

People can't be educated into vaccinations, but behavioral nudges help, study finds

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Vaccines were one of the great inventions of modern history. They helped stop America's polio epidemic in the 1950s, when it was paralyzing thousands and killing at least 3,000 a year. They have prevented the deaths of millions worldwide from diseases such as diphtheria, smallpox, measles and tetanus.

And yet many people are reluctant to get their shots or vaccinate their children.

A study [published Wednesday](#) concludes that using education campaigns, and simply trying to persuade people to get the shots, is far less effective than using indirect behavioral nudges.

The reason most people don't get vaccinations for themselves or their children, the study found, isn't because they need convincing but because they perceive inconveniences or obstacles.

The new report — published in the journal *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* — draws on hundreds of studies on psychology, behavioral science and vaccinations.