Abstract:

Vaccine Hesitancy Causes and Consequences

Vaccines are considered one of the top ten public health achievements and are credited with the reduction in vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) in the 20th century. However, in the past several decades there has been an increase in the number of individuals who are concerned about the decision to vaccinate themselves or their children. This hesitancy is due to a variety reasons, including the unfamiliarity with VPDs, fear of adverse health outcomes, and a distrust of governmental agencies. The result of this has been an increase in the number of non-medical exemptions to school immunization requirements along with an increase in outbreaks of VPDs including measles, pertussis, and invasive Haemophilus influenza type B.

Bio-summary:

Elizabeth Holzschuh is the population health epidemiologist at the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment, where she has worked since 2015. Her primary role is to provide data for program and policy development and support department activities, including the community health assessment. Prior to her current role, she served as an infectious disease epidemiologist at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. She obtained her Master’s degree with a concentration in public health, microbiology, and emerging infectious disease from the George Washington University.