

Vaccines MINA-Lot: Key Findings from SMFM's Maternal Immunization Needs Assessment Project

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Introduction

- Maternal immunization is an effective way to reduce maternal, fetal, and infant complications from vaccine-preventable diseases. However, with declining vaccination rates and pillars of public health under threat, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) recognized a need to understand the U.S. maternal immunization landscape in 2025.
- SMFM conducted the Maternal Immunization Needs Assessment (MINA) project to identify gaps and create an action plan to preserve and improve vaccine acceptance, uptake, and access in pregnancy.

Methods

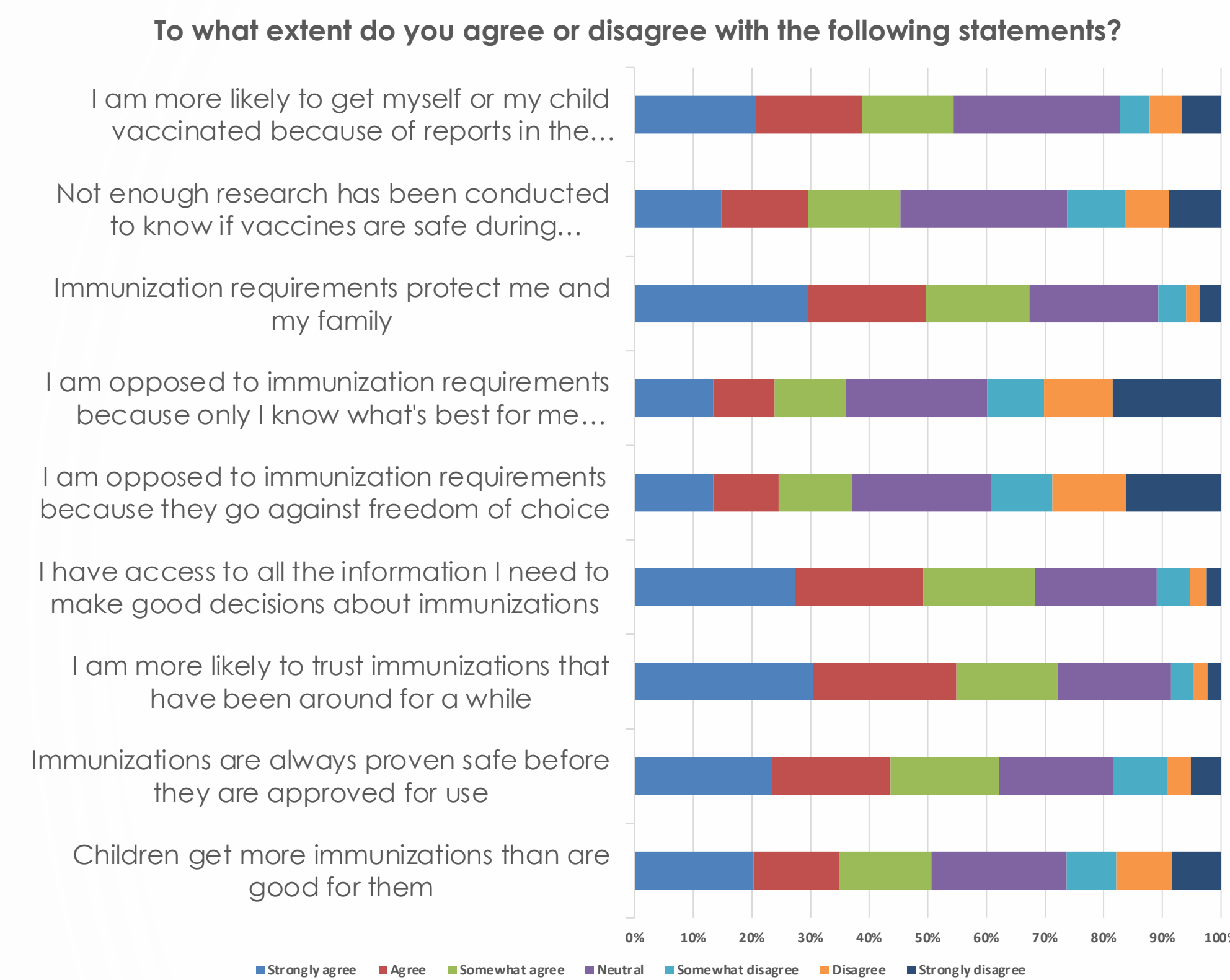
The objectives of the MINA project were to identify challenges, needs, and potential opportunities related to maternal immunization in the U.S.

The needs assessment included five components:

- Literature Review:** A literature search using PubMed Medline and Evidence-Based Medicine was limited to articles in English and published between 2015-2025. The searches were guided by PICOT-framed questions. A total of 146 articles were identified; 92 were reviewed and synthesized.
- Environmental Scan:** Three key data sources were utilized: existing messaging related to maternal and infant immunization; digital listening for online conversations pertaining to maternal vaccination; and a summary of key findings from previous research on pregnancy-related risk perception, vaccine knowledge gaps, and communication behaviors.
- Patient Survey:** A survey of 1,502 women of childbearing age (18-40 years) was fielded online in English and Spanish from January 20 to February 4, 2026. Quotas were set based on Census data to ensure final participants mirrored U.S. demographics for women ages 18 to 40.
- Focus Groups:** From October 2025 to January 2026, 17 focus groups were conducted with clinician, public health, and payer stakeholders from 26 liaison organizations.
- Roundtable:** SMFM facilitated a roundtable with staff, MINA steering committee members, and representatives from 12 liaison organizations to discuss the current landscape around maternal immunization, strategies to address gaps, and a shared vision for the future. Participants engaged in multiple small-group discussions and a post-meeting survey to rank prioritized action areas.

Findings

Vaccine Beliefs



Effective Communication and Behavioral Strategies



Digital Listening Across Social Media Platforms and Pregnancy Information Websites for Discussions Regarding Maternal Vaccination

Platform	Institution	General Public	Post Sentiment			Pro vs. Anti-vaccine		Fact, opinion, or personal experience		
			Positive	Negative	Neutral	Pro-vaccine	Anti-vaccine	Presented as a fact	Opinion	Personal experience
Facebook (n = 68)	32	45	2	5	61	26	13	40	18	11
Instagram (n = 56)	9	47	21	26	9	27	28	47	13	8
YouTube (n = 54)	31	23	35	4	16	49	5	54	1	2
Reddit (n = 17)	NA	NA	9	9	15	13	8	7	14	14
TikTok (n = 60)	1	59	10	5	44	52	10	38	9	28
Threads (n = 60)	4	56	21	24	17	34	15	22	15	29
Bluesky (n = 42)	13	29	3	13	26	40	0	33	5	5
Twitter (n = 59)	28	29	6	13	40	33	20	50	7	5
Baby Center (n = 15)	NA	NA	15	1	20	19	10	5	19	20
The Bump (n = 5)	NA	NA	2	2	3	5	0	1	4	5

Key Themes from Focus Groups



Conclusion

- Guided by the information gathered through the literature review, environmental scan, patient survey, and focus groups, roundtable participants identified high-priority areas and potential strategies to address gaps in maternal immunization. The following themes emerged:
- Creating a unified message:** Convene professional medical societies to align on recommendations and messaging related to maternal and infant immunizations. Additionally, engage trusted messengers.
- Supporting collaboration across the board:** Interdisciplinary collaboration to broaden reach. Examples of potential partners are health economists, doulas, and community health workers.
- Leveraging existing tools to increase access:** Consider replicating existing models, such as Vaccines for Children, and expanding to pregnant people. Equip policymakers with data to support maternal vaccination.
- Expanding research and advancing vaccine technology:** Prioritize inclusion of pregnant people in research and advance basic science research on maternal vaccination.
- Following the discussions from the roundtable, participants were asked to complete a survey to rank priority action areas for future maternal immunization efforts. Priority items were organized by three themes: collaborating and protecting vaccine access, communication and education, and opportunities for easy wins.

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