

## Friends & Family Campaign - *You Make a Difference:* Keys to Working with Your Community

Everyone feels differently about the COVID-19 shot. It is important to understand and respect people's opinions when having these conversations. Here are some tips on how to talk to different people and groups in your community about the COVID-19 shot. You should always feel safe and prepared when having these conversations.



### Talking to Someone One-on-One (1:1)

- **Ask permission** – some people may not want to talk about COVID-19 shots. It is important to ask them if it is okay to talk about this. You can say, “I would like to talk about the COVID-19 shot. Can we have a conversation about this?”
- **Share personal stories** – people feel comfortable hearing about the stories of others. Offer to share your personal story about getting the COVID-19 shot. Let them know that this was your experience and everyone's is different. You can say, “This was what it was like when I got my shot. Your experience may be different, but I hope hearing my story helps you.”
- **Allow them to respond** – after sharing your story or giving them information about the shot, it is important to let them think about what you just said. Then, allow them talk about their thoughts or questions.
- **Hear their concerns** – if someone tells you why they are scared or don't want to get the shot, listen to them. Do not judge them. Be curious and ask questions to better understand why they feel that way.
- **Stick to your message** – talking about COVID-19 can make people have strong emotions. Try to stick to your message, your experience, and facts you know to be true to keep the conversation going.
- **Offer resources** – not everyone will be ready to get their shot. Offer to provide resources to help them learn about the shot. Offer to help answer any questions they have in the future.



## Talking to a Group

- **Go with a friend or a partner** – it is important you always feel safe. Take someone else with you when talking to a group, especially a group of people you have never met before. This can be someone like a friend or coworker or a family member that may also be part of that local community group. Go together when you reach out to leaders of that group.
- **Introduce yourself as a community member** – even though you may be doing this work on behalf of an organization or university, try to introduce yourself as it relates to the community. People are more likely to trust and listen to a fellow community member. For example, *"Hello, my name is Katie, and I am a member of the local church."*
- **Set ground rules** – ground rules will help to keep the conversation respectful and let people know what is expected of them. Bring 2-3 rules to the group and then ask if they would like to add more. Some examples of ground rules include:
  - Speak one person at a time. Do not interrupt.
  - Assume everyone has each other's best interest in mind.
  - Listen without the need to respond with your thoughts.
  - Challenge yourself. If you are usually quieter, speak up. If you are usually more talkative, try and listen more.
  - The goal is to have a good conversation, not an argument.
- **Be prepared for questions** – before you meet with the group, think about what questions they may have for you. This will look different for different groups. For example, parents will have different questions about the COVID-19 shot than older adults.
- **Keep things calm and respectful** – some people may get excited or upset talking about COVID-19. It is important to be polite, even if someone is being rude to you. It is okay to end the conversation if you feel uncomfortable. You can say, *"It sounds like we aren't going to agree. I think it is okay to end this conversation."*
- **Keep safety first** – Remember these things to help keep you safe:
  - If you feel unsafe leaving, keep your friend or family member with you or ask someone to walk you out.

- If you are doing door-to-door, never go alone. Do not enter someone's house that you do not know. Always let someone know where you will be going next.
- Keep your phone always charged and with you, if you have a phone. If you feel unsafe, call someone you know for help.
- **Offer resources** – not everyone will be ready to get their shot. Offer to provide resources to help them learn about the shot. Offer to come back again and help answer questions they have in the future.