Child Care Center Immunization Assessment
2023–2024 Wisconsin Results

Child care centers are valuable to public health because they can help prevent the spread of childhood illnesses. DHS conducts an annual immunization status assessment of licensed child care attendees to monitor and protect children against disease. The child care assessment was conducted in the spring of 2024.

The assessment counted the number of children ages 2 through 4 years attending the child care center and the number of these attendees in compliance with the Wisconsin immunization law. The results are displayed on the next two pages.

2023–24 Key takeaways

The median number of child care attendees aged 2 through 4 years was 14 (range: 1 to 332).

1,875 child care centers reported compliance results for a total of 43,459 children.

Vaccination coverage declined across all immunizations assessed in 2023–24 compared to 2022–23.

46.5% of licensed child care centers submitted a report.

There were overall increases in waivers and non-vaccination in 2023–24 compared to 2022–23.

Assessment Process

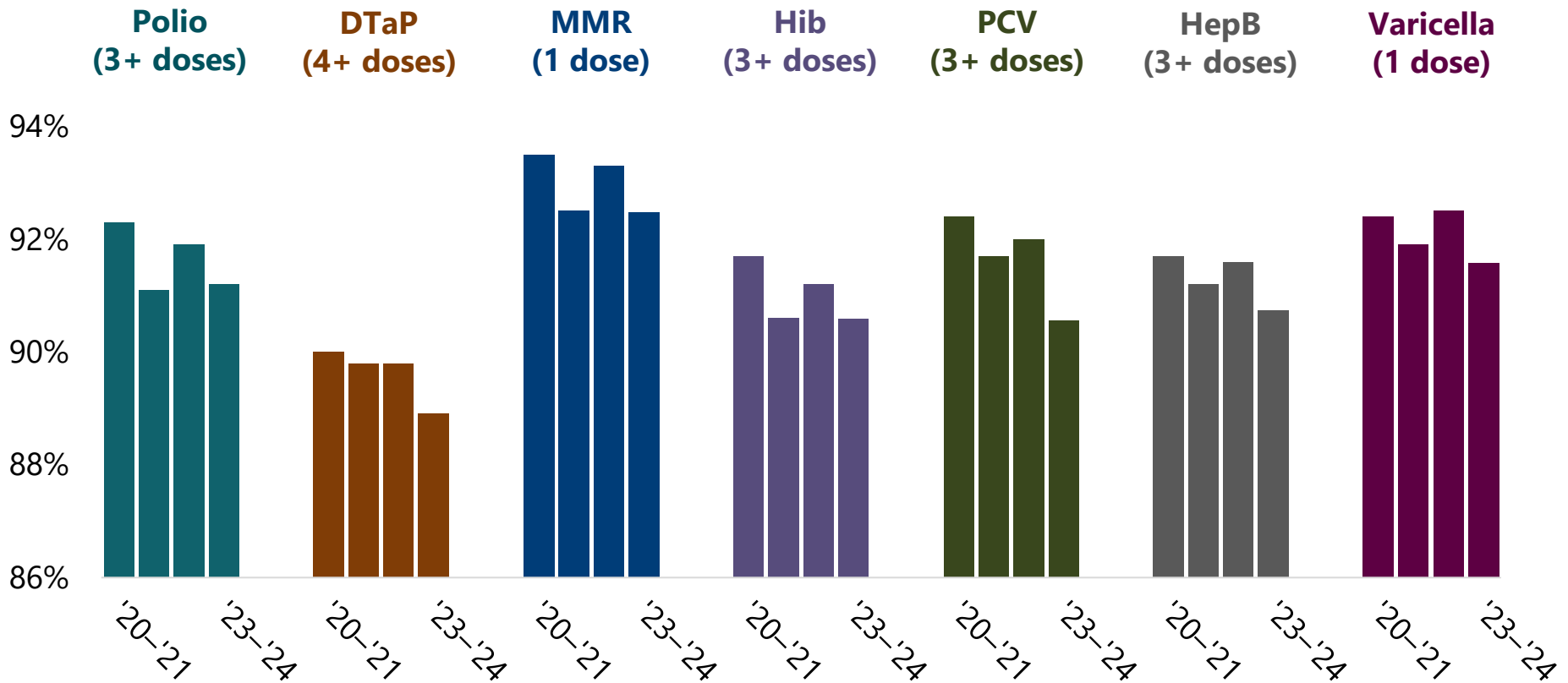DHS mails the assessment postcard and link → Child care centers complete assessment online → DHS collects and analyzes assessment results

Vaccination Coverage for 2–4-Year-Olds in Child Care Centers

The percentage of children attending licensed child care centers who received all required immunization doses declined across all seven vaccines. The vaccine/vaccine series with the largest decline was PCV, followed by DTaP and varicella.

Figure 1: Immunization coverage* of Wisconsin 2 through 4-year-olds enrolled in licensed child care centers, 2020–2021 to 2023–2024.
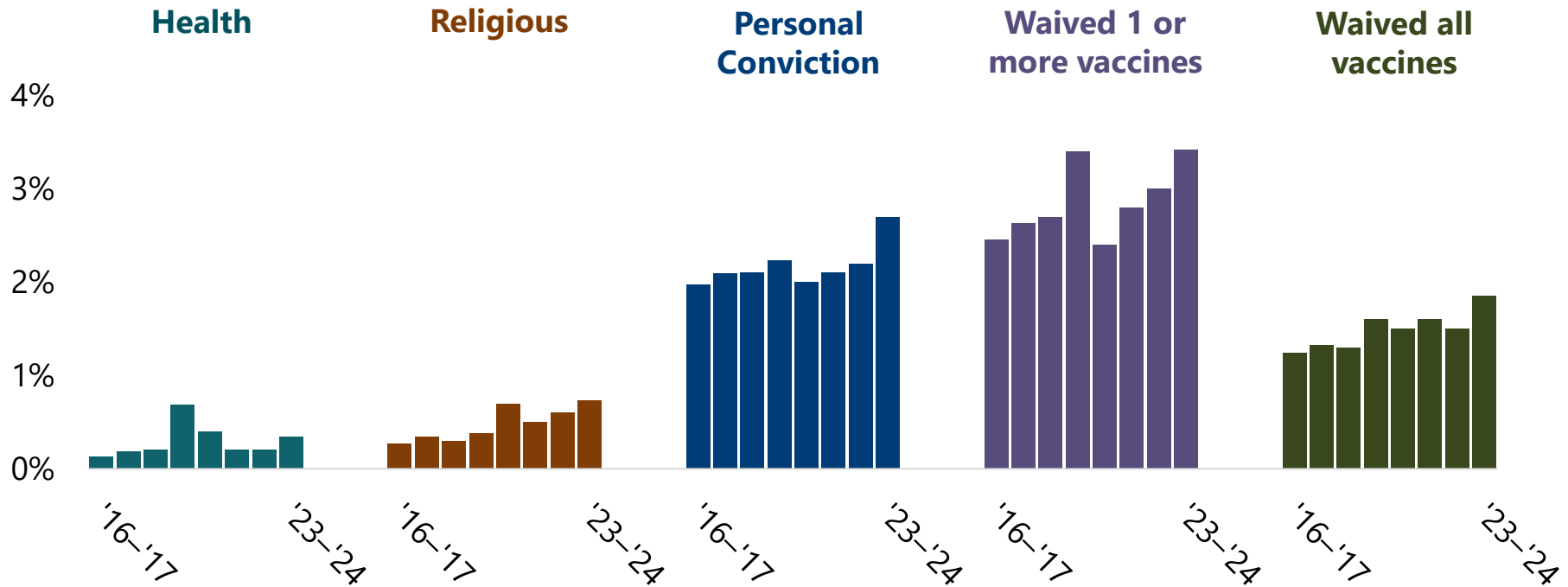

*Exact percentages reported on page 4.

Vaccination Waivers for 2-4-Year-Olds in Child Care Centers

The State of Wisconsin permits parents with children attending licensed child care centers to waive their required immunizations under health, religious, and personal conviction reasons. In 2023–24, the percentage of children with each type of waiver increased. Personal conviction was the most common type of waiver in child care centers. The percentage of children who had one or more vaccinations waived also increased, including those without any vaccinations (waived all).

Although children with waived vaccines are compliant with the law, this does not mean that they are protected against disease. Vaccination is still highly recommended for children's safety and health. More information and resources are available at DHS here.

Figure 2: Waivers* for children attending licensed child care centers, 2016–2017 to 2023–2024.

Waiver categories depicted above may not be mutually exclusive. Exact percentages reported on page 4.

Table 1: Immunization coverage of Wisconsin 2 through 4-year-olds enrolled in licensed child care centers.

Immunization Coverage	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	Change from previous year
Polio (3+ doses)	92.5%	93.3%	91.4%	93.3%	92.3%	91.1%	91.9%	91.2%	-0.6%
DTaP (4+ doses)	91.2%	91.5%	89.9%	91.5%	90.0%	89.8%	89.8%	88.9%	-0.9%
MMR (1 dose)	93.5%	93.7%	91.9%	94.3%	93.5%	92.5%	93.3%	92.5%	-0.8%
Hib (3+ doses)	92.2%	92.7%	91.0%	92.9%	91.7%	90.6%	91.2%	90.6%	-0.6%
PCV (3+ doses)	93.0%	93.1%	91.5%	94.0%	92.4%	91.7%	92.0%	90.6%	-1.4%
Hep B (3+ doses)	92.2%	93.0%	90.6%	93.3%	91.7%	91.2%	91.6%	90.7%	-0.8%
Varicella (1 dose)	92.3%	92.8%	91.1%	93.0%	92.4%	91.9%	92.5%	91.6%	-0.9%

Table 2: Vaccination Waivers for Wisconsin 2 through 4-year-olds enrolled in licensed child care centers.

Waivers	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	Change from previous year
Health Waiver	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Religious Waiver	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.1%
Personal Conviction Waiver	2.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%	2.1%	2.2%	2.7%	0.5%
Waived One or More Vaccines	2.5%	2.6%	2.7%	3.4%	2.4%	2.8%	3.0%	3.4%	0.4%
Waived All Vaccines	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.6%	1.5%	1.6%	1.5%	1.8%	0.2%