



# Campaign Background

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) COVID-19 Public Education Campaign is a national initiative to increase public confidence in and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines while reinforcing basic prevention measures such as mask wearing and social distancing.

Through a nationwide network of trusted messengers and consistent, fact-based public health messaging, the Campaign helps the public make informed decisions about their health and COVID-19, including steps to protect themselves and their communities.

The effort is driven by communication science and provides tailored information for at-risk groups. The Campaign supports efforts of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and others across HHS to use education to improve public health.

Communication products and initiatives are designed to help those in “the movable middle”—people who want to protect their health but have questions about vaccines—become more willing to consider vaccination. The “We Can Do This” campaign aims to connect with Americans from a wide range of backgrounds. While the Campaign aims to build confidence in vaccines, it also reinforces basic messages about prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and flu.

## OPPORTUNITY

Science-based public education campaigns are proven to motivate behavior change. HHS has assembled a team to implement a COVID-19 public education campaign informed by science, aligned with evidence-based best practices, and guided by agency peer review.

## CAMPAIGN GOALS

- Increase vaccine confidence and uptake while reinforcing basic prevention measures (mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing).
- Connect the public with factual government information about COVID-19.

## Overall Campaign Strategy

HHS is using a comprehensive media campaign and collaboration with public health influencers to reach Americans through traditional, digital, and social media in culturally appropriate ways. HHS is also providing rapidly evolving messages based on the latest scientific information and research.

Messages are specially designed to reach diverse populations most likely to take action to protect their health and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

## Research and Evaluation

A robust and continuous cycle of research drives all campaign activities.

- Research includes audience segmentation, daily monitoring of news stories and social media, secondary data scans, foundational and creative focus group discussions, creative testing surveys, and production of a weekly current events tracker.
- Additional outcome surveys and analysis, along with social listening, enable campaign performance and impact assessment in real time, allowing for adjustments that align with the rapidly changing environment.

## Message and Materials Production

The Campaign uses products for paid and earned traditional, digital, and social media platforms such as:

- Website integration with CDC.gov to provide up-to-date information on COVID-19 and connection to paid ads driving to the CDC website.
- Radio, print, and social media ads to encourage social distancing and mask-wearing while communities are waiting to receive vaccines.
- Comprehensive vaccine confidence ads created for multiple platforms (radio, TV, social, digital, print, out-of-home).
- Culturally tailored, plain language materials to support partners' outreach to their communities.

## Paid and Earned Media

The campaign uses both paid advertising and media interviews, presentations, radio/TV tours, and other public events to educate people about the importance of vaccination and basic prevention measures to prevent COVID-19 and protect public health. The Campaign is designed to reach 90% of the American adult population at least once per quarter. On average, they would be reached at least 10 times.

The Campaign's paid media activities focus on three strategies:

- **Slow the Spread**—Provides general audiences with action steps they can take while waiting for the vaccine to protect themselves, family members, and their community, as well as tailored messaging to those who are disproportionately affected.
- **Building Vaccine Confidence**—Uses public education to build confidence about the COVID-19 vaccines so people are ready to get vaccinated when it is their turn. The timing of these vaccine confidence efforts aligns with increasing availability of vaccines.
- **Preparing the Nation**—Provides general audiences with information about vaccine development, safety, and effectiveness, including answers to common questions.

Earned media outreach features trusted messengers and influencers from multicultural and other communities hit hard by COVID-19 as well as experts from HHS agencies, the larger public health community, academia, and industry. They provide factual, timely information and steps people can take to protect themselves, their families, and their communities. This includes a new educational podcast, titled "COVID-19 Immunity in Our Community."

## Partnerships

The campaign uses widespread partnership networks that already exist within HHS and among HHS agencies.

Through our partners' insights and trusted voices in their communities, we can support the needs of each of our target audiences – meeting them where they are and providing access to the resources they need.

The Campaign also collaborates with corporations, foundations, and not-for-profits that share a common mission of preventing COVID-19 and protecting public health.