

COVID-19 VACCINATION HESITANCY

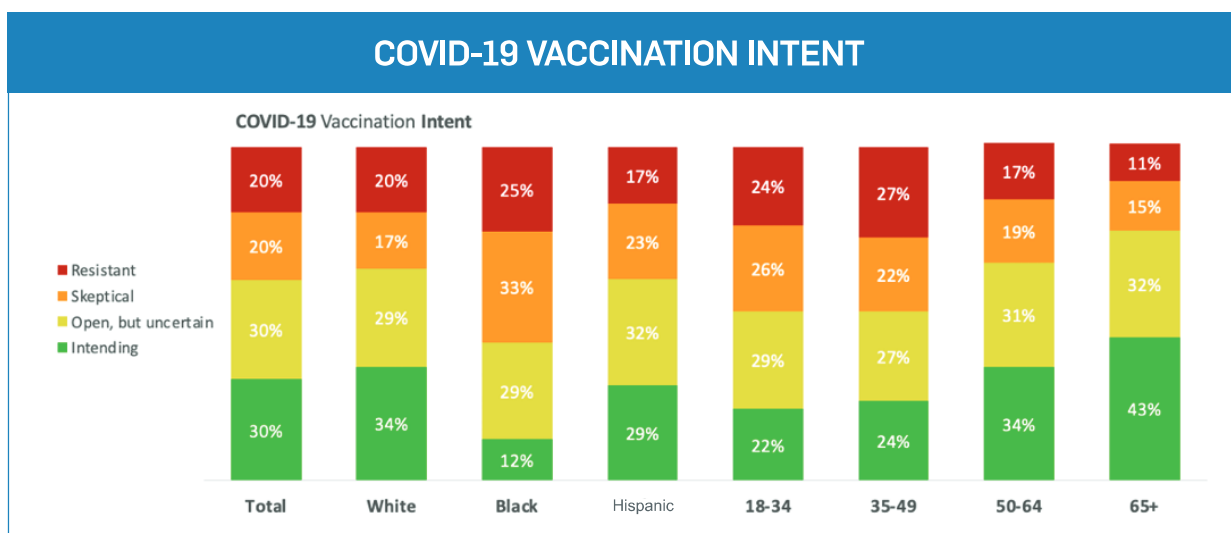
The [Ad Council](#) and [COVID Collaborative](#) are leading a massive communications effort to educate the American public and build confidence around the COVID-19 vaccines.

Guided by the leading minds in science and medicine and fueled by the best talent in the private sector, the **COVID-19 Vaccine Education Initiative** is designed to reach different audiences, including communities of color who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The following insights are based on extensive qualitative and quantitative research we conducted in December 2020 to ensure our messages are research-based and resonate with audiences. Specifically, we tested potential messaging with a variety of Americans nationwide, including white Americans, Black Americans and Hispanics.

VACCINE HESITANCY

- Overall, 50% of the general public falls into the “movable middle”- people who range from skeptical (20%) to open but uncertain (30%). The best way to describe their overall mindset about COVID vaccination is “wait and see.” Relatively few have an in-depth understanding of how vaccines are developed, tested through large clinical trials, authorized or how these vaccines actually work. Movable middle Americans are also less likely to have personal experience with severe cases of COVID-19 (self, family, friends).
- While all Americans report hesitancy Black Americans are more likely than other demographic groups to be hesitant; currently 62% (compared to 50% of the total population) of Black Americans are “skeptical” or “open but uncertain,” while an additional 25% (compared to 20% total population) are resistant. This hesitancy, in part, has roots in historical unethical practices in medical research (i.e. Tuskegee experiments) as well as awareness and personal experience of systemic inequities of the health care system, especially laid bare by the pandemic.
- Hispanics have rates of hesitancy/intent that are similar to the total U.S. population. As with other populations, a primary concern is not having adequate information about the vaccines and their safety.



COVID-19 VACCINATION HESITANCY

PRIMARY DRIVERS OF HESITANCY

- Concerns about **safety and side effects** from COVID-19 vaccination, driven by the speed of the clinical development process and the vaccines' novelty.
- Lack of **knowledge**.
- **Distrust** in the **political and economic motives** of the government and corporations.

VACCINATION ATTITUDES

Public attitudes in favor of COVID-19 vaccination far outweigh negative attitudes, but significant trust gaps remain.

This distrust is especially pronounced among Black Americans and Hispanics. Compared to the general public, Black and Hispanic respondents are less likely to agree that:

- They have the confidence in having enough information to guide a decision on whether to get vaccinated.
- The benefits of COVID-19 vaccines are much greater than the risks.
- COVID-19 vaccines are effective

	General Public (agree strongly or somewhat agree)	Black	Hispanic
I can protect people I know and love by getting a COVID-19 vaccine	61%	54%	60%
I feel confident that I know enough to guide my decision about getting a COVID vaccine	60%	40%	40%
Getting vaccinated against the coronavirus is important to me	55%	50%	50%
The benefits of COVID vaccines are much greater than the risks	51%	39%	45%
People have a responsibility to get a COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to them	50%	42%	50%
I would trust a COVID vaccine only after millions have had it	48%	47%	47%
COVID vaccines are effective	40%	28%	35%

COVID-19 VACCINATION HESITANCY

GENERAL POPULATION MOVABLE MIDDLE DEMOGRAPHICS 105 MILLION AMERICANS	
	General Population movable middle ("Skeptical" + "Open but Uncertain")
RACE/ETHNICITY	
White	75%
Black/African American	16%
Hispanic/Latinx	18%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%
AGE	
18-34	29%
35-49	24%
50-64	25%
65+	23%
SEX	
Female	53%
Male	47%
URBANICITY	
Urban	32%
Suburban	49%
Rural	19%
HIGHEST COMPLETED EDUCATION LEVEL	
High School Degree or Less	42%
Some college/Associates Degree	27%
Bachelors Degree or Higher	31%
POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION	
Republican	24%
Democrat	32%
Independent/Something Else	44%

Source of our insights and recommendations:

- Literature review of existing research around vaccination hesitancy, with a focus on COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy.
- Consultations with public health and health communications professionals, affiliated with COVID Collaborative and other expert organizations.
- Insights and input from Ad Council partner creative and media agencies, including Dentsu Health, Been There Done That, Pereira O'Dell.
- A series of short quick-turnaround surveys in November-December 2020, conducted in partnership with Feedback Loop.
- Qualitative in-depth interviews conducted December 10-17, 2020 with a diverse array of 30 COVID-19 vaccination hesitant individuals nationwide (10 Black, 10 Hispanic, 10 white). Interviews conducted in English and Spanish. Conducted in partnership with [Ahzul](#).
- Nationwide survey conducted December 15-21, 2020, n=1992, including augment samples of Black and Hispanic adults. Sampling and weighting protocols were implemented to ensure U.S. Census-representative results. This online study was conducted in partnership with Ipsos Public Affairs, leveraging their Knowledge Panel methodology.