

Grandparents *For* Vaccines

A storytelling movement to protect every child's tomorrow.

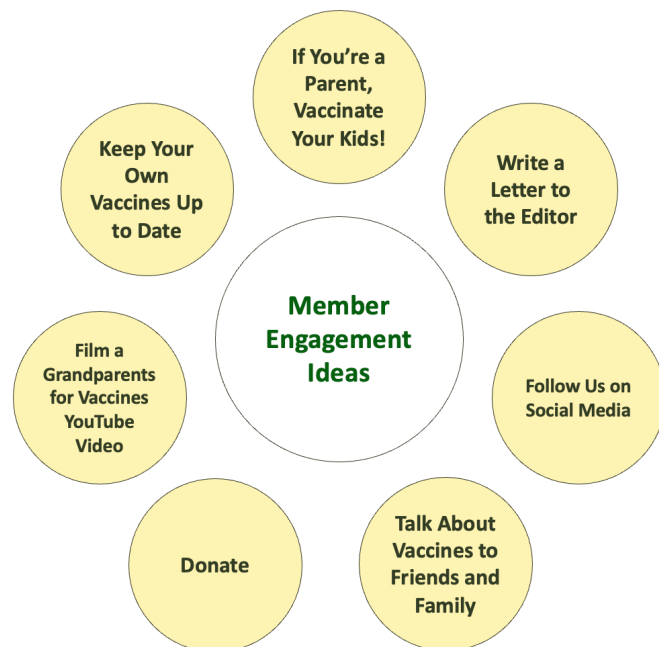
Newsletter, May 2026

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Members: Not Sure What to Do?

In speaking with members, we have learned that some you are excited about being a part of Grandparents for Vaccines but aren't quite sure what comes next.

Here are some ideas that will help you get involved. Every action you take makes a difference, and we're hoping you can check three or more items off the list this year. Not sure how to achieve some of these items? [Email us!](#)



State Leader Spotlight: Stephanie Grove Cocchini

Oregon state leader Stephanie Grove Cocchini's favorite quote is from the 17th century poet John Donne's work, Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." She read the lines during a recent interview, sharing not just her favorite quote but also the guiding ethos for her life.

"It's so relevant to public health and what we're trying to do with Grandparents for Vaccines," she said. "In today's world, where we travel and interact with so many people, we are continually impacting each other's health."

The importance of childhood vaccination hit home when Stephanie's daughter, now 22 and a recent college graduate, came down with a severe case of chickenpox in infancy. Stephanie shared the story in a Grandparents for Vaccines [video](#). Recently, she and our Virginia state leader, Kathryn Toussaint, took on an expanded role: leading orientation for new and prospective state leaders. "It's inspiring to see the different reasons people join us," she said.

"I'm not a grandparent myself, but I'm just as committed to the cause."

When asked what other members of Grandparents for Vaccines can do to help the cause, Stephanie said the answer is simple. "Share your stories. Amplify the message. People want to get involved, but don't necessarily know how. If you like us on Facebook, film a YouTube video, or just talk to your friends and family about vaccination, it makes a difference." Stephanie also points out that you don't have to be a grandparent to participate. "I'm not a grandparent myself," she said, "but I'm just as committed to the cause."

Stephanie, originally from England, majored in Philosophy in college and then spent a decade teaching in Italy, where she met her husband, Pasquale. They settled in the U.S., where she became a frequent classroom volunteer and passionate advocate for gun violence prevention and childhood vaccination. When she's not volunteering for important causes, you'll find Stephanie on the Willamette River with her dragon boat racing team. They practice three times a week and enjoy fierce but fun competitions. "It's very calming to be on the river with my teammates," she said.



Stephanie with her family and teammates

DYK (Did You Know)?

The state with the highest Kindergarten MMR vaccination rate is Connecticut, at 98.2%, while the state with the lowest rate is Idaho, with 78.5%.

Every Interaction Counts: A Conversation with Kim Boller, Executive Director

By Patricia Flynn Weitzman, New York State Leader

PFW: Please remind members why you first got involved with Grandparents for Vaccines.

KB: I came into Grandparents for Vaccines with a goal of working locally here in my community and in the state of New Jersey. I very much was looking for something to do in this moment that would have an impact on health and well-being. And Grandparents with Vaccines aligned perfectly with my goals. I am adamant about keeping children, families, and communities safe from vaccine-preventable diseases.

PFW: What do you find particularly inspiring about the mission of Grandparents for Vaccines?

KB: I am inspired by the stories themselves that volunteers are sharing. I find them incredibly moving. They touch my heart. For people to come forward out of their lives, out of time with grandchildren, to dedicate themselves to helping people cut through confusion about vaccines, that is very meaningful to me.

PFW: So, what you're saying is the altruism and the dedication of others who have stepped into this space to share their stories, to get mobilized, motivates you even more?

KB: Yes, I am touched by the people we are working with.

"We don't know what the ripple effect of one conversation might be."

PFW: Membership has exploded recently. What is the most important thing that you want members to know?

KB: The Board is committed to making this a national effort, all 50 states, and preferably all 270 media markets. We are not there yet. Each of us has our own networks to get the rest of the states on board.

PFW: What can members do right now?

I say even one interaction could make a difference. We don't know what the ripple effect of one conversation might be. We want to become a household name. If that happens, people can say wait, I can find someone locally who can talk about vaccines, who I can plug into my PTA meeting.

We are completely reliant on members and volunteers doing the work every day, whether it's being on social media, talking to others in their community, sharing this newsletter. But we don't want anyone to think that donating is not volunteering. It is volunteering.

When you make a donation, please tell your friends you've done it!



Kim Boller with her mom and daughter, celebrating inclusivity, and a [mini-collage](#) of Kim's watercolors, an art form she recently started exploring.

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It): Our feature on NBC News!

Robin Cogan, a school nurse and our NJ state leader, was featured in an [NBC News story about Grandparents for Vaccines](#). This is an important milestone in our ongoing mission to spread the word about the importance of childhood vaccination. Thank you, Robin, for your hard work on sharing the message!

End Notes: Growing Fast and the Lowdown on Hashtags

We checked the roster, and it's official: more than 1,000 new subscribers joined Grandparents for Vaccines in the last 90 days. Wow. This is a testament to the hard work of many volunteers and staffers. It's an exciting time.

For newcomers (or those who just need a reminder), below are some hashtags we use when posting content to social media. If you post or share our content, please consider using them, too:

#GrandparentsForVaccines
#VaccinesWork
#HeardImmunity
#PublicHealth
#ChildHealth
#VaccinesSaveLives