Letter from the Executive Director

In early 2018 as measles cases reached record levels, Vaccinate Your Family (VYF) went into high gear doing what we do best — reaching out to our contacts in the media, fielding dozens of stories, putting out the facts on social media, and helping to formulate a Senate HELP Hearing on the outbreaks and their root cause, disinformation about vaccines. Ending the outbreaks and overcoming hesitancy required coordination with our local partners, who were the key to stopping measles and disinformation its tracks.

Our annual State of the ImmUnion report highlighted the cracks in our public health infrastructure and offered sage advice to our elected leaders regarding challenges in childhood vaccinations, disparities among adults, much needed vaccine funding, and legislative fixes to bring equity in coverage to people of all ages.

Sharing the facts on social media and online remained at the forefront of our educational endeavors. In addition to our ongoing educational offerings, we launched a new video series with the Vaccine Mom on our Shot of Prevention blog and shared them on our YouTube, Instagram and Facebook pages. Heeding the advice of researchers regarding the power of story-telling to encourage good health choices, VYF filmed five individuals about the impact of VPDs on their families in order to encourage others to make the choice to vaccinate on time. In June VYF accompanied the advocates to the halls of Congress where we filmed them as they prepared to meet their own representatives. Our entire team celebrated alongside these amazing advocates on the steps of the Capitol, as this effort was the culmination of years of research and planning to ensure the greatest possible impact.

In August the VYF team lost our beloved coworker and friend Richard, who passed away suddenly at his home in D.C. The loss impacted our team deeply, as Rich was dear to us professionally, but most importantly as a friend. The support from our partners throughout the nation kept our spirits up, as letters, calls and donations in his honor were received along with testimonials about his passion for the cause of immunizations and LGBTQ equality. As we entered the fall, we strived even harder to achieve our goals to honor Rich’s memory.

We focused our efforts on eliminating disparities in vaccination coverage and breaking down barriers to access by developing several programs for the pregnant women and mothers served by WIC. We continued to support our state partners by developing resources to support pro-vaccine policies and counter misinformation targeting legislators and the public.

We have many challenges ahead. Working together with our partners throughout the nation, we will achieve our vision of a world where families no longer suffer the devastating consequences of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Amy Pisani, Executive Director
Vaccinate Your Family
In Memoriam

Rich Greenaway
(1958-2019)

Rich Greenaway served as the Director of Operations and Special Programs from 2000 until his passing in 2019. He was truly dedicated to the mission of our organization and is missed by all.
Responding to the 2019 Measles Outbreaks

During the U.S. measles outbreaks, Vaccinate Your Family (VYF) responded by sharing science-based information and advocating for sound public health policies.

More than 1,200 cases of measles were reported in the U.S. in 2019 — the greatest number of cases since 1992. In response, VYF:

- Worked with Congressional staff to organize committee hearings in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives regarding the measles outbreaks and vaccine disinformation.
- Updated the VYF website with current information about the measles outbreaks and CDC messaging.
- Published an op-ed in USA Today, written by VYF Co-Founder Rosalynn Carter, about vaccine disinformation.
- Created new graphics and posts to share up-to-date information with the public and partners regarding measles through our social media pages.
- Organized a joint letter from immunization stakeholders to Congress identifying five key policy areas federal policymakers needed to address regarding vaccination.
- Helped inform more than a dozen media stories about the dangers of measles and tactics used by anti-vaccine activists, which were featured in the following media outlets:

  - USA Today: Disinformation is the new barrier to measles vaccines, and it’s deadly: Rosalynn Carter
  - Jezebel
  - Goop
  - NBC News
  - CBS Evening News
  - Politico
  - National Journal
  - The Washington Post
Promoting Vaccination and Combating Disinformation

VYF developed new graphics and videos to help illustrate the benefits and safety of timely vaccinations.

COMMUNICATING WITH PREGNANT WOMEN

Vaccination during pregnancy can protect both moms and babies from potentially serious diseases like influenza and pertussis (also called whooping cough), yet only about one in three pregnant women in the U.S. receive recommended vaccines during pregnancy.

To encourage influenza and pertussis (Tdap) vaccination during pregnancy and to promote childhood vaccinations, VYF relied on research from the CDC, ACOG and other national partners to develop a series of messages and graphics addressing common questions and concerns that pregnant women have regarding vaccination during pregnancy.

We also launched an vaccination campaign to encourage pregnant women to visit our website for more information about maternal and childhood vaccinations.

VYF’s online ads (both static and animated) were displayed on select websites. Messages were also displayed on mobile phones while expectant parents and others in specific cities were shopping at Buy Buy Baby and Carter’s.

Examples of messages that scrolled across the bottom of the phones’ screens during our campaign included:

- Not sure what to buy? Make an easy decision. Get vaccinated during pregnancy to protect you & your baby. Learn more now.
- OB-GYNs and midwives agree. Vaccines during pregnancy are safe and effective for you and your baby. Learn which vaccines you need by tapping here.
- TFW you can’t decide on a car seat. Make an easy decision instead: Get vaccinated while pregnant to protect your new baby. Learn more.

A graphic used in VYF’s vaccination campaign
VACCINATE YOUR FAMILY WEBSITE

After launching our newly designed Vaccinate Your Family website in November 2018, VYF continuously updated the site throughout 2019 with vaccine resources, critical information about vaccination recommendations and vaccine-preventable diseases, and answers to some of the most common questions regarding vaccines and their safety.

As a World Health Organization Vaccine Safety Net certified website, VYF is mandated to maintain science-based information about vaccinations and their safety.

Shot of Prevention

Our Shot of Prevention blog continued to provide approachable information on vaccinations and vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States.

Some of our most engaging posts:
- Spotlighted the work of vaccine advocates.
- Shared advice and answers for vaccinating children on time.
- Shed light on vaccination inequities within racial demographics.

THE VACCINE MOM VIDEOS

VYF launched a new series of videos for our Shot of Prevention blog by partnering with Taryn Chapman (aka “The Vaccine Mom”). In her videos, Taryn uses her experience as a molecular biologist and mom of two to discuss the nuts and bolts of infectious diseases, immunization and vaccine safety. You can view her videos on Shotofprevention.com or by visiting VYF’s YouTube channel.
Behind the statistics that we use to explain the potential consequences of vaccine-preventable diseases are real people — families who have lost loved ones or are suffering lifelong side effects from infectious diseases that can now be prevented through timely vaccinations like measles, flu, HPV, pertussis and meningitis. VYF captured the stories of five families personally impacted by vaccine-preventable diseases. The video series (to be formally launched in 2020) illustrates the impact preventable diseases like measles and flu can have on people of all ages in the United States. A sixth video features their journey to Washington, DC, to meet with their members of Congress and urge the public to take a stand against vaccine-preventable diseases.

In 2019, VYF’s social media accounts received:

**3.2m TOTAL IMPRESSIONS**
The total number of accounts who saw VYF content on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**207k TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS**
The number of times people clicked, liked, commented on or shared VYF messages on social media.

**↑210% INCREASE IN NET FOLLOWERS**
The net number of followers VYF gained in 2019 across all social media platforms.

SOCIAL MEDIA

With a total of 200,000+ followers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, VYF has a substantial social media presence, which we use to share science-based information about the importance of timely vaccinations and the safety of vaccines for people of all ages. Throughout the year, we created a variety of new graphics to dispel myths and direct people to our website for more information.

PERSONAL STORIES

The total number of accounts who saw VYF content on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The number of times people clicked, liked, commented on or shared VYF messages on social media.

The net number of followers VYF gained in 2019 across all social media platforms.
Educating Policymakers

VYF continued to educate policymakers on key issues related to vaccination to ensure everyone has access to and confidence in lifesaving vaccines.

Sharing science-based information about vaccines, vaccine-preventable diseases and health policies with U.S. policymakers remained a core part of our mission. To do this, VYF:

- Published our annual State of the ImmUnion report in February, warning legislators that the state of immunization in the U.S. was uncertain and that outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases were on the rise.
- Presented to various policymaker organizations, including the National Association of Latino Elected Officials and the National Governors Association.
- Drafted and co-signed letters with over 50 other public health and healthcare organizations that:
  - Requested that Congress increase funding for the CDC’s Immunization Program, fully fund the National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO), provide funds to the National Academies of Medicine for a new examination of vaccine safety, and other key recommendations to support local, state, and federal vaccination programs.
  - Urged senior administration officials to allow healthcare professionals greater access to children and adults detained in U.S. Customs and Border Protection facilities, including the administration of flu vaccines.
Eliminating Disparities

Inequality and disparities in vaccination rates still exist in the U.S. In 2019, VYF persisted in our efforts to level the playing field.

VYF maintained our long-time partnership with USDA’s Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to reach low-income pregnant women and mothers of young children. To provide up-to-date vaccination information and resources to WIC staff, VYF:

Hosted the Annual Immunization Webinar for WIC Staff

Hosted VYF’s annual Immunization Webinar for WIC Staff in collaboration with the USDA and the National WIC Association (NWA). Dr. Amanda Cohn, then Acting Chief Medical Officer for National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) within the CDC, provided the main presentation, which contained up-to-date information on childhood and maternal vaccinations.

The Immunization Webinar for WIC staff had 1,022 registrants and over 575 participants.

Some of the feedback we received from VYF’s Immunization Webinar for WIC Staff included:

Excellent overview on the importance of immunizations and resource materials.

This was an excellent webinar. I learned some things that I will be putting in to practice. I did not know about the pregnant women being able to get the Tdap and Flu vaccine any time during their pregnancy and that the need the Tdap every pregnancy.

The Webinar was very informative with a lot of resource material. A big thank you to those who put it together and presented.
Developed a Vaccine Lesson for WIC Participants

Developed an online vaccine lesson - in English and Spanish - for pregnant women and families served by WIC nationwide. This vaccine education program was developed in an effort to ensure the timely vaccination of both pregnant women and children who participate in WIC. It was done in partnership with West Michigan University with funding to VYF from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Updated and Shared VYF’s Immunization Resources for WIC

Annually updated VYF’s resources, which were developed specifically for WIC staff and participants. These resources include Immunization Resources for Parents and Parents-to-Be (available in English and Spanish) and Vaccines 101: Information for WIC Staff. These resources were shared with all Immunization Webinar registrants and are available to WIC staff through the VYF and USDA’s WIC WORKS Resource System websites.
Building Partnerships

VYF formed and strengthened relationships with immunization advocates throughout the U.S.

To build and nurture relationships with public health partners, VYF:

- Created resources for state and local immunization coalitions to support their efforts to develop evidence-based policies and messaging.
- Updated and sent out vaccine-related lesson plans for daycares and preschools, in collaboration with Young Minds Inspired (YMI).
- Provided technical support to local partners in Connecticut relaunching its statewide immunization coalition.
- Served on the Planning Committee and provided keynote as well as several breakout presentations for the National Conference for Immunization Coalitions and Partnerships in November 2019.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE

VYF presented information about vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases at the following events:

- Maternal Immunization Summit, hosted by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American Academy of Family Physicians; Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses; and American College of Nurse-Midwives
- National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit events
- Democratic Caucus event
- National Association of Latino Elected Officials Conference
- Iowa Statewide Immunization Conference
- Sioux Falls Immunization Conference
- Colorado Children’s Immunization Coalition Conference
- Montgomery County Immunization Coalition (PA) Meeting
- Association of Health Care Journalists Conference
- Geisinger Healthcare Nurses event
- AAP Policy Conference
- AIM, IAC, and NACCHO Webinars
- TED/CIVIC Vaccines Information Working Group
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses Webinar
The VYF Team

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VYF’s Board of Directors is composed of leaders in the field of immunization that comes from many fields and disciplines.

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VYF’s Scientific Advisory Board is a panel of vaccine experts we rely on to ensure the information we provide to the public is scientifically accurate.

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For a full list of our funding sources, please visit: Vaccinateyourfamily.org/about-us/funding