

**Title:** SAVE: An avenue for medical student involvement in community vaccination education

Co-authors: Karen Lehan and Sarah Pietruszka

**Background:** Rising fears over the safety and efficacy of childhood vaccines coupled with the perception of an overwhelming vaccination schedule may influence a new parent's decision to vaccinate their child.

**Methods:** Student Advocates for Vaccine Education, or SAVE, is a group of Creighton University School of Medicine students dedicated to counteracting the tide of vaccine misinformation through student advocacy and community education. Parents enrolled in prenatal classes in Omaha metro CHI hospitals are provided with brief educational presentations via PowerPoint by SAVE members on risks, benefits, and myths of vaccines. Nearly 30 students have presented to approximately 360 parents since SAVE's inception 2 years ago.

**Discussion:** Vaccines are critical to pediatric public health, and interventions to improve vaccination rates have been studied across the nation. However, parental engagement at the level of prenatal classes is a novel way to reach out to parents and may be a parent's first exposure to vaccination education. Involving medical school students in the presentations provides students the opportunity to form connections with their community and prepares them for future difficult discussions with patients.

**Conclusion:** Student Advocates for Vaccine Education is an evolving group of medical students that hopes to positively impact the community by providing new parents at prenatal classes the information necessary to make informed decisions about their child's vaccinations. Future plans for SAVE include 1.) a short survey given to parents at the end of each education session to assess the effectiveness of this antepartum intervention and 2.) extension of SAVE to other medical schools around the nation.