

# Analyzing Pediatric Vaccine Schedules Over Time

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## Introduction:

In the mid 1800s, Massachusetts became the first state to require a pediatric vaccine for smallpox, after recent outbreaks among the United States. With this, children were required to have this vaccine before entering schools. As years went on, many other states started to mandate vaccines, which led to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) creating “The Red Book”. Due to this publication, the United States had its first official vaccine schedule with a total of 12 vaccine preventable diseases. As time passed, there were more diseases emerging, creating differences in yearly vaccine schedules after the AAP released its schedule in 1938. The research presented here examines how vaccine schedules have changed throughout the years, including the amount of vaccine preventable diseases, and which diseases have been introduced and have been withdrawn. In connection with this work, we are able to see the impact of vaccine preventable diseases, and how the public has reacted towards it.



The American Academy of Pediatrics published the first pediatric vaccine schedule in 1938.

**Table 1 Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for Ages 18 Years or Younger, United States, 2026**

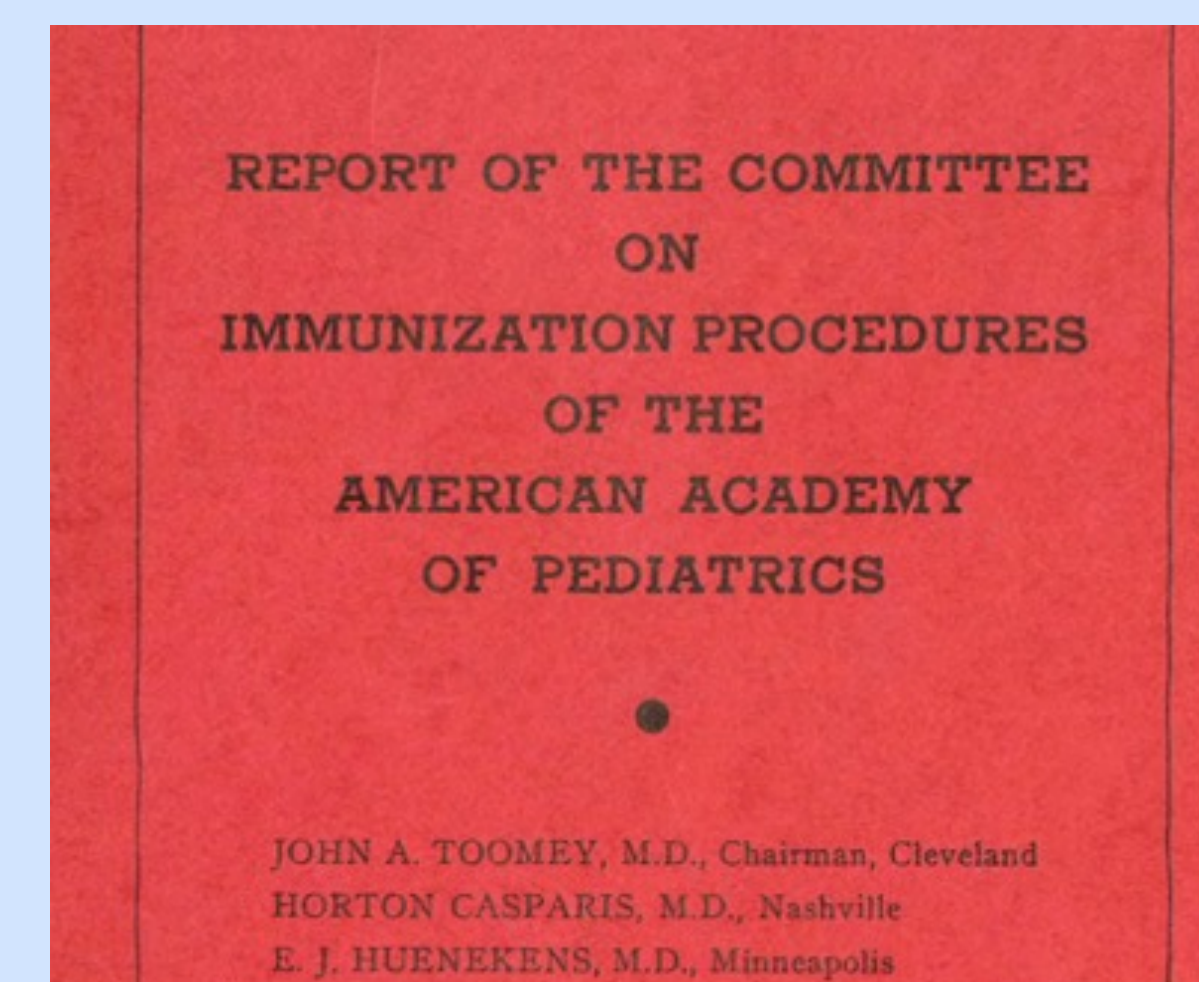
American Academy of Pediatrics

These recommendations must be read with the Notes that follow. For those who fall behind or start late, provide catch-up vaccination at the earliest opportunity as indicated by the outlined purple bars. To determine minimum intervals between doses, see the catch-up schedule (Table 2).

**Legend:**

- Range of recommended ages for all children
- Range of recommended ages for catch-up vaccination
- Range of recommended ages for certain high-risk groups or populations
- Recommended vaccination for those who desire protection
- Recommended vaccination based on shared clinical decision-making

The 2026 pediatric vaccine schedule, released on January 26, 2026, by the CDC.



The “Red Book”, which was the first pediatric vaccine schedule released in 1938 by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

## Results:

After analyzing different documents, it became clear that there is an increase in pediatric vaccines from 1938 to present day. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the original “Red Book” from 1938 included 18 diseases. In the latest 2026 edition, there were more than 160 diseases (not specifically vaccine preventable diseases). Out of the 18 diseases mentioned in the original edition, 13 have been declared vaccine preventable (in 2014). With this information, we can conclude that pediatric vaccine schedules have increased yearly. Another noticeable differentiation in vaccine schedules from the 20th century is the creation of combination vaccines, specifically MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella), DTP (Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus), and more. With the combination vaccine, patients are able to lift the burden on emotional, physical, and financial stress from receiving multiple vaccines. Additionally, a source found on PubMed had information based on research discussing physician’s opinions on vaccines, and vaccine schedules. According to the findings, many physicians supported vaccine schedules, and some don’t allow parents to opt out of vaccines. Based on results, we can conclude that pediatric vaccine schedules were created to prevent diseases from spreading and create a safer environment, and many healthcare professionals are in agreement with their purpose.

## Conclusion:

Throughout my time analyzing the change in pediatric vaccine schedules, I was able to examine many documents, articles, and novels throughout the 20th century to the present day. As years went on, I was able to find a clear increase in the number of diseases and vaccine preventable diseases in each schedule. For the future, with this information collected, healthcare professionals, researchers, and the public could advocate and bring awareness to the impact of vaccines. In seeing the differences between each decade, or even year, individuals will be able to understand how society has been able to adapt to new diseases. Throughout time, vaccine schedules have adapted to newly introduced diseases and have modified each year since the 20th century.

## Acknowledgements and References:

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## Methods:

### Sources

Conducted a search on FSU Database, PubMed, and Google Scholar

### Keywords

“Pediatric”, “Vaccine Schedule”, “Children”, “Vaccine Preventable Diseases” “CDC”

### Timeline

Sources were used dating back to mid-20th century to present in the United States

### Use

When determining what sources to use, I made sure it included information on vaccines based on multiple time periods, how civilians reacted to them, and if there were similarities or differences to a previous year.

After finding sources, I organized them by year and compared them to each other. With this information, I was able to make a general timeline on vaccine schedules from the 20<sup>th</sup> century to present day.

