

As the polio outbreak response progresses in your country, you may encounter parents who question the value of the vaccination and have doubts about whether they should vaccinate their children. In some cases, parents could start refusing the vaccination due to multiple campaign rounds, rumors regarding side effects or other social or cultural reasons.

When you see cases of refusals in the community, please, stress to the caregivers the following key issues:

- It takes **multiple doses** of the polio vaccine **to achieve full immunization** against polio. Every additional dose during the National or Subnational Immunization Days (NID/SNID) means your child gets additional protection against polio.
- **Polio vaccine is safe**, effective and has no side effects.
- As long as a **single child remains unprotected children are at risk** of contracting polio.
- Even **if a child is sick, he or she should still receive polio vaccine**. Polio vaccine will not make sickness worse.
- **Polio vaccine is safe for newborn**, even if they are born a few hours ago. **The younger the child, the higher is the risk** of getting the virus and develop poliomyelitis.
- **All children under the age of 5 years, should be vaccinated during every campaign**, every time even if they have completed all their routine immunization.
- Completing the routine immunization schedule is the **best protection for every child** on the longer term.

Vaccines are safe!

- The polio vaccine is **safe, effective, and has no side effects** and according to international standards, and is the same polio vaccine used all around the world.
- **All vaccines are monitored** throughout the process of manufacturing, shipping, storing, and administering.
- **The polio vaccine is one of the safest vaccines** and millions of doses have been administered throughout the world and have **saved millions of children**.
- Oral polio vaccine (**OPV**) has a **unique ability to stop person-to-person spread of the virus**. Therefore, OPV is used in outbreak settings, to rapidly stop circulation of the virus in a community. Injectable vaccine (IPV) can only protect the receiving child.
- **Management and safety of the polio vaccine is closely monitored** by UNICEF and WHO.

**REMEMBER! CAREGIVERS TRUST YOU
& TRUST IS AS PRECIOUS AS HEALTH IS.**

HEALTH PROVIDERS FACT SHEET

As a health worker you play a critical role in encouraging caregiver to vaccinate their children against polio and other vaccine preventable diseases and reassuring them of the quality and efficacy of the vaccine.

Caregivers trust you and trust the health of their child to you. What you communicate and most importantly how you communicate will probably impact caregiver's decision to vaccinate.

Caregivers might have concerns about vaccination, they often have incomplete and inaccurate information, if any information at all. **It is your duty to counsel parents who are against vaccination** (reject or hesitant). **You should provide them with accurate and factual information**, be attentive and **answer all their questions**, this will help to change their minds and ultimately **vaccinate their children**.



Educate every caregiver about vaccine and immunization. Give a very accurate and complete information. Encourage mother to share her concern and answer her questions as much as you can. Be patient and attentive. Build mother's confidence in vaccine and vaccination.

The following information will help you communicate important information about polio vaccination and vaccine:

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- › The current polio outbreak needs to be contained quickly otherwise it can **paralyze more children** or infect or spread to neighbouring areas.
- › The polio virus **spreads because there are unimmunized children** in our country.
- › **One infected child** can put more than **two hundred children around at risk**.
- › **Success** in vaccination programs **depends on a high vaccination coverage** rate. This directly protects the vaccinated individuals and indirectly boosts the immunity of the entire community by providing herd immunity thereby reducing the transmission of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs), which as you know include polio.
- › Children will need to **receive polio vaccination during every campaign**, irrespective of their previous immunization status.
- › Vaccines given during campaigns provide additional **protection for children** and will help to **eradicate polio in our country**.
- › **Giving the polio vaccine to all children at the same time during campaigns will stop the circulation of poliovirus and eradicate polio.**

Your role:

- › **Encourage** caregiver to vaccinate all eligible children during every round of polio campaign.
- › **Educate** mothers, parents, families and community about polio risk and benefits of vaccination Talk to your patients/clients and community members about protecting their children against polio
- › **Appreciate and give approval** when mothers/caregivers decide to vaccinate or already vaccinated children
- › **Explain** to caregivers and community members that polio infection will be stopped only if all eligible children in their community are immunised – receive multiple doses of polio vaccine, necessary to build immunity.
- › **Inform** caregivers and families of the date of vaccination campaign and request them to vaccinate their children.
- › **Advise** your patients/clients and community members who have children of immunization age to get them vaccinated during the upcoming vaccination campaigns and every campaign to boost community immunity.
- › **Forewarn** that repeated campaigns are likely to happen and recognise the disruption it may cause; explain the necessity for multiple campaigns and encourage caretakers to talk to other caretakers in their neighbourhood and their family.