



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

Building Vaccine Confidence Through Community Engagement

PURPOSE

The Equity Flattens the Curve Initiative at APA has developed this resource to assist community leaders and others to better understand the psychological and other scientific phenomena related to vaccination attitudes and behaviors. Current surveys suggest that widespread reticence to and rejection of vaccinations may exist once they become available.¹ Community leaders, grassroots activists, as well as all types of healthcare providers need to be able to recognize barriers to vaccination acceptance while at the same time maintaining respect for differences. Out of such understanding, it is hoped that culturally competent interventions and deployment strategies will promote individual health choices and civic responsibility.

WHY THIS RESOURCE IS NEEDED

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified long embedded racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic inequities across the public health sector. From case identification, testing, data collection practices, surveillance, and easily accessible treatment and care, communities of color and economically disadvantaged persons living near or at poverty levels have been burdened with few protections to stem the viral spread. As a result, marginalized populations and other under-resourced communities have experienced disproportionate rates of infection, as well as higher morbidity and death rates attributable to COVID-19. Moreover, the economic fallout tied to the pandemic has had even more of a disastrous impact on less advantaged individuals and families, as seen in staggering rates of job loss, housing instability, and food scarcity.² Children and young people living at the margins have experienced significant educational losses throughout the pandemic because, when compared to more advantaged learners, many more poor students of all ages lack access to technology and broadband necessary for remote learning. It is well established that poor and/or remote communities, older adults, individuals with disabilities, economically disadvantaged families, and persons of color will have harder times during periods of recovery than those with greater financial advantage and security.³

1 pewresearch.org/science/2020/09/17/u-s-public-now-divided-over-whether-to-get-covid-19-vaccine

2 pewsocialtrends.org/2020/09/24/economic-fallout-from-covid-19-continues-to-hit-lower-income-americans-the-hardest

3 brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20200923_BrookingsMetro_Distressed-Communities-COVID19-Recovery_Bartik_Report.pdf; ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2862006/; onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/disa.12161