

Case Study – Vaccinating Children



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Bioethics case study on vaccinating children.

Anwar is a five-year old child who is eligible to get a recommended COVID vaccine recently approved for children 5-11 years. He is at the pediatrician’s office with his parents. Though Anwar is perfectly compliant—with the help of a small toy he is given by the nurse—the parents have a heated exchange in the examination room. They disagree over the effectiveness and efficacy of the vaccine, but especially so about its safety. Citing something persuasive he found online about the potential adverse side-effects of COVID vaccine, Dad begs Mom to reconsider vaccination of their child. They simply disagree, having believed contradictory sources of information.

Anwar still seems willing to get jabbed but is visibly frustrated by his parents’ squabble. The clinician is torn between trying to mediate between the parents, obtain consent for vaccination from the parent who seems most reasonable (Mom), or just reschedule the appointment for a time when the parents have come to consensus—if ever.

In the meantime, a pandemic rages, placing all unvaccinated persons, including his young patient, at higher risk. What should be done?