

vaccine messaging: a two-way street

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Vaccine messaging: At two-way street

Audience matters – elected officials

- Cost of NOT doing so
- Vaccine development is one of the most monumental public health achievements of the 20th century
- United States (per CDC):
 - Children born between 1994 – 2018, vaccines will prevent 418 million illnesses, help prevent 936,000 deaths, and save billions in direct costs



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Audience matters – elected officials

- Elected officials often determine the direction of health policy for the state
 - Craft legislation
 - Appropriate money
 - Help raise awareness
- Elected official engagement is critical
- AGAIN, what is the cost of not communicating with and engaging elected officials?



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Audience matters – elected officials

- Do not assume elected officials are walking encyclopedias on every pending issue
- Do not expect a commitment on the spot
- Do not engage without the facts / Know the issues
- Do not forget there's always another side to the issue / Avoid running down the other side
- Do not burn your bridges when you lose
- Do not leave and never be heard from again



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Audience matters – elected officials

- Addressing Vaccinations (especially COVID vaccine)
 - Elements of ***Motivational Interviewing*** techniques could prove helpful:
 - Open-ended questions
 - Reflective listening
 - Elicit pros and cons of change
 - Inquire about importance/confidence of making change
 - Summarize conversation



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Message matters – for mand substance

- **STARTING POINT:** Each person brings personal experiences, thoughts, beliefs
 - Hesitancy may be based on rational fears
 - Respect other viewpoints
 - Utilize diplomacy
- What I Say vs. How I Say It
 - Tone is as important as the words I use
 - If individuals become defensive, does that increase or decrease their likelihood of becoming vaccinated?



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Message matters – for mand substance

- Manage Expectations
 - Some opinions/positions WILL NOT CHANGE
 - Goal is not always getting someone from 0 to 10
- Evidence-based Data vs. Humanization
 - Am I “talking down” to people? Real or perceived, it can be a problem
 - Dallas Morning News Op-ed: “Our inclination should be to show others that we care about them, not to win an argument.”
- Refer to trusted sources of information, e.g. local pediatrician



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messenger matter – providers & other leaders

- Forbes Survey:
 - Medical professionals, including physicians and nurses, rank at the top of the list of most trusted professions
- Medical professionals and healthcare advocates are seen as the **EXPERTS** and **TRUSTED SOURCES**
- Strongly encourage individuals to talk with/refer to their “**trusted sources**” or “**influencers**”





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