

## **Vaccine Champions: Who are They and What They Do**

**Defining Champions:** In this project, Vaccine Champions are individuals who understand, support and advocate for the use of recommended immunizations to prevent serious infections and other diseases in babies and children. Vaccine Champions are able to describe why vaccines are important, how vaccines benefit patients and what parents should consider when seeking vaccinations. Champions bring objective balance and trusted information to their vaccine discussions with patients so patients can objectively consider the risks and benefits of immunization. Vaccine Champions are equipped with knowledge that allows them to answer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

**Characteristics of a Champion:** Depending on their workplace or neighborhood situation, Vaccine Champions have potential for interacting with a wide range of persons. In community settings, Vaccine Champions may have a variety of backgrounds and a healthcare background or specialized training is *not* required. A Vaccine Champion, after training, will be well-versed on the most recent recommendations for each vaccine and understands the rationale for these recommendations so they can explain the importance of vaccines to others. For this reason, a Vaccine Champion becomes the “go to” expert in the community when parents or family members have questions about infant and childhood vaccines.

**Where Vaccine Champions Provide Service:** Vaccine Champions may be present to discuss vaccination anywhere that individuals or groups of residents are present. In the community, Vaccine Champions will typically interact with parents or families in faith-based organizations, community centers or other locations in the community with parents or families gather. In the context of a clinic or vaccination clinic, Vaccine Champions may interact with parents while they are in the waiting room of a clinic and they may also respond to questions about vaccines via telephone or other electronic means.

**Specialized Training of Vaccine Champions:** Vaccine Champions will be beneficiaries of expert instruction (both self-study and small group discussions) that is provided by experts in vaccines, infectious diseases and public health. Vaccine Champions will complete modular training that focuses on recommended routine infant and children’s vaccines. Through their training, Vaccine Champions will understand the rationale for these vaccines, what vaccines are available, how each vaccine is given and what potential adverse events to watch for following vaccine administration.

**How We Evaluate Vaccine Champions:** Vaccine champions will be evaluated at multiple time points during their work. First, following completion of their initial vaccine expert training, each champion will complete a post-test to assess their knowledge of vaccines. Second, vaccine champions will maintain a logbook of parents with whom they interact as it relates to vaccines and their use. The combination of these evaluations will constitute the basis for a report that is provided to each vaccine champion to help them deliver improved vaccine education to members of the community.