

Vaccine Hesitancy in Alaska: “Too Many, Too Early”



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What is CUBS?



- Three-year follow-up survey to Alaska Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)
- On-going since 2008
- Attempts to contact all PRAMS respondents still living in Alaska
- Conducted via mail and phone
- 1105 respondents during 2012-2013 (57% response rate)
- 2012 results have been weighted to represent all mothers of 3-year-old children born in Alaska during 2009
- Weighted results from 2013 data not available at this time.

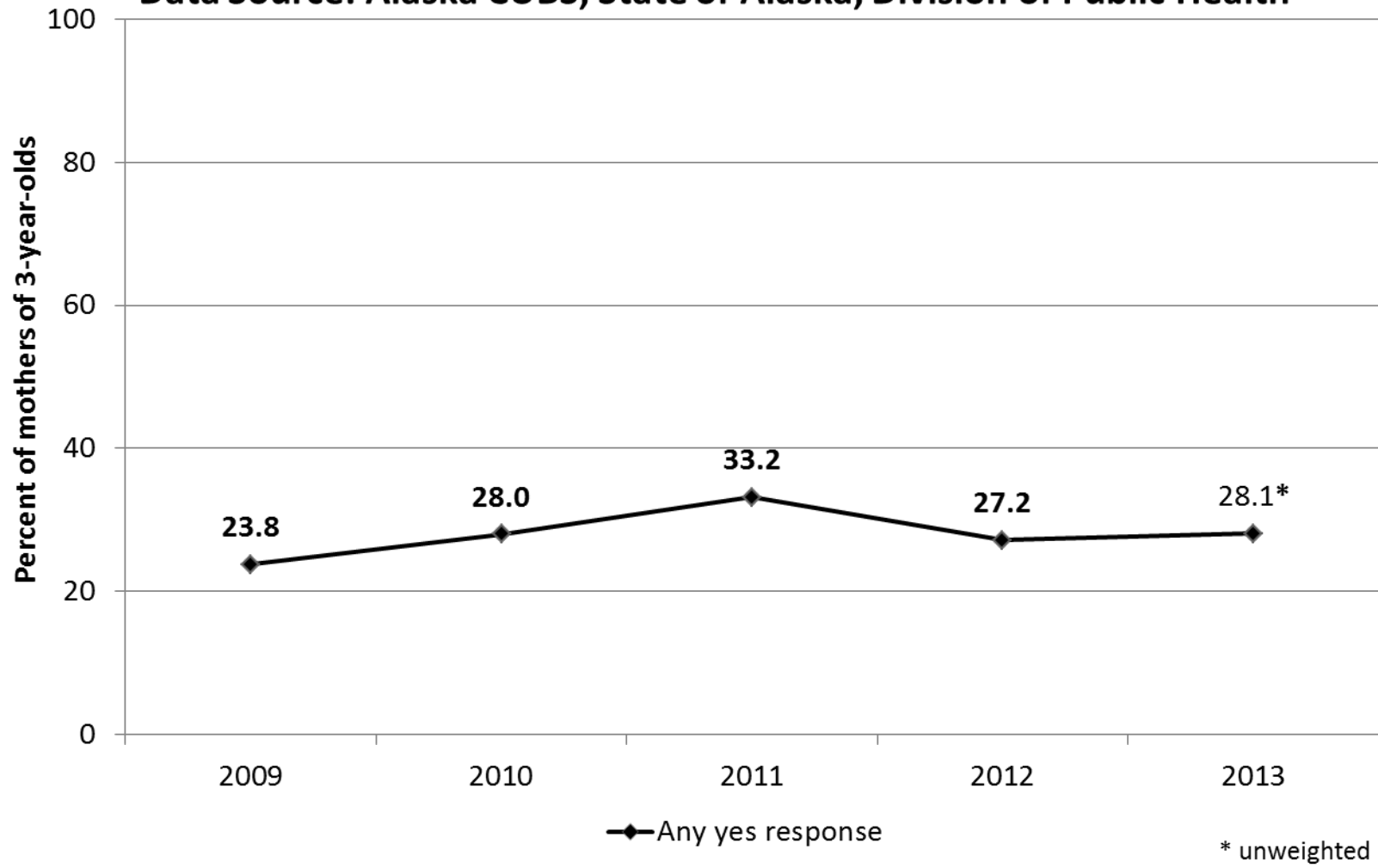
Survey Questions about Immunizations (2012-2013)



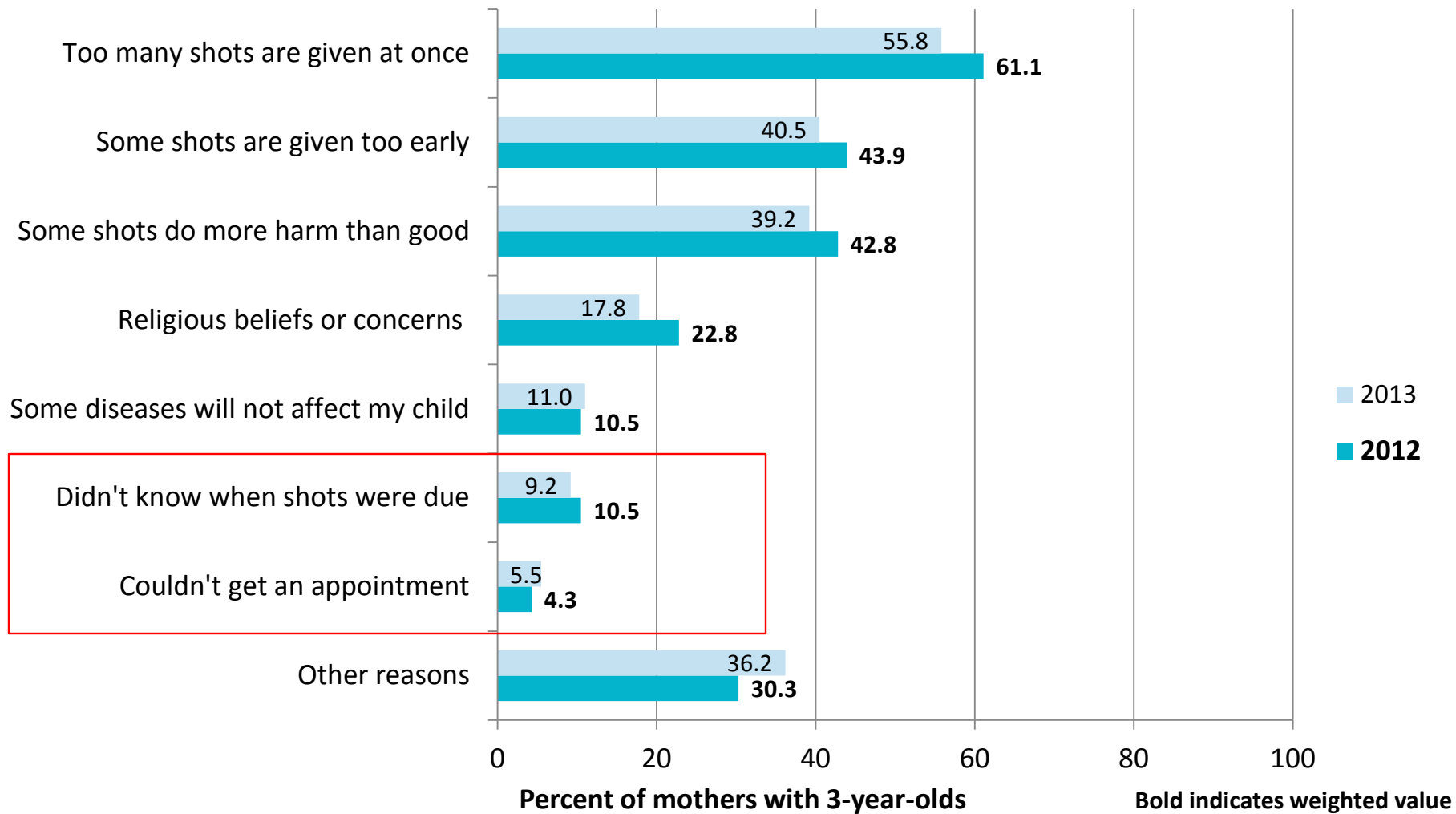
- Have you ever delayed or decided not to get vaccine shots or immunizations for your child?
- What were the reasons you delayed or did not get vaccine shots or immunizations for your child? (*check all that apply*)
- Did you delay or decide not to get a specific vaccine shot or immunization for your child?
 - *If Yes, please tell us which shot(s) and why*

Percent of mothers who ever delayed or did not get vaccines for their 3-year-old child, Alaska 2009-2013

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, State of Alaska, Division of Public Health

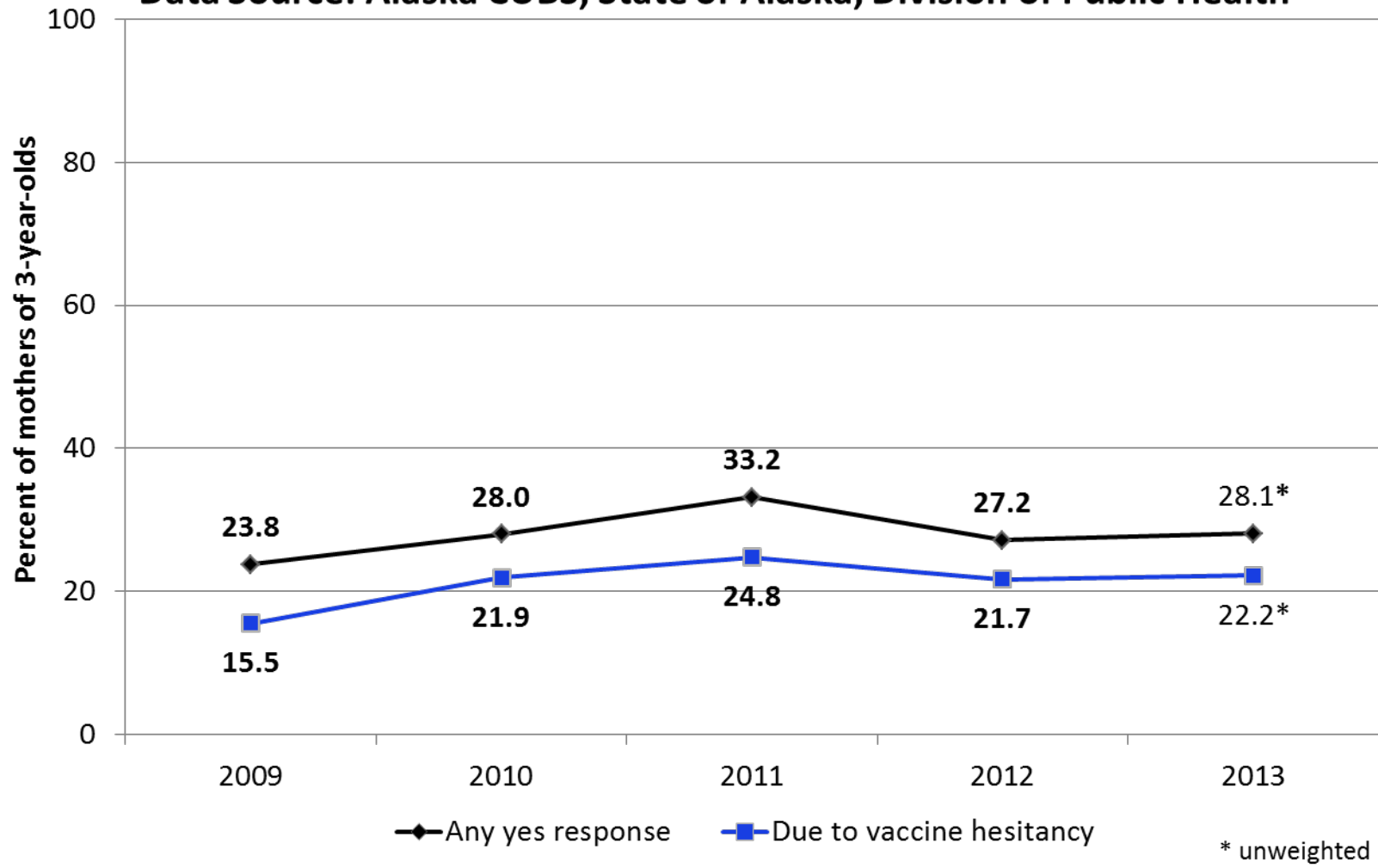


Percent of mothers of 3-year-olds who reported that each item was a reason they ever delayed or did not get vaccines for their child (among mothers who ever delayed), Alaska 2012 & 2013

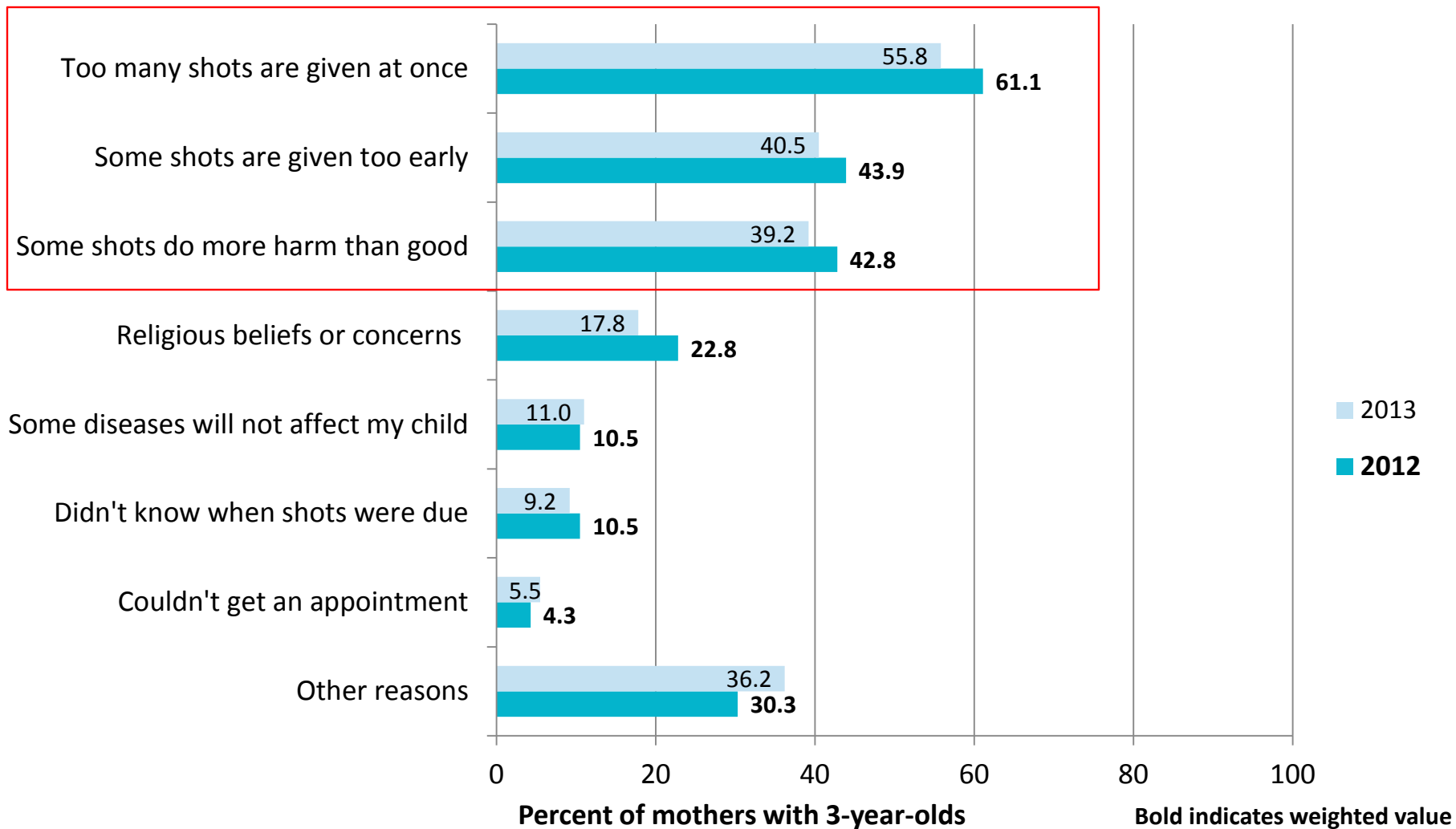


Percent of mothers who ever delayed or did not get vaccines for their 3-year-old child, Alaska 2009-2013

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, State of Alaska, Division of Public Health



Percent of mothers of 3-year-olds who reported that each item was a reason they ever delayed or did not get vaccines for their child (among mothers who ever delayed), Alaska 2012 & 2013



Comments by moms who checked

Too many shots are given at once



"Separated varicella and MMR vaccine so he wouldn't get so many at once."

- Native mom in Southwest region, age 31 years, some college

"[Delayed] all except DTaP & Hib, **I don't feel they are necessary with medical advances.**"

- White mom in Interior region, age 31 years, college graduate

"I think it is important to **let their bodies build a little immunity** before we do anything, plus spacing them helps if something goes wrong."

- White mom in Southeast region, age 31 years, some college

Comments by moms who checked

Too many shots are given at once



"Hep B, MMR - low risk of disease and **not enough info about how vaccines interact with each other**"

- White mom in Southeast region, age 34 years, college graduate

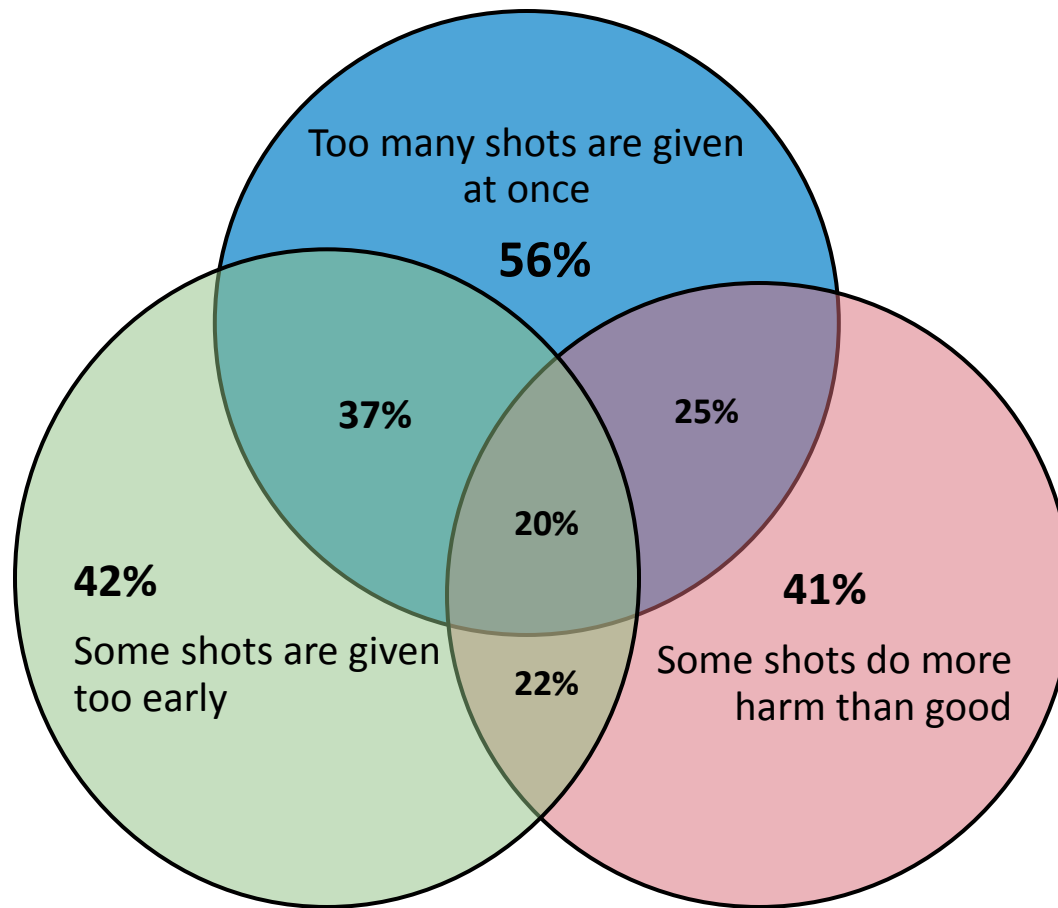
"Chicken pox? **Was it necessary?** Others that were too many at once."

- White mom in Interior region, age 31 years, college graduate

"1st Hep shot - at a later date, **last round of immunizations, waiting, will do separately, not all at once**"

- White mom in Mat-Su region, age 27 years, some college

Most common reasons for delaying or deciding not to get vaccine shots or immunizations among mothers of 3-year olds (CUBS 2012-2013)



Comments by moms who checked

Some shots are given too early



"Hep B Not at risk **until school age**"

- White mom in Anchorage area, age 37 years, college grad

"Right now, all of them because I think it's too early. I think they should **wait until he's older because of brain development.**"

- White mom in Anchorage area, age 39 years, college grad

Comments by moms who checked

Some shots are given too early



"MMR - this one is the one everyone talks about. I wanted to wait until he was older and bigger before we get the shot and/or make our decision. I have heard this particular shot is linked with Autism. **When the child already shows behavioral signs of Autism, this shot can amplify the Autism. So we are waiting to know his personality first.**"

- White mom in Anchorage area, age 33 years, college grad

Comments by moms who checked

Some shots are given too early



"Chicken pox, **it's not life threatening. I consider it a convenience vaccine.** We will consider it if she delays catching pox near 10 years old. Flu, **it's highly ineffective,** relatively speaking. It has toxic heavy metal levels, not worth it."

- White mom in Mat-Su region, age 28 years, college graduate

"All [were delayed], he had his first DTaP after his 3rd birthday. **He is home with me mostly** and I felt like it was too much too young."

- White mom in Mat-Su region, age 28 years, college graduate

Comments by moms who checked

Some shots do more harm than good



"All shots delayed. No chicken pox, naturally getting the disease provides better immunity."

- White mom in Mat-Su region, age 30 years, some college

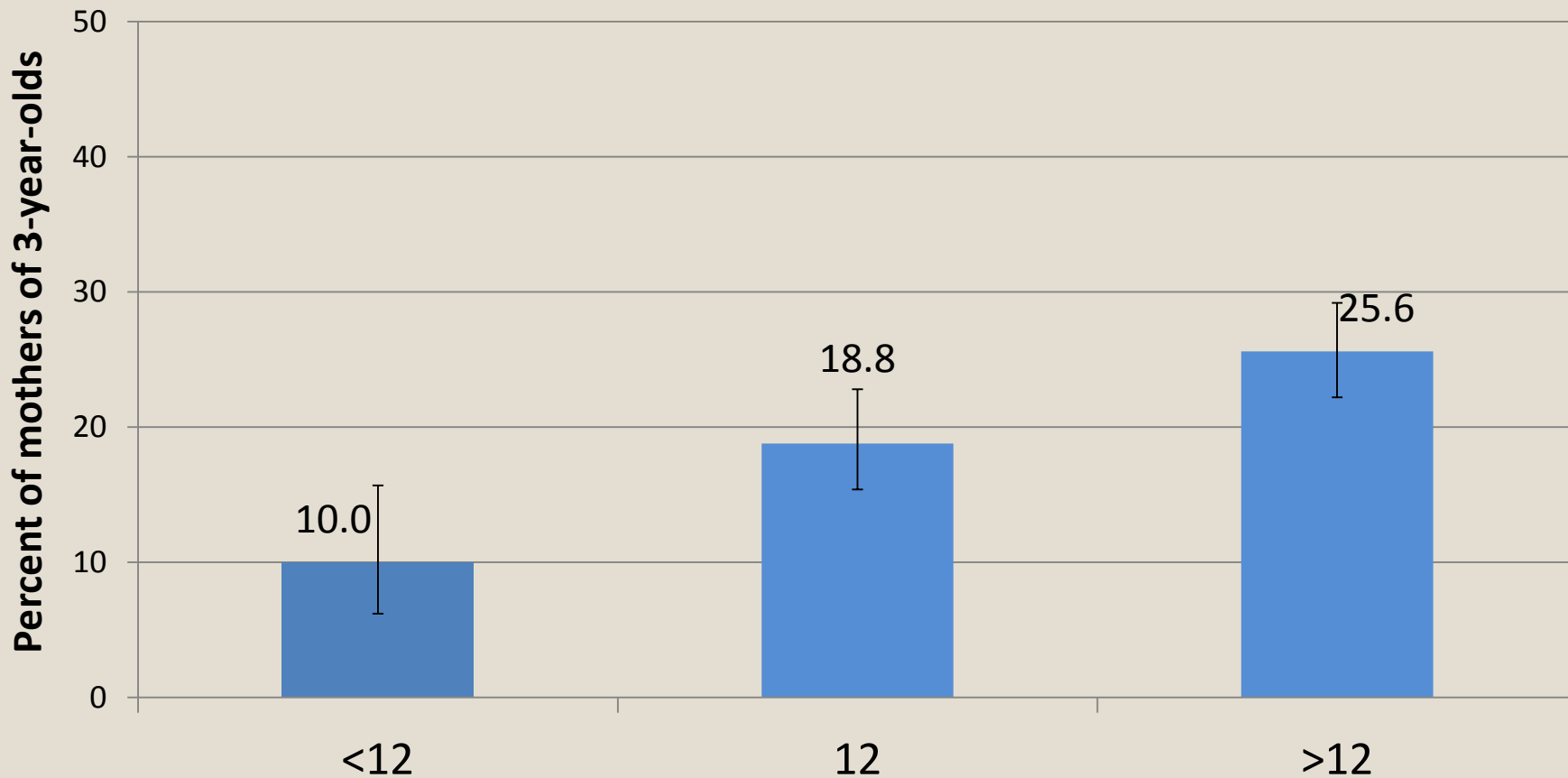
"All - little is known about side effects"

- White mom in Gulf Coast region, age 37 years, college grad

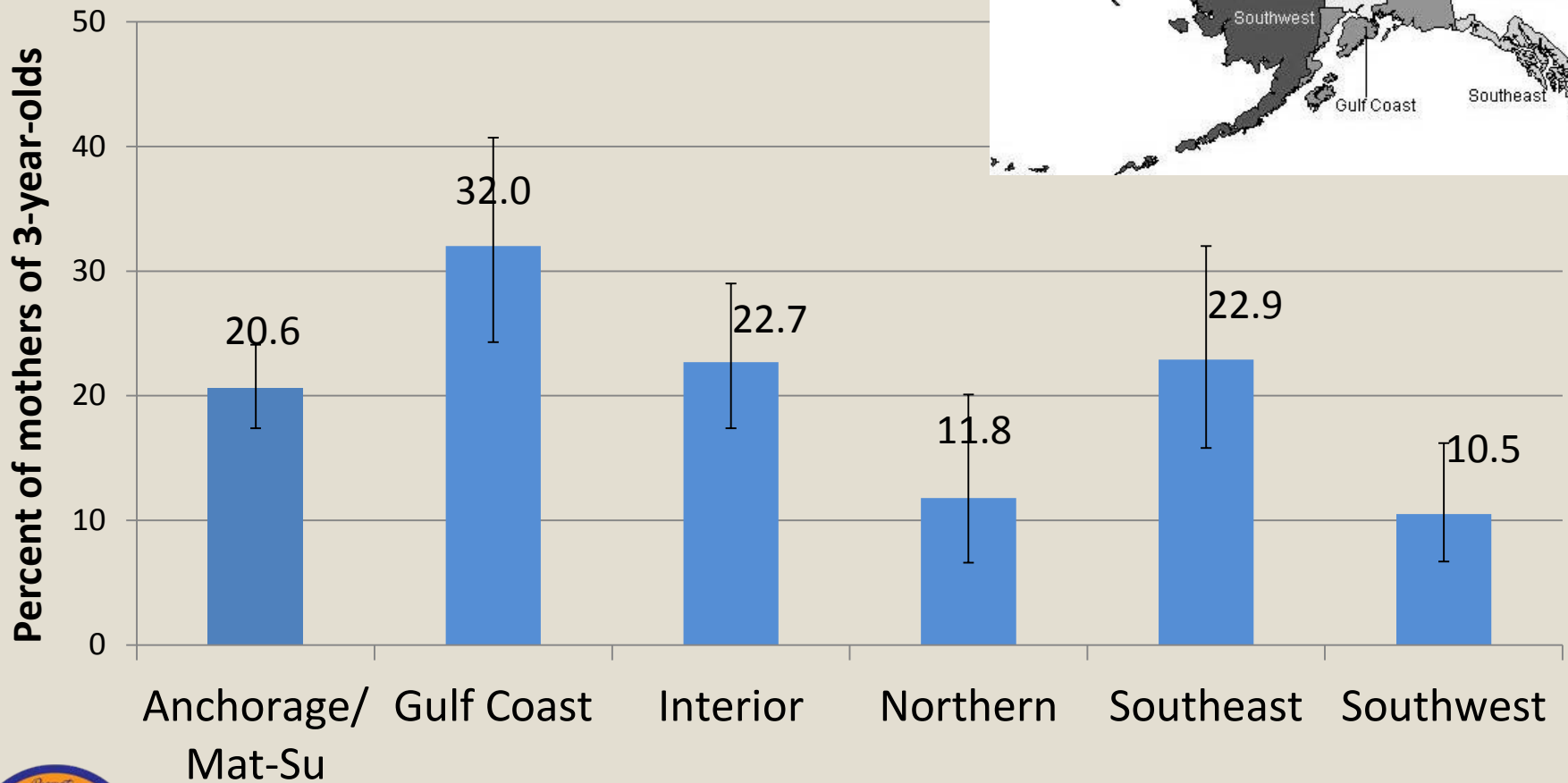
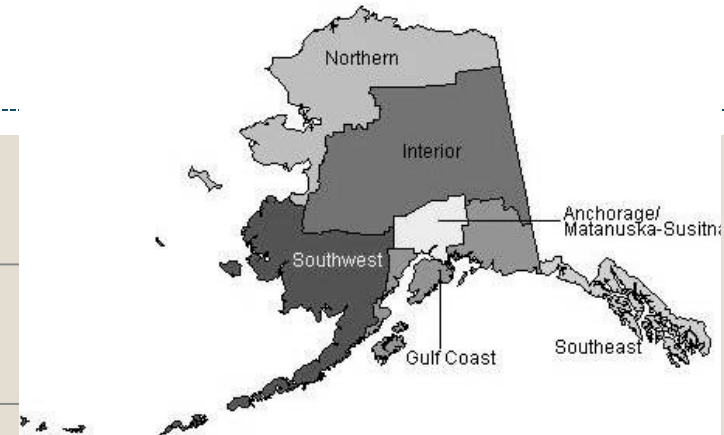
"All - because they're toxic"

- White mom in Interior region, age 27 years, some college

Ever delayed or did not get vaccines by maternal education (at birth), 2009-2012

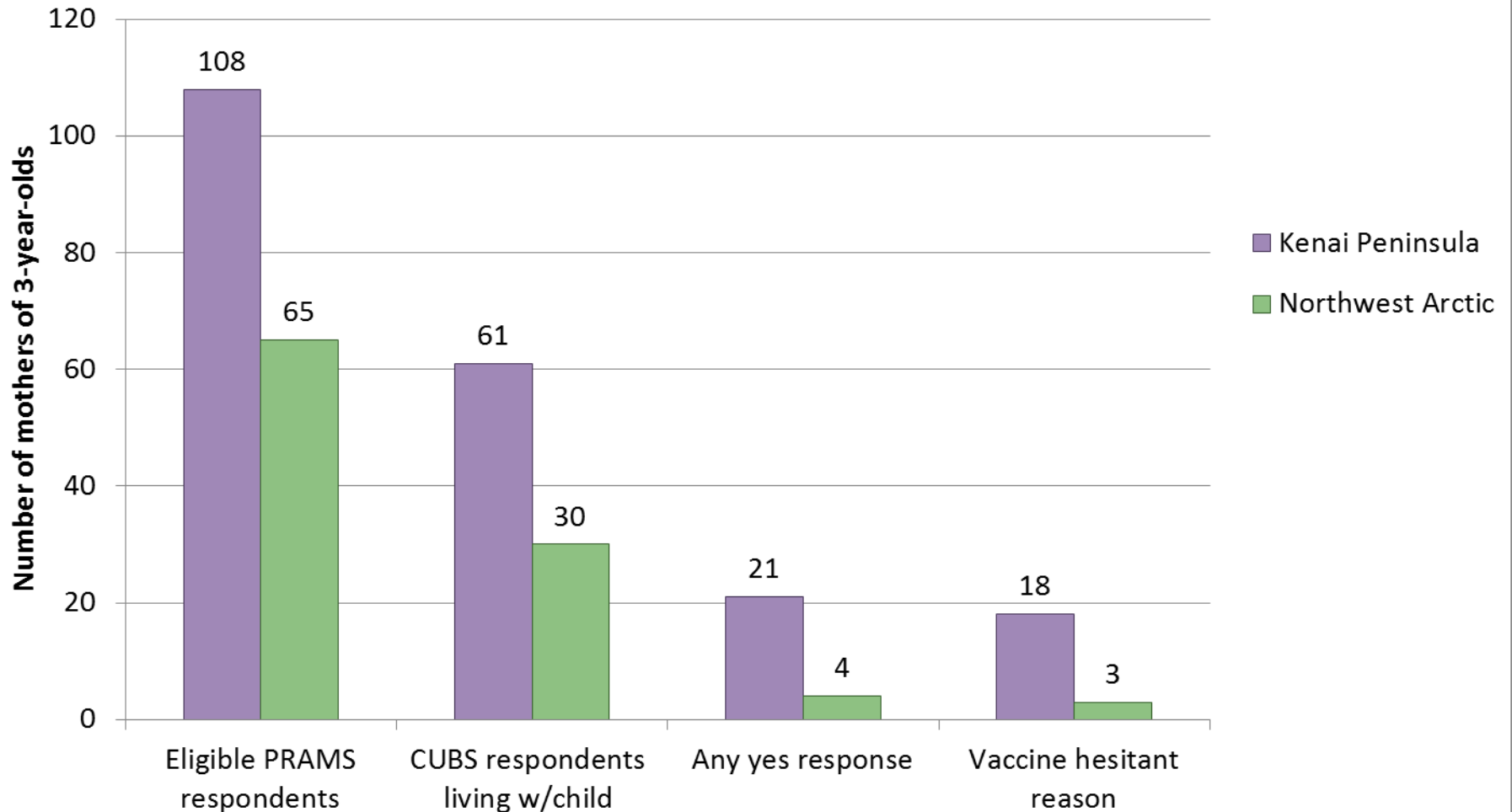


Ever delayed or did not get vaccines by region, 2009-2012



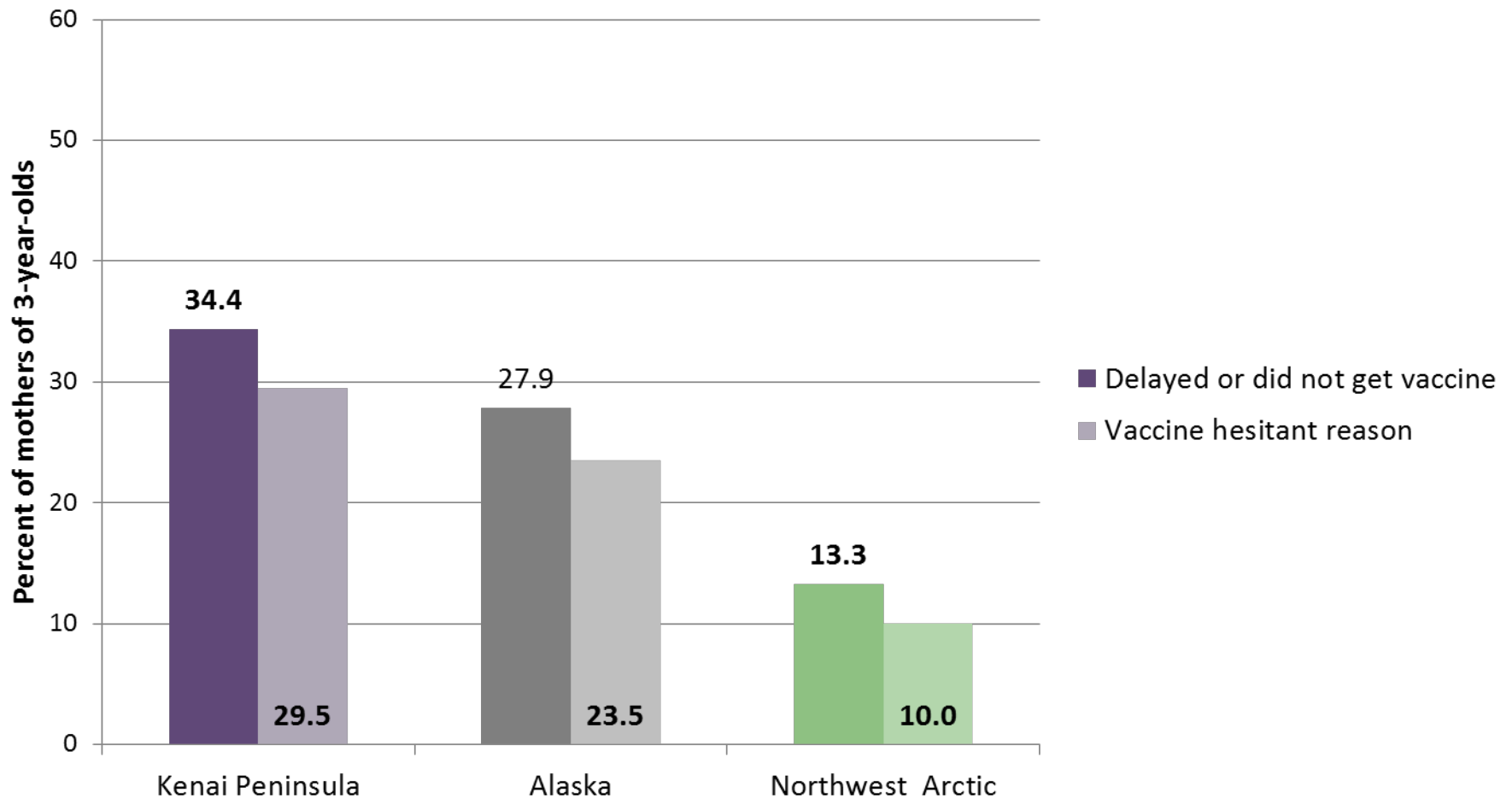
Kenai Peninsula & Northwest Arctic regions: Have you ever delayed or decided not to get vaccines for your child? (2012-2013)

Date Source: Alaska CUBS, State of Alaska, Division of Public Health



Regional variation of vaccine hesitancy in Alaska: Kenai Peninsula & Northwest Arctic (2012-2013)

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, State of Alaska, Division of Public Health



Vaccine Hesitancy: Kenai Peninsula & Northwest Arctic (2012-2013)



CUBS survey respondents from the Kenai Peninsula region reported vaccine hesitancy **three times more frequently** than did those from the Northwest Arctic region.

Vaccine hesitancy in the Northwest Arctic



"I just chose not to give her the flu shot... **I don't get the flu shot and so don't let my children get it**"

- Native mom, age 28 years with some college

"**I don't believe in flu shots**"

- Native mom, age 29 years with vocational education

"Delayed for flu shot, **that's it**"

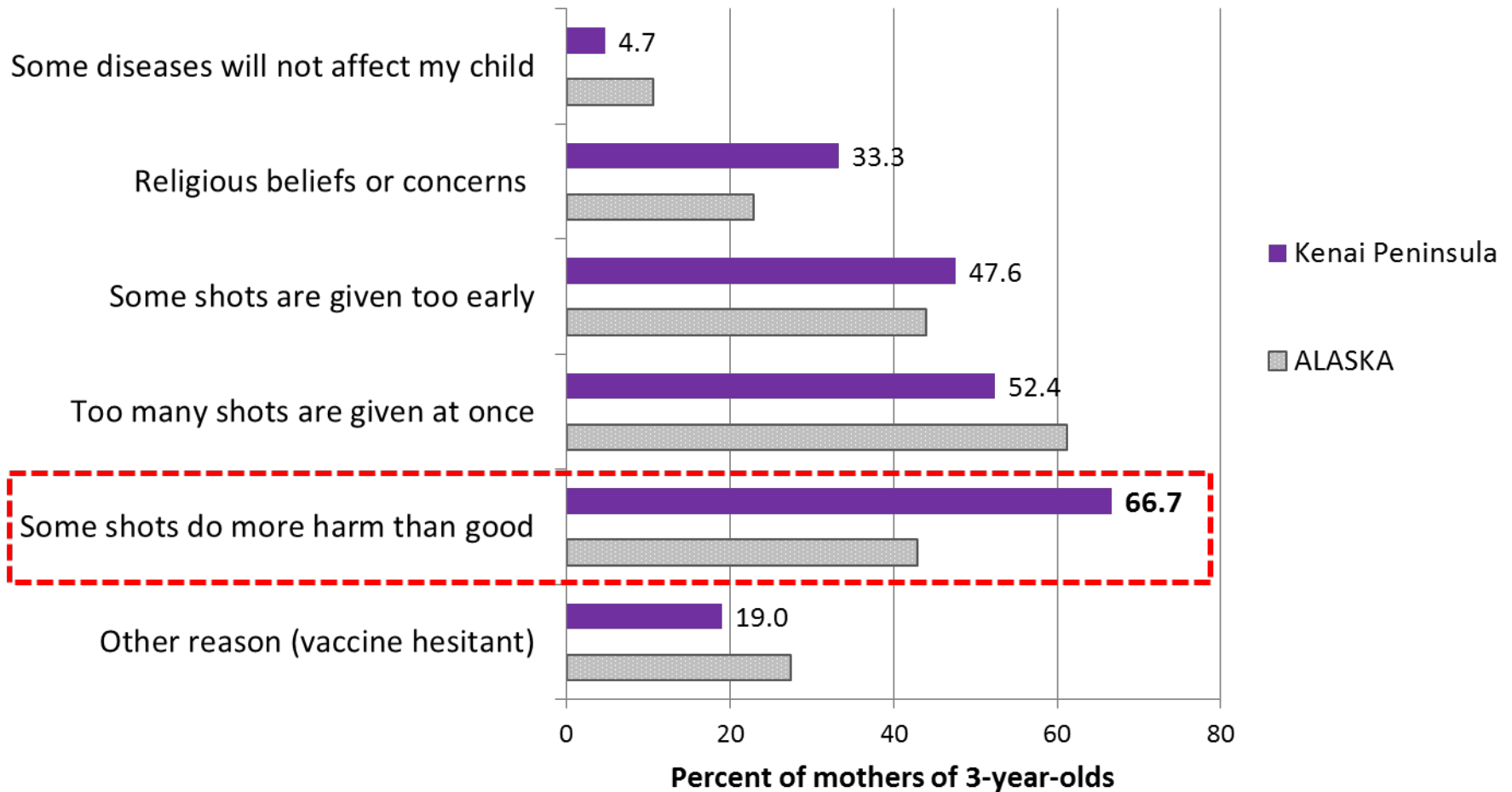
- Native mom, age 29 years with some high school

Vaccine Hesitancy: Kenai Peninsula & Northwest Arctic (2012-2013)



- Vaccine hesitant survey respondents in the Northwest Arctic region all questioned the necessity of the flu vaccine; **they did not report concerns with other vaccines.**
- Vaccine hesitant survey respondents from the Kenai Peninsula also expressed concern about the flu vaccine in addition to other vaccines. **Two-thirds of these moms think that some shots do more harm than good.**

Reasons for vaccine hesitancy in the Kenai Region (among mothers of 3-year-olds who ever delayed), Alaska 2012-13



Moms living on the Kenai Peninsula: Some shots do more harm than good



"Haven't given flu vaccine...unsure, felt unnecessary"

- Native mom, age 36 years with vocational education

"[Delayed or decided not to get] all of the shots"

- Native mom, age 36 with some college

"My kids, he's healthy and I keep him clean...**I bring him to get vaccines but have mixed feelings about immunization shots.**"

- Native mom, age 26 years with some college

Moms on the Kenai Peninsula: Some shots do more harm than good



"I don't get my kids the flu shot. I do get [the shots] separated for first year, **I don't get bulk shots, but they are both over a year now so I guess that doesn't affect them anymore.** [Delayed or decided not to get] flu shot, because every time me or family members get the flu shot, we get very sick, for an extended amount of time, not just a week, it's ongoing."

- White mom, age 23 years, high school graduate

Moms living on the Kenai Peninsula: Some shots do more harm than good



"Hep A, delayed, **I don't believe a one day old baby needs this.**"

- White mom, age 36 years, high school graduate

"MMR - don't like the **statistics of Autism linked to this shot.**"

- White mom, age 39 years, vocational education

"Chicken pox - disease is not that serious in childhood and **the vaccine wears off in 10 years anyway.**"

- White mom, age 34 years, college graduate

Moms living on the Kenai Peninsula: Some shots do more harm than good



“Flu (illness) I let him have; I think it is important that we let our kids be strong enough to fight what their body is strong enough to fight, that it is okay to be sick from time to time. What is important is food & activity. We should not teach ourselves, kids, new generation you should vaccinate yourself from everything!”

- White mom, age 34 years with some college

“I don't give any shots/immunizations.”

- White mom, age 36 years and high school graduate

Did you delay or decide not to get a **specific** vaccine shot or immunization for your child?



Weighted data from 2012 CUBS respondents showed:

- **48%** (among those who delayed or did not get) **checked Yes**
- When asked which shots and why, the most commonly shots mentioned were:
 - Influenza “flu”, including H1N1 (14.9%)
 - Varicella “Chicken pox” (9.2%)
 - Hepatitis A or Hepatitis B (7.1%)
 - Measles Mumps Rubella “MMR” (5.2%)
 - Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis “DTaP” (4.5%)
 - Some women wrote “all shots”

Summary



- Alaskan mothers who delayed or did not get vaccines for their 3-year-old child show a **fairly stable trend** since 2009 for both vaccine hesitant reasons and situations that are not due to hesitancy.
- Not all regions show the same patterns
 - Immunization rates vary by region
 - Frequencies of reported vaccine hesitancy vary by region
 - Reasons to delay or not get vaccines vary by region
- Most women who report on surveys that they delayed indicate it was **their** choice, or are “vaccine hesitant.” However, this is not the only reason kids aren’t getting immunized.

References



- **Alaska Section of Epidemiology. Alaska Falling Short on Vaccinating Children – Let’s Focus Our Efforts! Bulletin No 22, September 27, 2012**
Available at:
http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2012_22.pdf
- **Alaska Section of Epidemiology. Vaccine Hesitancy among Mothers of 3-Year-Old Children – Alaska, 2009-2011. Bulletin No 11, April 22, 2012**
Available at:
http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2013_11.pdf

Questions?



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Information Resources for Vaccine-Hesitant Parents



- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):**
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):**
<http://www.healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/immunizations>
- **Immunization Action Coalition:**
<http://www.immunize.org>