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We are writing to inform you of a significant change to our office policy that reflects our collective, ongoing, unwavering belief in the safety, efficacy, and necessity of VACCINES. We have always been an office that has encouraged protection from communicable illnesses by vaccinating. Now we are requiring that our patients be vaccinated according to the schedule put forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This new policy affirms our primary roles as your pediatrician - to decrease risk, prevent injury, and promote the general wellness and safety of all children.

Immunizations prevent over 2 million deaths per year world-wide. Considering the hundreds of unnecessary deaths and illnesses among children caused by vaccine-preventable illness every year in our country, it is our duty to do what we can to ward off preventable illnesses. Communicable diseases are still a threat despite the success of vaccinations in decreasing their prevalence. COVID may have provided a new perspective for your family as well; having now seen first hand how an unexpected and deadly infectious disease can challenge the health and well-being of those you love. We, the doctors, take our roles as patient educators, patient advocates, and public health practitioners with the utmost gravity and feel strongly that not vaccinating is an unnecessary risk.

- We understand that the decision not to vaccinate is usually a very thoughtful choice made by parents who have spent considerable time on the topic. Your pediatrician should be trustworthy, knowledgeable, and a primary resource. All of our doctors have years of experience and knowledge of science-based literature. It is backed by data and, therefore, well-accepted that vaccines are safe AND effective. We believe that not vaccinating is risky and dangerous.
- We understand that the decision to not vaccinate may be based on philosophical and religious reasons. Although we respect your right to make these very personal decisions, we have decided to decrease risks to the entire community by requiring that all of our patients vaccinate against vaccine-preventable communicable diseases.

We are offering our partially vaccinated and unvaccinated families the opportunity to consult with their trusted SSP doctor to develop a vaccine catch-up plan for their child(ren). During this consultation, we will discuss any misconceptions or misinformation that may exist. Should you choose to remain with our practice, we will develop a 12 month "Vaccine Catch-up Schedule." We understand that some families may decide that SSP is not the best fit for them and will choose to find a provider that aligns with their own beliefs. We have enjoyed caring for your child(ren) and would be saddened by the departure of your family from our office. We will welcome the return of your fully vaccinated child(ren) should your plans change.