

TO: National Rural Health Association
FR: Morning Consult
DT: April 5th, 2022
RE: Vaccination Considerations in Rural America



This memo refers to research conducted by Morning Consult on behalf of the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). This research seeks to measure attitudes among rural adults, rural parents, and rural teenagers regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, trusted sources of vaccine information, and barriers to COVID-19 vaccine uptake.¹

TOPLINE TAKEAWAYS

- Most rural adults report at least partial vaccination for COVID-19 (61%), as well as half of rural parents (47%) and rural teens (48%).
- Overall, 31% of rural adults, 42% of rural parents, and 50% of rural teens report feeling social pressure about the vaccine – *either to accept it or reject it*.
- When looking at barriers to vaccination, feeling overwhelmed by the information and misinformation is the most selected barrier to personal vaccination uptake (26% of unvaccinated rural adults) and vaccination uptake for their child(ren) (31% of rural parents).
- Health care providers are the most trusted source of COVID-19 vaccine information across all three groups: rural adults, parents, and teens.

COVID-19 VACCINE UPTAKE

Most rural adults report at least partial vaccination for COVID-19 (61%), with a majority of vaccinated rural adults having also received their booster shot (62%). Half of rural parents (47%) and teens (48%) report they are fully or partially vaccinated.

- Approximately **half of rural parents say they have at least partially vaccinated their eligible child(ren) (46%),** 15% are hesitant to have their child(ren) vaccinated, while another 8% say they plan to vaccinate their child(ren) in the future. One-quarter of rural parents do not plan on vaccinating their child(ren) (28%).
- **A child's reported vaccination status typically aligns with a parent's reported vaccination status:** Three-quarters of **vaccinated** rural parents say they have vaccinated their eligible child(ren) at least partially (78%), compared to 7% of **unvaccinated** rural parents who say the same. Half of unvaccinated parents say they have no plans to have their child(ren) vaccinated in the future (56%), with an additional 22% unsure if they will in the future.

PERCEIVED PRESSURES OF COVID-19 VACCINE UPTAKE

Overall, 31% of rural adults, 42% of rural parents, and **50% of rural teens report feeling social pressure about the vaccine – either to accept it or reject it** – including 15% of teens who report social pressure to reject the COVID-19 vaccine.

- **Social pressure is coming from both sides of the ideological spectrum:** Around one-third of liberal (31%) and conservative (33%) rural adults report experiencing some sort of pressure, and this is mostly pressure to receive the vaccine.
- **Young rural adults are also more likely to report they have felt pressure to receive and/or reject the vaccine:** Half of GenZers (48%) and two-in-five of Millennials (42%) report they have felt pressured, compared one-quarter of Baby Boomers (22%).

When asked about their perceptions of vaccination rates in their community, the plurality across all three samples perceive at least 50% of their community is vaccinated.

- **Perceptions do differ by vaccination status:** Among those who are vaccinated, 75% say they believe *at least* half of their community is vaccinated. Among those who are not vaccinated, 45% say they believe *less than* half of their community is vaccinated.

MOTIVATORS AND BARRIERS OF COVID-19 VACCINATION

When asked what motivated them to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, **a majority of vaccinated rural adults cite their own health (76%) and the health of those around them (67%) as their motivation to get vaccinated.** Nearly one-third of vaccinated rural adults report the recommendation of a health care provider as a key motivator (33%).

- When looking at barriers to vaccination, **feeling overwhelmed by the information and misinformation** is the most selected barrier to personal vaccination uptake (26% of unvaccinated rural adults) and vaccination uptake for their child(ren) (31% of rural parents).

Motivation to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine – Vaccinated Rural Adults	
To protect my health	76%
To protect the health of those around me	67%
On the recommendation of a personal health care provider	33%
To resume social activities	20%
On the recommendations of trusted peers	13%
To resume social activities	20%
Public health messaging (Media ads, Posters, Billboards, etc.)	12%
To resume in-person school or workplace safely	9%
On the recommendation of a trusted news outlet	8%
It was mandated by my employer, school, or child's school	4%
I previously had COVID with significant symptoms	4%

TRUSTED COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION SOURCES

Health care providers are the most trusted source of COVID-19 vaccine information across all three groups: rural adults, parents, and teens. This is especially true of *personal* health care providers (77% of rural adults, 71% of rural parents, 72% of rural teens).

- This includes unvaccinated adults who are more likely to say they trust information from their own health care provider (56%) versus other health care providers (42%).

Trust for COVID-19 Vaccine Advice and Information – Rural Adults			
Information Sources	% Trust (A lot + Some)		
	Rural Adults	Rural Parents	Rural Teens
Your health care provider	77%	71%	72%
Other health care providers	65%	61%	51%
Universities and academic institutions	49%	46%	57%
Fox News	31%	34%	17%
CNN	30%	27%	24%
NBC	35%	30%	12%
ABC	35%	30%	16%
OAN	11%	16%	4%
Facebook or Instagram	17%	26%	12%
Twitter	10%	14%	7%
YouTube	22%	28%	24%
State or local public health departments	62%	52%	63%
Researchers or scientists	66%	60%	71%
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	59%	53%	61%
Dr. Anthony Fauci	41%	32%	25%
President Joe Biden	37%	31%	32%

Half or more rural adults also say they trust researchers and scientists (66%), universities and academic institutions (49%), and the CDC (59%).

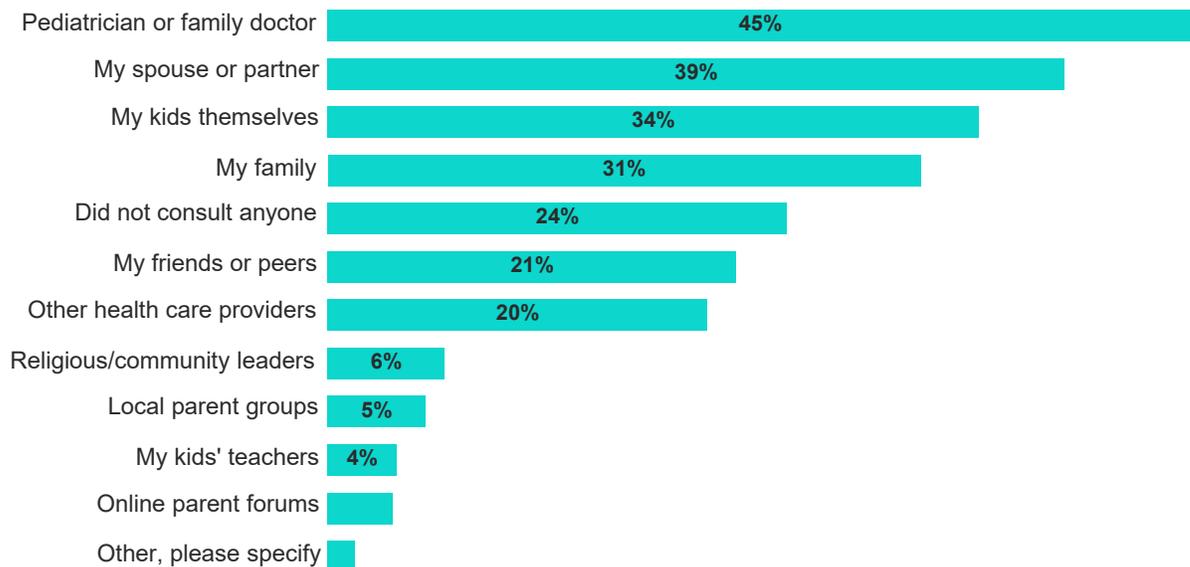
- **Unvaccinated rural adults are less likely to trust government or academic institutions** when compared to their vaccinated counterparts. However, 32% say they trust the CDC, 30% say they trust universities, 37% say they trust public health departments, and 44% say they trust researchers or scientists.

TRUSTED COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION SOURCES CONT.

When asked if they consulted anyone in their decision about whether to vaccinate their child(ren), **rural parents are most likely, of the options tested, to consult those who they have the most personal relationships with** – their family doctor (45%), their partner (39%), their kid(s) (34%), and their family members (31%).

- **Parents who chose to not vaccinate their child(ren) are more likely than those who did vaccinate their child(ren) to say that they did not consult anyone** (39% unvaccinated parents; 14% vaccinated parents). They are less likely to say they consulted their friends or peers (17% vs. 25%), their kids themselves (26% vs. 43%), and their pediatrician (32% vs. 58%).

INFORMATION SOURCES RURAL PARENTS CONSULTED ABOUT VACCINATING THEIR CHILD(REN)



*Among Rural Parents with child(ren) 12 years or older; n = 223

¹ **Rural Adults:** living in a “non-urban” zip code as defined by the Census and are currently at least 18 years old.

Rural Parents: living in a “non-urban” zip code as defined by the Census and have at least one child under the age 18 living in their home.

Rural Teens: living in a “non-urban” zip code as defined by the Census and are currently between the ages of 13 to 17 years old.

Methodology: This poll was conducted between February 1-February 22, 2022 among a sample of 1806 Rural Adults, 475 Rural Parents, and 220 Rural Teens. The interviews were conducted online. Weighting targets were constructed from the 2021 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the Census’ Current Population Survey. The sample was weighted to approximate a target sample of US Rural Adults, Rural Parents and Rural Teens based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. Results from the teen sample have a margin of error of plus or minus 7 percentage points.