrast, only a small minority (one percent) feels uncomfortable vaccinating their children for religious or moral reasons.

"Nearly all parents believe that childhood vaccinations are important and under used," says Katherine Binns, senior vice president of health care at Harris Interactive. "That said, many also have safety concerns, and a sizable minority is uncomfortable having their children vaccinated. Ultimately these qualms will continue to challenge the public health community as it seeks to increase the prevalence of childhood vaccinations."

# Health Care Poll

**TABLE 1**

**Importance Of Childhood Vaccinations**

“How important do you think it is that all children receive vaccinations?”

Base: All adults

	All Adults	Parents
	%	%
<b>Very/Somewhat important</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>96</b>
Very important	91	89
Somewhat important	6	7
<b>Not very/Not at all important</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Not very important	1	1
Not at all important	1	1
Not sure	1	2

**TABLE 2**

**Adequacy Of Current Vaccination Rates**

“About half of all children in the U.S. are vaccinated today, do you think that is good enough to offer protection to all children, or not?”

Base: All adults

	All Adults	Parents
	%	%
Yes, good enough	15	20
Not good enough	77	76
Not sure	8	5

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 3**

**Concerns About Vaccinations**

“Many adults and parents have concerns about childhood vaccinations. To what extent are you concerned about...?”

Base: All adults

		Very Concerned/ Somewhat Concerned		Not Very/ Not at All Concerned	
		All Adults	Parents	All Adults	Parents
Short-term side effects such as fever, nausea or pain at the injection site	%	38	46	60	54
Getting the disease which the vaccination is intended to provide protection	%	43	53	54	47
Developing a long-term serious medical condition as a result of the vaccination	%	43	52	54	46

Note: Multiple response question.

# Health Care Poll

**TABLE 4**

**Parent Discomfort With Vaccinations**

“Some parents don’t feel comfortable having their children vaccinated for a variety of reasons, including health reasons and religious/moral reasons. Are you personally uncomfortable having your child/children vaccinated for either of these reasons, or not?”

Base: Parents of pre-school or school-aged children under age 18.

	All Parents	Father	Mother
	%	%	%
Uncomfortable having child/children vaccinated for:			
Health reasons	10	14	8
Religious or moral reasons	1	3	*
Both health and religious or moral reasons	1	2	*
For any of the reasons listed above	13	18	9
Not uncomfortable for either reason	87	82	91

\* = Less than 0.5%.

Downloadable PDFs of Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Polls are posted at [http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters\\_wsj.asp](http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_wsj.asp).

**Methodology**

Harris Interactive conducted this online study between August 18 and 20, 2004. A nationwide sample of 2,093 U.S. adults (age 18+), of whom 461 are parents of pre-school or school-aged children under the age of 18 were surveyed. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, income and region were weighted where necessary to align with population proportions. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

In theory, with probability samples of this size, one could say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3 percentage points (for the overall sample). Statistical precision for the parent sample results is plus or minus 7 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population of parents with pre-school or school-aged children under the age of 18 had been polled with complete accuracy. This online sample was not a probability sample.

*These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.*

**About the Survey**

The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll is an exclusive poll that is published in the award-winning Health Industry Edition of The Wall Street Journal Online at [www.wsj.com/health](http://www.wsj.com/health).



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# Health Care Poll

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## About The Wall Street Journal Online

The Wall Street Journal Online at WSJ.com, published by Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; www.dowjones.com), offers authoritative analysis, breaking news and commentary from top industry journalists. Launched in 1996, the Online Journal is the largest paid subscription news site on the Web, with more than 689,000 subscribers world-wide. The Online Journal provides in-depth business news and financial information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with insight and analysis, including breaking business and technology news and analysis from around the world. It draws on the Dow Jones network of more than 1,500 reporters and editors – the largest staff of business and financial journalists in the world. For the second consecutive year in 2003, the Online Journal received a WebAward for the “Best Newspaper Web Site” and was also cited by Yahoo! Internet Life magazine as the “Best Business News” site (2002 & 2001).

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## About Harris Interactive

**Harris Interactive** (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*<sup>®</sup>, and for pioneering the Internet method to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Headquartered in Rochester, New York, Harris Interactive combines proprietary methodologies and technology with expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. The Company conducts international research from its U.S. offices and through wholly owned subsidiaries—London-based **HI Europe** (www.hieurope.com), Paris-based **Novatris** and Tokyo-based **Harris Interactive Japan**—as well as through the Harris Interactive Global Network of independent market- and opinion-research firms. *EOE M/F/D/V*

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