

Black Audience

Messaging Brief

LeadingAge is working with JOY to leverage the Ad Council's "It's Up To You" COVID-19 Vaccine Education Initiative to provide helpful resources to non-profit aging service providers and state partners nationwide, ultimately helping to educate their Black American Direct Care Workers about COVID-19 vaccines.

AUDIENCE GOALS

- **Build vaccine confidence** by empowering Black Direct Care Workers to get the latest information on the benefits of vaccination, overcome myths and misinformation, and help them make a more informed decision to protect themselves, those they care for, and their loved ones.
- **Drive urgency** of the importance of vaccination by contextualizing COVID-19 risks and vaccination benefits.

AUDIENCE PROFILE

Snapshot of Direct Care Workers (Source: Direct Care Workers in the US 2021 – PHI)

	Home Care Workers (Support in private homes)	Residential Care Aides (Group Homes, Assisted Living)	Direct Care Workers in Nursing Homes
Size / Impact	2.4 Million Support 8.6 Million people	675,000 Support 1.1 Million people	527,000 Support 1.3 Million people
Demographics	90% women Median age - 47 27% Black	81% women Median age - 37 30% Black	90% women Median age - 38 38% Black

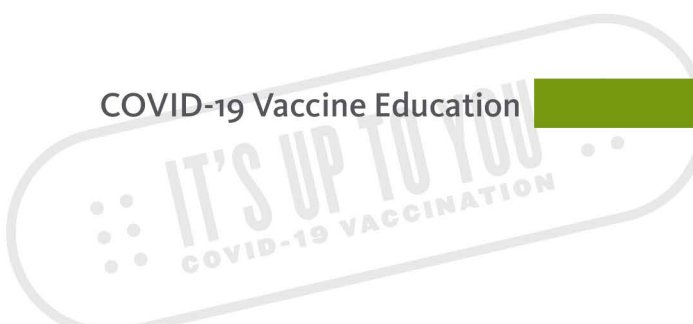
- Limited formal education beyond high school
- Low wages / high poverty rates – challenged to support themselves and their families
- High rates of part-time work
- Direct Care Workers are often stressed and carry a heavy workload. They can be prone to injury / burnout.
- Given their work environments, they are at a greater risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19
- They have historically been under-paid, under-valued, and overworked.

GENERAL ROOTS OF HESITANCY

- Concerns about safety and the potential unknown long-term side effects from COVID-19 vaccination, driven by the speed of the clinical development process and the vaccines' novelty.
- Need for digestible information that cuts through the clutter, elevates the benefits of vaccination, and combats misinformation.
- Higher rates of distrust in the political and economic motives of the medical community, government, and corporations. Distrust is especially salient in the Black community because of medical and government mistreatment (e.g., Tuskegee study) that has contributed to cultural trauma.
- Infertility and pregnancy-related concerns
- They desire to wait and see how others will react to it first
- There are also systemic barriers to vaccination like time away from work, language barriers, and transportation issues.
- In select cases, faith / religious beliefs have contributed to vaccine hesitancy

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NEW / GROWING BARRIERS

- COVID-19 news fatigue causing many to tune out new information. It's important to break through without being overly alarmist or using fear tactics.
- Breakthrough cases can raise doubts and increase reluctance.
- Perception that they don't need the vaccine or take on the risks when many people in their circle are vaccinated.
- Younger adults (<45) don't always see themselves as high risk for getting seriously ill from COVID
- Unvaccinated adults remain relatively unmoved by the recent news of the omicron variant with a large majority of unvaccinated adults (87%) saying the news about the omicron variant does not make them more likely to get vaccinated. (Source: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Research)
- Increase in breakthrough cases with the new variants; however, it's important to be up-to-date with vaccines and booster shots to help keep them out of the hospital and prevent serious illness.
- Health experts recommend that everyone get a booster shot at the appropriate time.
- Increase in reliance on social media for information and / or the current prevalent myths - such as, "boosters causing COVID-19" or "you're injected with the flu"

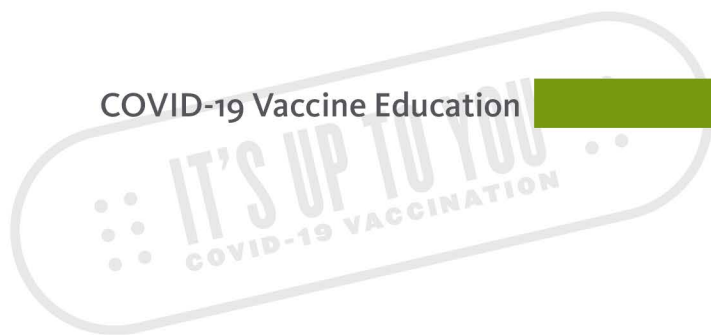
KEY MESSAGES

Act Now New Variants Are Serious	Get Protected	The Vaccines Are Safe
<p>New variants (i.e., Delta, Omicron, etc.) are much more infectious than the original COVID-19 virus.</p> <p>The Delta variant is more contagious than the common cold.</p> <p>Don't wait. The vaccines also give you protection against these variants.</p> <p>We're not fighting the same virus from 2020, and we need to take these new variants seriously.</p> <p>Direct Care Workers The new variants are serious and can have serious impacts. You may feel that if you contract COVID-19 that you can easily recover and it only impacts your health. It actually could increase your stress and impact your health, financial and employment status.</p> <p>Furthermore, you might have added stress given pressure of vaccine mandates to keep your job.</p>	<p>Getting vaccinated helps keep you out of the hospital. COVID is now putting people like you in the hospital – not just the elderly or those with underlying health issues.</p> <p>Vaccines provide strong protection against serious illness and death from COVID-19.</p> <p>Direct Care Workers Vaccines protect you personally and against compounding existing health disparities. You are important and your health is important to us.</p> <p>Vaccines help protect your residents / clients, the people you care for, with whom you provide intimate care.</p> <p>Vaccination is necessary to protect you and your co-workers collectively as an aging services workforce with the health and capacity to care for your residents.</p>	<p>The FDA has fully approved a COVID-19 vaccine. There's now an option that's fully approved by the FDA.</p> <p>Join the more than 200 million Americans (and 96% of doctors according to the AMA) who've been safely vaccinated.</p> <p>68% of aging services staff are safely vaccinated.</p> <p>Serious side effects are extremely unlikely.</p>

NOTE: When possible, also reinforce the importance of slowing the spread. Even if you're vaccinated, the data is clear that masks make it harder for new variants to spread. If you're in an indoor public setting, encourage people to please do their best to wear a mask to help keep themselves and others safe.

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CREATIVE PLATFORM

- **“It’s Up to You”** platform engages with current mindset, emphasizes personal choice, and encourages people to get the new and latest information.
- **Call-To-Action (CTA):**
 - Get the latest information so you can make a more informed decision.
 - Avoid using language like “get the shot” unless it’s coming from an expert; however, find ways to express urgency to act.
 - Act urgently – “Now is the time to make an informed decision.”
 - Connect to information – “Get the latest information at [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://getvaccineanswers.org).
 - Connect to locations – “Find a vaccine location near you at [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://getvaccineanswers.org).”
- **URL:** [GetVaccineAnswers.org](https://getvaccineanswers.org)

GUIDING MESSAGING PRINCIPLES

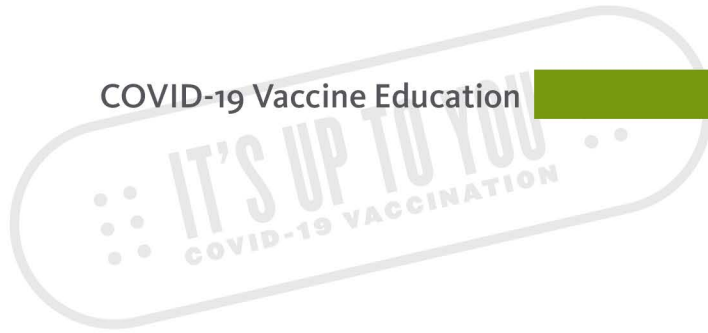
- Don’t be an alarmist – lead with the “new” news (such as new variants or local hospitalization rates) to break through, but don’t play into fear tactics. People will be protected if they follow the recommended steps.
- Ideal tone is empathetic, authentic, and respectful if people have questions or concerns.
- Respect people’s independence and urge them to make an informed decision.
- Position vaccines as not only being important for their protection, but also those that they are caring for each day, those closest to them, their loved ones, and their most vulnerable family and friends (i.e., older family members, children at home, and those with pre-existing conditions).
- Acknowledge that new variants have led to more breakthrough cases – but that the vaccines still provide ample protection against serious illness. If you’re not vaccinated, you’re at least 10x more likely to die from COVID-19.
- Acknowledge that there is a lot of information on COVID-19 and the vaccines, then point them to the latest, clear information.
- Build trust by being honest and transparent where appropriate.
- When sharing a key message, provide a reason to believe (e.g., stat, fact) when possible.
- Convey messages through personal and relatable stories, and / or visualizations to make it easier to understand and contextualize some of the key facts.
- Framing around loss or negatives (e.g., fear, regret, guilt) are best done through storytelling.
- Specific Black audience creative insights:
 - Community is critical, with an emphasis on local neighborhoods, churches, and schools.
 - Be careful of singling out Black communities and / or depicting responsibility for vaccination to be resting on their shoulders.
 - Creative should include diverse audiences.

MESSAGES TO AVOID

- Positioning getting a vaccine as “the right thing to do”.
- Avoid language around “getting back to moments missed” due to the current state of the pandemic.
- Overpromising that getting a vaccine will “flip the switch” and end the pandemic.
- Avoid playing into fear tactics or trying to make it seem like things are the worst they’ve ever been.

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CONSUMER (DIRECT CARE WORKERS) FACING LANGUAGE

DO SAY	DON'T SAY
People who have questions	Anti-vaxxers
Get / seek the latest information	There are things we still don't know
Protect yourself, those you care for, and those who are most vulnerable	Get vaccinated to protect your country
Public health	Government
Medical experts and doctors	Scientists

TRUSTED MESSENGERS

- **Influencer Objectives**

- Vaccine education and demystifying the science
- Demonstrating vaccination safety & efficacy
- Satisfying the “wait and see” unmet need with knowledge and personal experiences
- Delivering messages from people our audiences trust and those whom they can relate to
- Combatting misinformation and disinformation directly

- **Recommended Categories**

(Note: *It's important that Black Americans see themselves reflected in the trusted messengers selected*)

- Medical experts and community health providers are generally the most trusted sources. A call to action to “go get vaccinated” is best to only come from these sources.
- Word of mouth is important to build a cultural consensus, especially from peers and other care workers. Family and friends are also trusted sources when it comes to gathering information or seeking advice.
- Celebrities aren't always the best messengers, but can help by amplifying support, sharing why they got vaccinated, or giving a platform to medical experts to help share educational information.
- Public health institutions like CDC still carry credibility, but it can sometimes be more effective to focus on trusted medical experts within specific communities.

- **Recommended Social Media Posting Cadence**

- Phase 1: Getting the facts – share important key stats about COVID-19 vaccines
- Phase 2: Amplifying the facts (Reference: AdCouncilFactLibrary.org)
- Phase 3: Sharing personal vaccination experiences – real-time reaction videos that highlight personal vaccination stories, leveraging geo-tags to inform followers on where they can get vaccinated.