



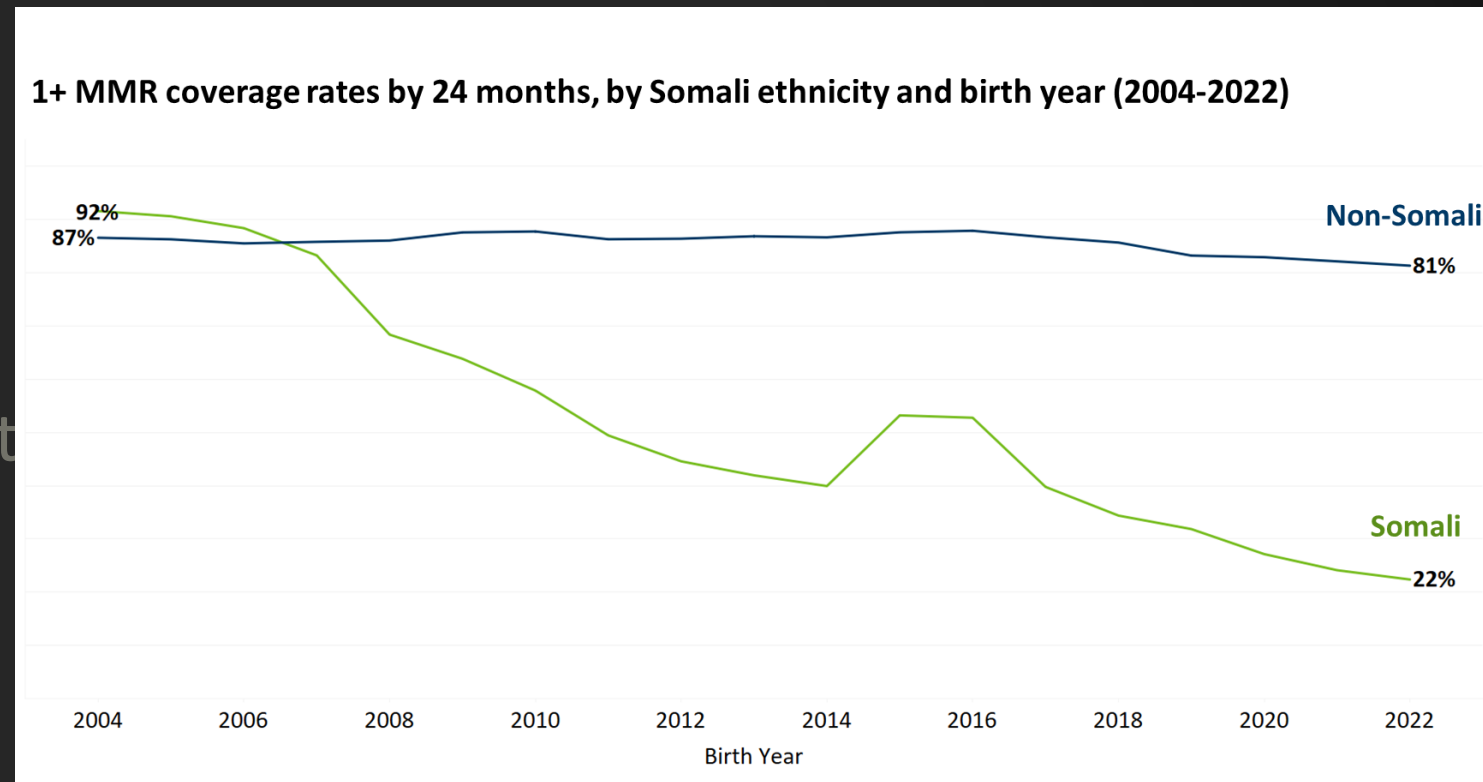
Becoming a Vaccine Advocate Training Program

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- The problem.
- What to do about it?
- How this training program came to be.
- Details about the training program.
- Evaluation results.
- Conclusions.

The problem(s) - 1

- Immunization rate gaps
- Health disparities
- Mistrust
- Misinformation/disinformation
- Funding losses



The problem(s) - 2

- Immunization rate gaps
- Health disparities
- **Mistrust**
- Misinformation/disinformation
- Funding losses



The problem(s) - 3

- Immunization rate gaps
- Health disparities
- Mistrust
- **Misinformation/disinformation**
- Funding losses



The problem(s) - 4

- Immunization rate gaps
- Health disparities
- Mistrust
- Misinformation/disinformation
- Funding losses



What should
we do?



The vaccine advocate training program goal:

To leverage partners, who already have trusted relationships with parents and families, to feel more comfortable navigating conversations about immunizations when they arise.

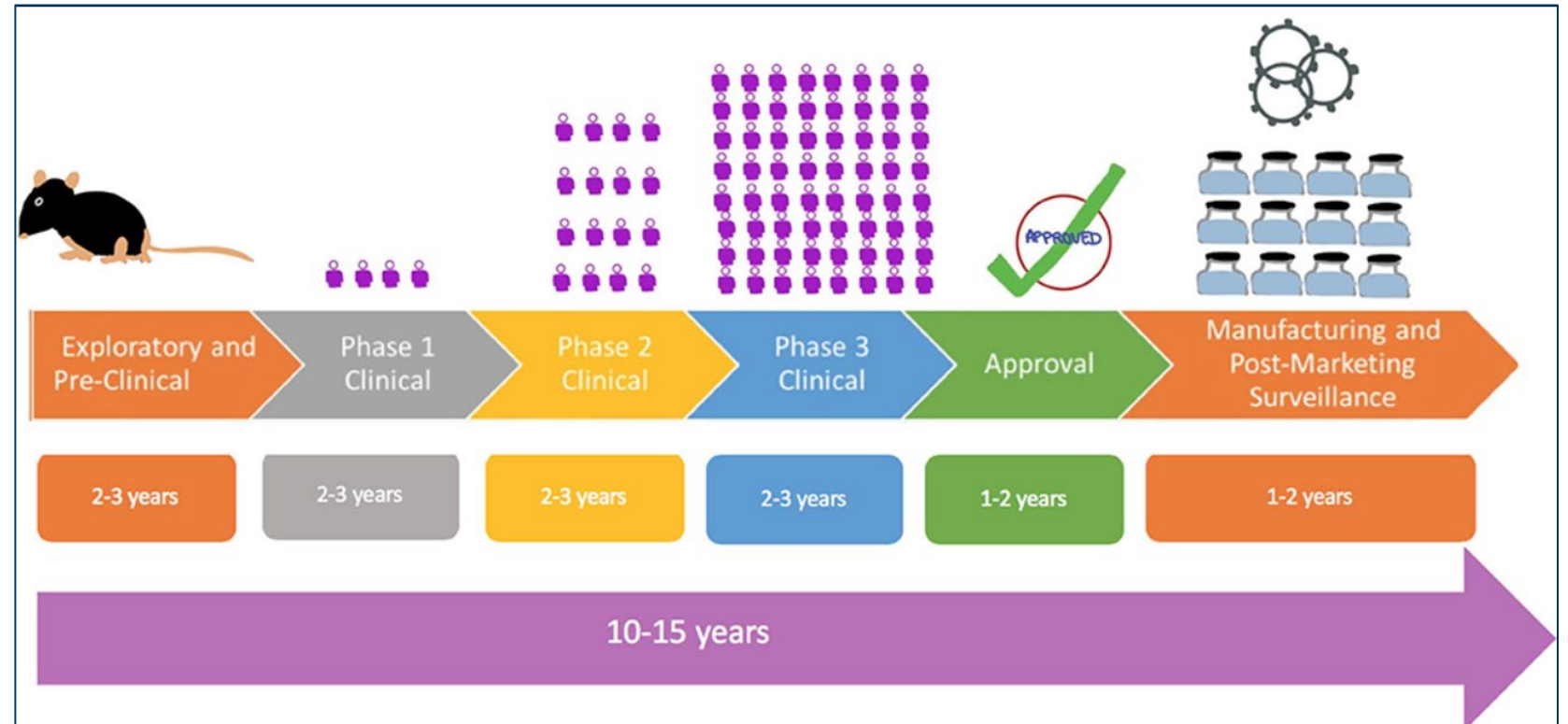
Partners we've connected with

- **Minnesota Department of Education**
- **Early childhood education and development partners**
- **Minnesota Department of Health colleagues:**
 - **Family home visiting**
 - Maternal and child health
 - **Infectious disease**
 - Primary care clinic networks
- **Community health workers**
- **Health care quality improvement partners**
- Federally-qualified health centers (FQHCs)

Content of training, part 1

Immunization 101:

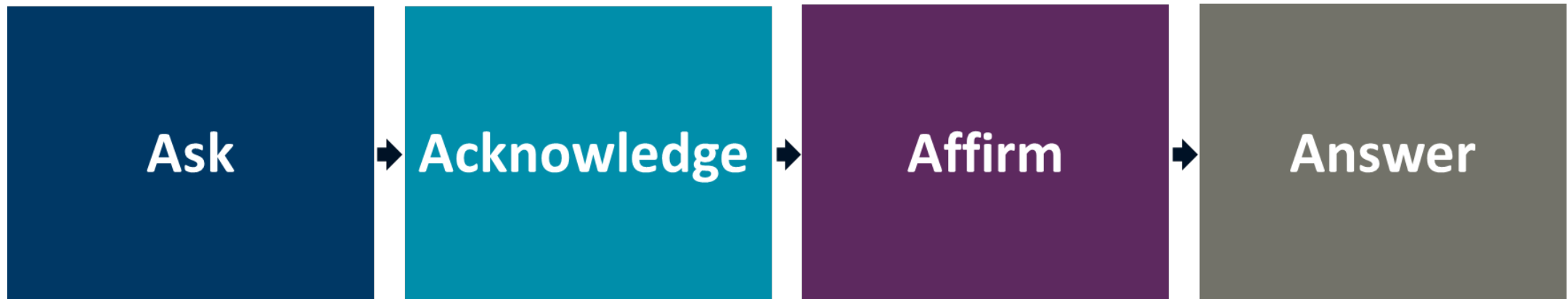
Summarize the basics of how vaccines work and how they are monitored for safety.



Content of training, part 2

Talking about vaccines and responding to questions:

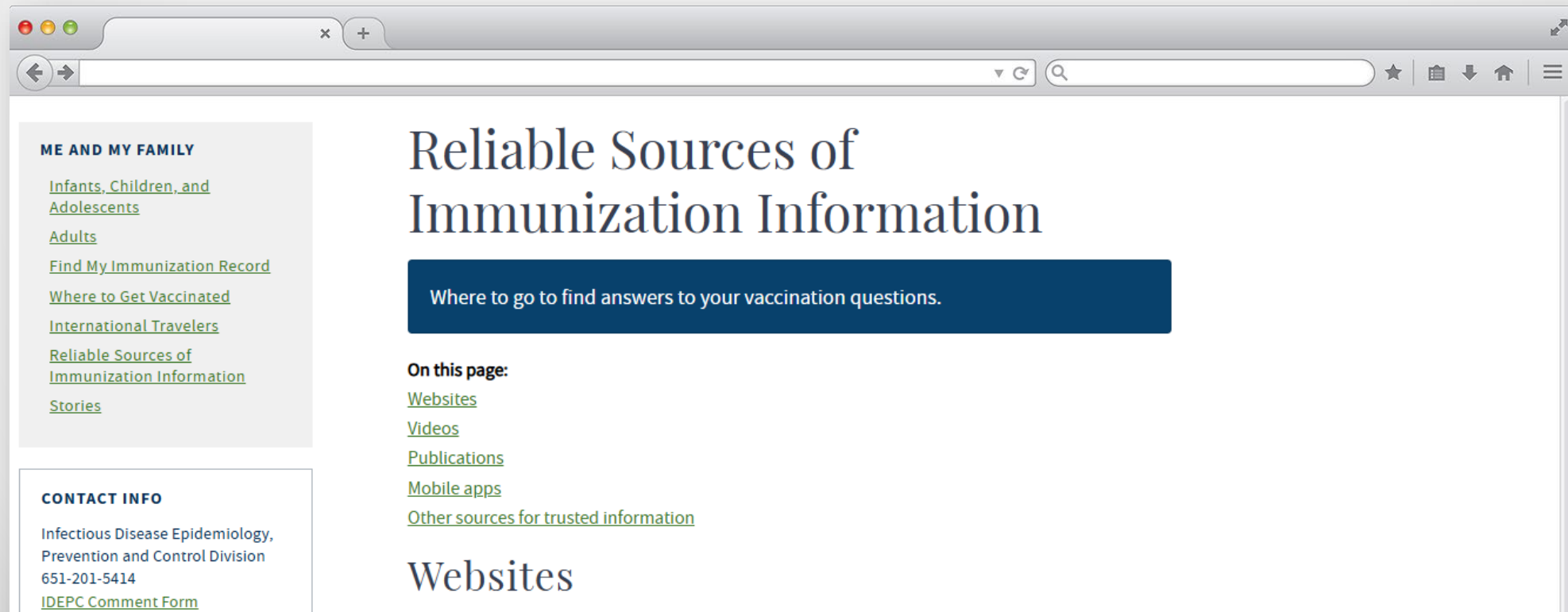
- Identify drivers of vaccine hesitancy.
- Understand how to navigate questions or concerns from families.
- Build confidence in talking to families about vaccines.



Content of training, part 3

Reliable resources:

- Identify where to locate reliable vaccine resources for families.



Vaccine advocate handbook

Be a vaccine advocate!

You don't need to be a vaccine expert to be a vaccine advocate. Letting someone know you care about them and are willing to listen to their concerns can open the door to becoming a trusted vaccine messenger. Use this evidence-based method to guide your conversation. To learn more about the 4-As, visit [Voices For Vaccines: Becoming Trusted Messengers \(www.voicesforvaccines.org/course/becoming-trusted-messengers/\)](https://www.voicesforvaccines.org/course/becoming-trusted-messengers/).

Using the 4-As

Ask	Acknowledge	Affirm	Answer
<p>When someone shares a question or concern with you, ask open-ended questions to get them to share more information about the source of their concerns and to develop trust.</p> <p>Make sure your questions are clear, neutral and relevant. Listen to learn.</p> <p><i>"Can you tell me about what you've heard or read regarding the vaccine?"</i></p>	<p>Acknowledge what they have right. People usually have some correct information about vaccines; by acknowledging that, we can lead them to a place of confidence, instead of pointing out what they have wrong.</p> <p>Say this: <i>"That's a valid point. It's great that you're so well-informed on this issue."</i></p> <p>Don't say: <i>"That's true, but actually, it's more complicated than that."</i></p>	<p>Throughout your conversation, affirm experiences and feelings of the other person so that they can trust you and feel safe enough to explore their concerns and new ideas.</p> <p>This is important for helping people feel secure enough to rethink their positions and possibly change their behaviors.</p> <p><i>"It's OK to have questions about vaccines."</i></p>	<p>Answer their questions after you have asked permission to provide information. It is important that the person with the question determines when to receive an answer.</p> <p>Asking for permission empowers them and lowers their resistance to listening to your information since the listening is happening willingly.</p> <p><i>"May I share some recent findings that could help clarify some of your concerns?"</i></p>

When you don't know the answer

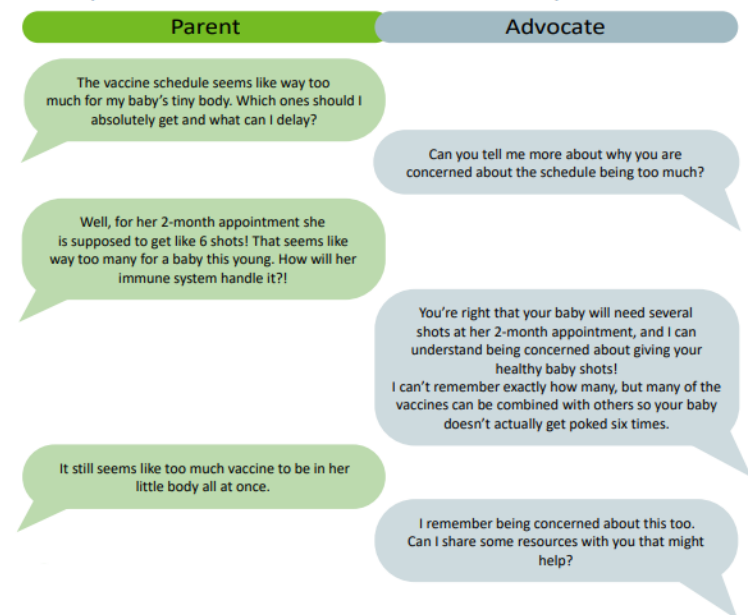
If a person brings up a concern that is brand new to you, it's OK to say that you don't know the answer. You can ask permission to look up the information and follow-up with them later, or look up an answer together. If they are open to the idea, share trusted resources. If a question is very medically detailed or specific to a person's health needs, encourage them to discuss it with their health care provider.

"Do you mind if we look at some of the evidence together? It might help us both understand this better."

Minnesota Department of Health | PO Box 64975 St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-5503 | www.health.state.mn.us/immunize
To obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-5414.
08/08/2025



Example scenario: Concern about too many vaccines



How to determine if information is reliable

Vaccine misinformation has contributed to vaccine hesitancy and confusion for people trying to make vaccine decisions for themselves and their loved ones. Here are a few tips to help you spot bad science:

1. **No obvious author:** Who wrote this?
2. **Unqualified author:** What are the author's credentials?
3. **Bias:** Does this author/organization have an agenda and why did they write it?
4. **Citations:** What sources were used in the creation of this information?
5. **Current:** Is this the latest and most up-to-date information?
6. **Lone wolf:** Is this a one-of-a-kind study that is not supported by other scientific work?

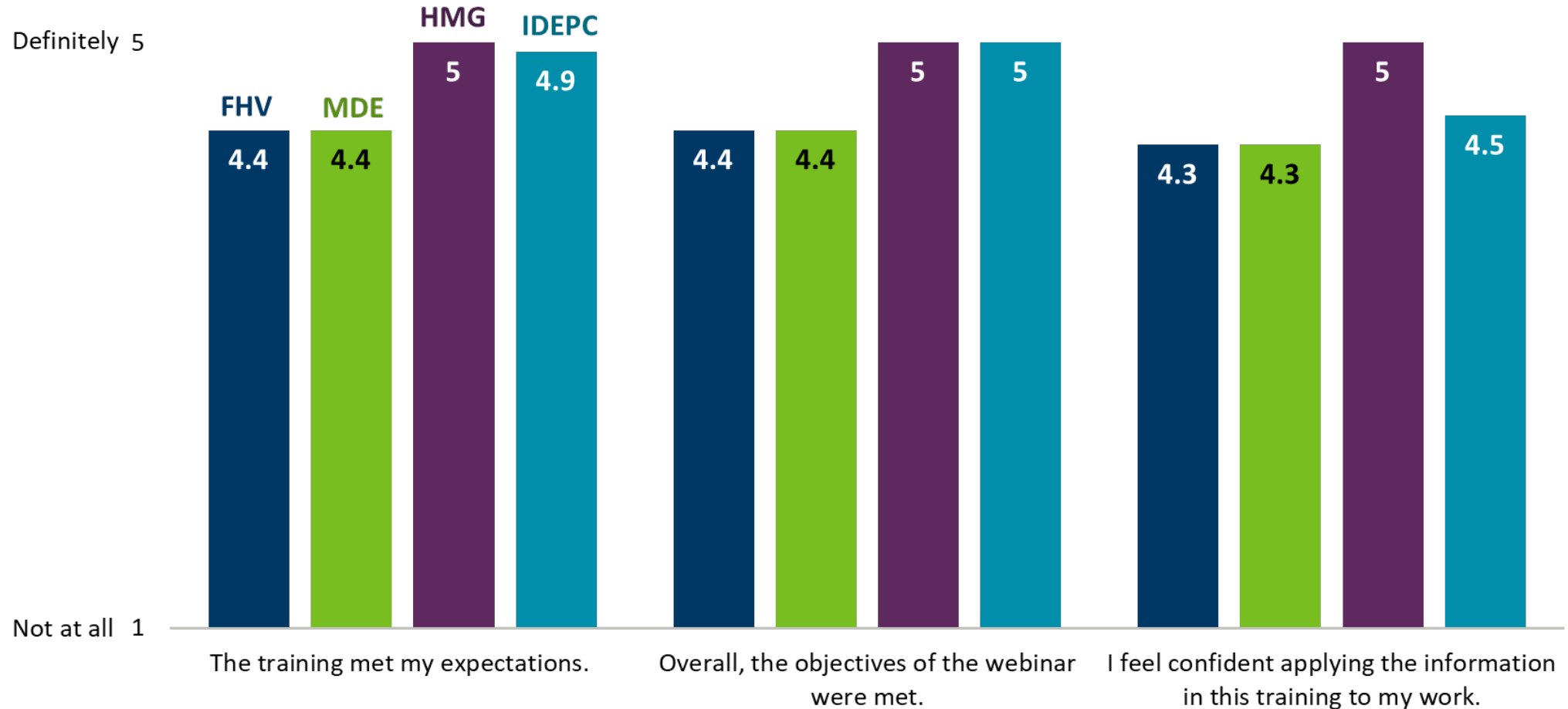
For more information and access to additional resources scan the QR code or visit [Reliable Sources of Immunization Information \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/imminfo.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/imminfo.html)



How the training happens

1. Meet with the partner ahead of time.
2. Develop the training.
3. Deliver the training.
4. Evaluate the training.

Overall, participants were very satisfied with the vaccine advocate trainings



FHV: Family Home Visiting program

MDE: Minnesota Department of Education, School Cultural Liaisons

HMG: Help Me Grow Parent Navigators

IDEPC: MDH Infectious Disease, Epidemiology, Prevention, and Control Division staff

Qualitative responses

“Absolutely awesome presentation! Love that you shared personal experiences and easy to understand language. Very empowering - thank you!”

“Great info, the scenarios were especially helpful!”

“Thank you for tailoring this training to meet the specific needs of our group and for answering questions with such professionalism and knowledge.”

“Thank you for your time and information provided to help us to advocate for all the right reasons to get vaccinated and why they are important.”

“Very helpful as a newer PHN in FHV. Especially with meeting so much resistance to immunizations from clients. Thank you!”

“I enjoyed the role play examples in talking with clients that have concerns regarding immunizations. This was very helpful.”

“Will use in my home visiting program education.”

“Very helpful, can tell the speaker was knowledgeable and passionate about this work.”

In conclusion

- Successful so far!
- Opportunity to connect with a wide variety of partners.
- Building trusted vaccines messengers is more important than ever.
- Many future trainings planned.
- Hope this can be applied in any jurisdiction!

Many future trainings planned

- Minnesota Department of Education
- **Early childhood education and development partners**
- **Minnesota Department of Health colleagues:**
 - Family home visiting
 - **Maternal and child health**
 - Infectious disease
 - **Primary care clinic networks**
- Community health workers
- Health care quality improvement partners
- **Federally-qualified health centers (FQHCs)**

A photograph of a wooden bridge spanning a river in a lush forest. The bridge is made of wooden planks and is supported by ropes and wooden posts. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding greenery. A large, semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "You can do this too!" in white. The text is centered and occupies the middle portion of the frame.

You can do this
too!

Thank you!

Carly Edson

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Thank you!



immunizationmanagers.org



@AIMimmunization



Association of Immunization
Managers



Association of
Immunization
Managers