

Building Vaccine Confidence, Community Partnerships, & Tailored Messaging: A “Learn. Understand. Decide.” Communication Method Approach

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INTRODUCTION

Vaccine hesitancy remains a significant public health challenge in rural Arkansas, where immunization rates fall below national goals. The “*Learn. Understand. Decide.*” communication framework addresses these concerns by fostering informed decision-making through trusted messengers and targeted educational efforts by increasing awareness and confidence around vaccination. This initiative integrates strategies from the *Immunity in AR Community* project, the Adult Education Integration Initiative, and the Adult Messaging Awareness Project to build vaccine confidence through education, community partnerships, and tailored messaging.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase vaccine confidence among rural adults through tailored messaging and community engagement.
- Strengthen partnerships between public health organizations, healthcare providers, and Extension.
- Increase the accessibility to vaccination clinics among rural and adult audiences with unmet medical needs.
- Support public health partners in implementing educational programs that increase positive health outcomes.

METHODS & STRATEGIES

- **Community-Centered Approach:** Leveraged trusted local figures, including pharmacists, Extension Educators, and healthcare workers, to disseminate vaccine education.
- **Strategic Partnerships for Vaccine Access:** Collaborated with ARcare and other healthcare providers to facilitate vaccine access and education.
- **Targeted Outreach & Social Media:** Developed bilingual (English/Spanish) materials addressing common vaccine concerns, distributed via the UADA website, community events, social media, and healthcare facilities.
- **Educational Interventions:** Implemented training sessions for community health workers and healthcare professionals using the “*How to Talk to Your Patient about Vaccination*” course.

RESULTS & IMPACT

Outreach Success: Over 50,000 Arkansans received educational materials, contributing to increased awareness and vaccine confidence.

Vaccination Impact: 2,500+ vaccines administered in a 22-county target area through EXCITE Activity 2 efforts, with an additional 500 vaccines provided by ARcare’s Mobile Unit.

Training Reach: The “*How to Talk to Your Patient About Vaccination*” course engaged 26 registrants in 2024, leading to improved confidence in vaccine-related discussions.

Community Engagement: Increased trust in healthcare providers and public health initiatives, reinforcing the value of Extension in vaccine education.

LESSONS LEARNED & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Sustaining Impact: Plans to expand the “*Learn. Understand. Decide.*” framework by incorporating new digital tools and expanding partnerships.

Evaluation & Improvement: Ongoing assessment of vaccine communication effectiveness and adjustments to outreach strategies based on community feedback.

Scalability: Exploring opportunities to implement this model in other rural states facing similar vaccine hesitancy challenges.

CONCLUSION

The *Immunity in AR Community* initiative, through the integration of adult education and targeted messaging, has proven effective in increasing vaccine confidence in rural Arkansas. By leveraging trusted messengers, tailored messaging, and strategic partnerships, this initiative demonstrates the power of community-driven public health efforts in overcoming vaccine hesitancy and improving immunization rates.

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LEARN.



UNDERSTAND.



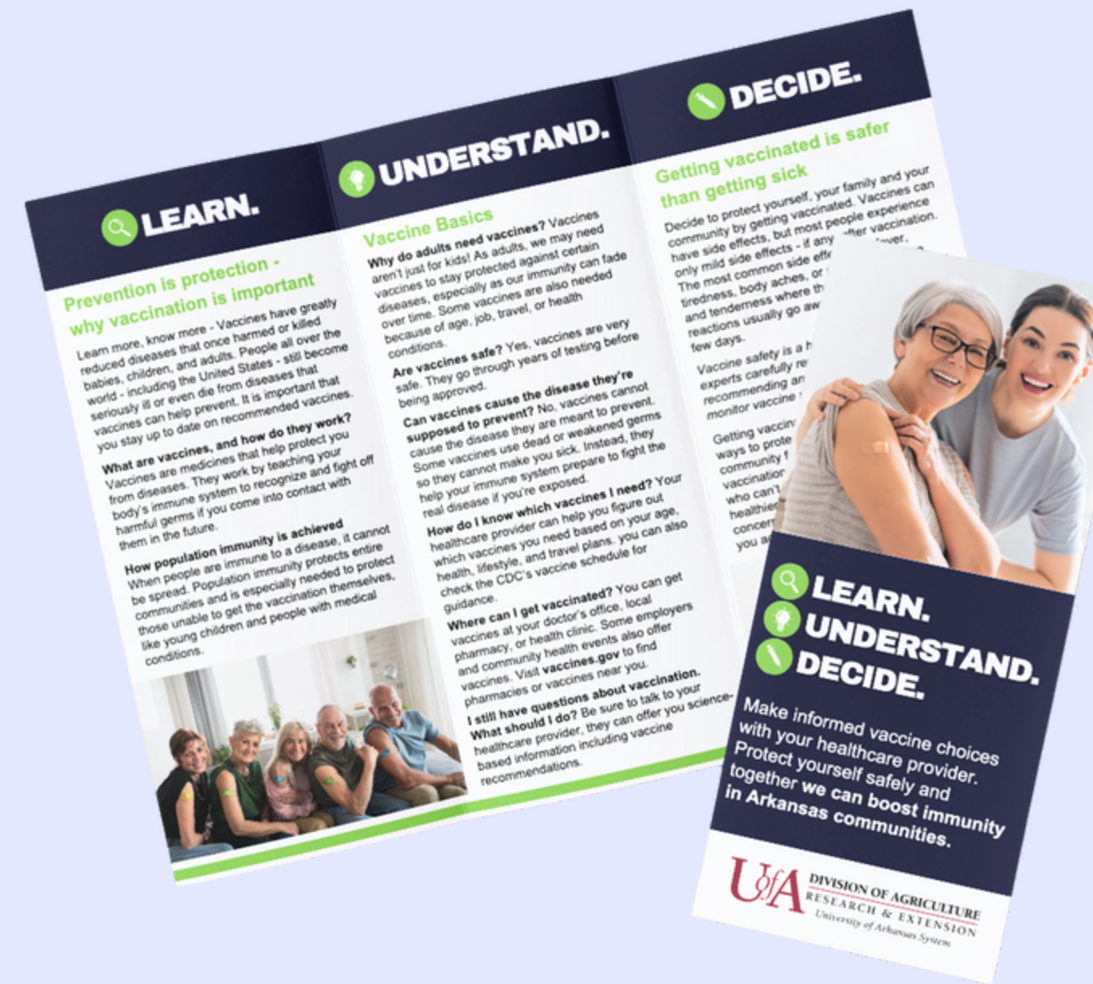
DECIDE.

EXPANDED METHODS & STRATEGIES

We utilize a multi-faceted approach to improve vaccine confidence in rural Arkansas, focusing on **trusted messengers**, **tailored education**, and **accessible resources**. Each method played a unique role in addressing vaccine hesitancy and improving immunization rates:

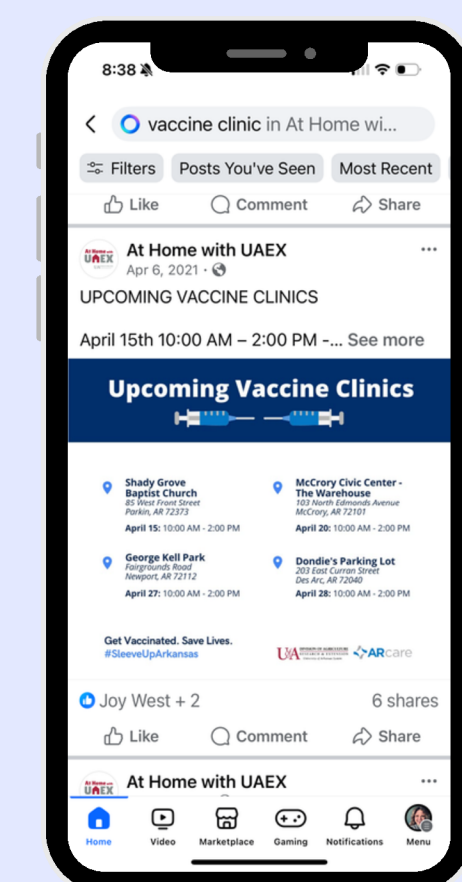
COMMUNITY-CENTERED APPROACH

- Leveraged Extension educators, pharmacists, and community health workers as trusted messengers.
- Engaged faith-based organizations, rural clinics, and community centers to distribute educational materials.
- Developed an educational brochure in English and Spanish using the *Learn. Understand. Decide.* framework to discuss the benefits of vaccination and encourage conversations with healthcare providers.



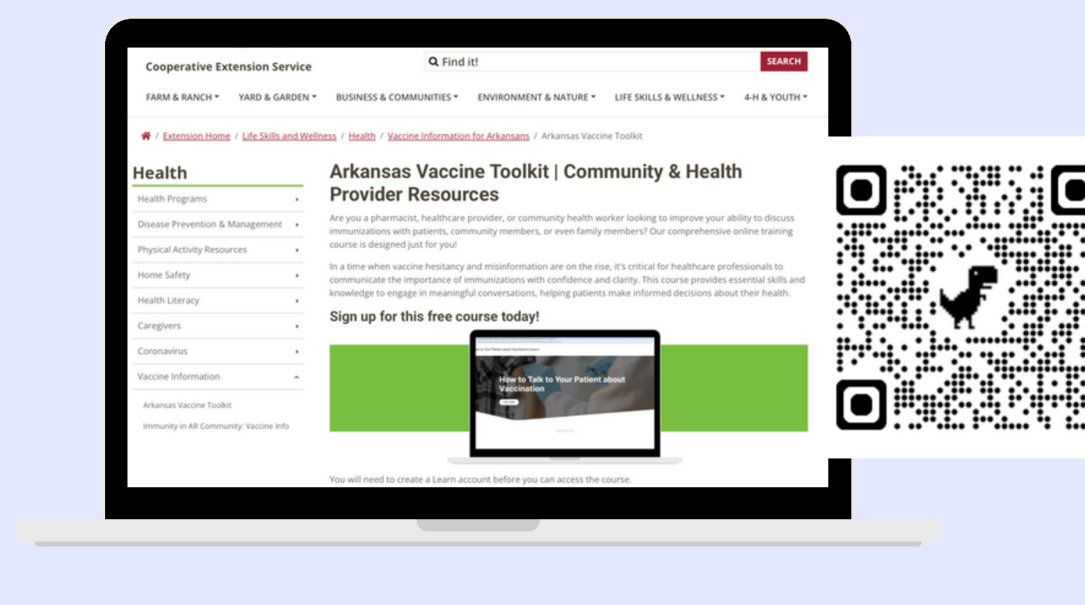
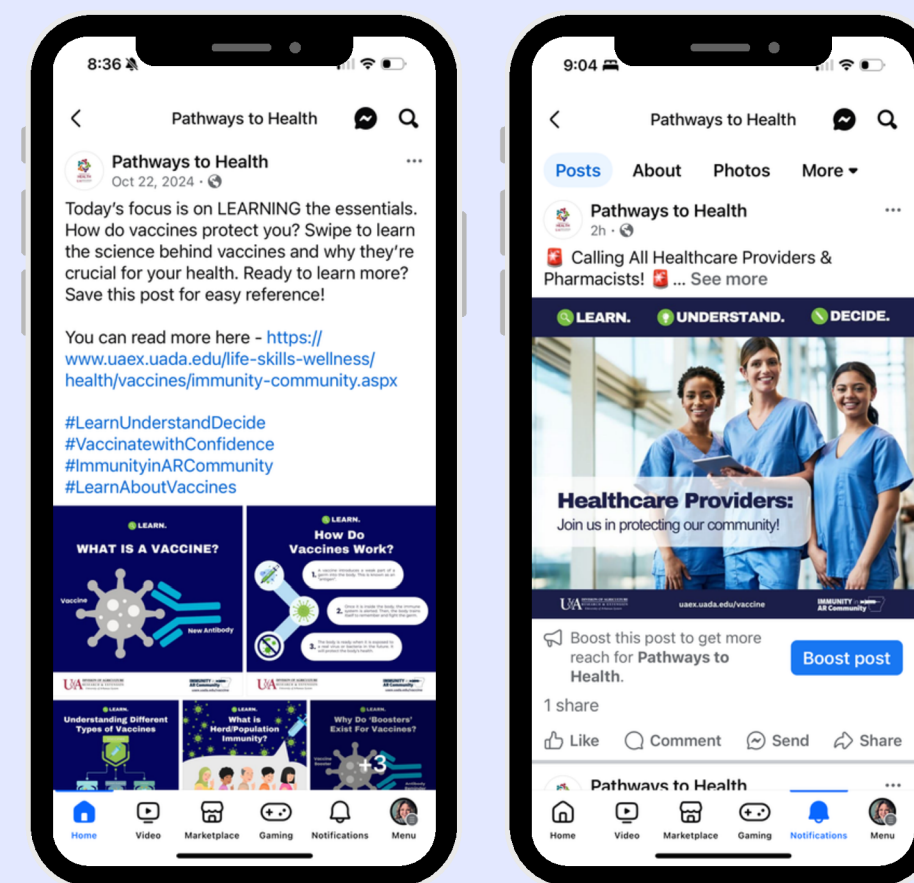
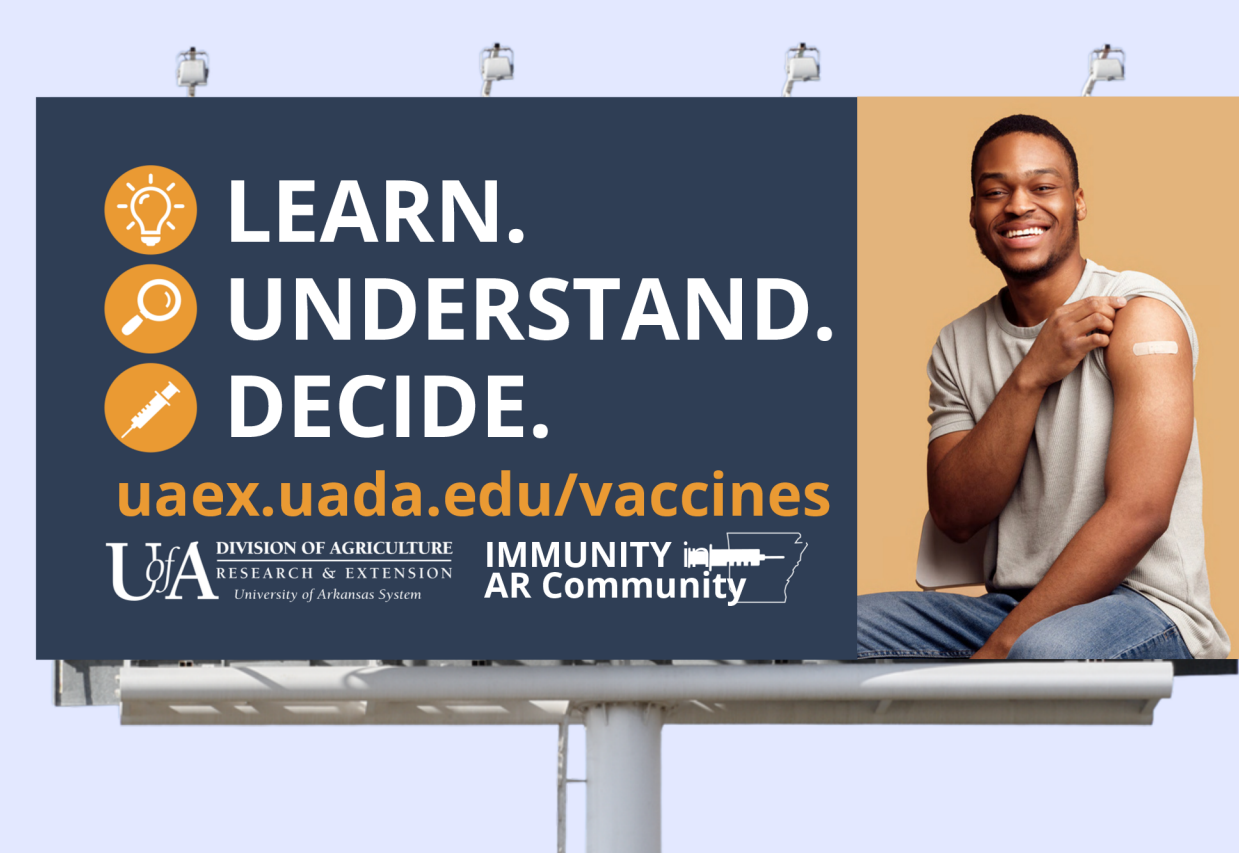
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR VACCINE ACCESS

- ARcare Collaboration:
 - Helped deliver 2,500+ vaccines in 22 priority counties.
 - ARcare’s Mobile Unit provided 500 additional vaccines in rural areas.
 - This Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) partnership increased vaccine access for uninsured adults.
- Integrated vaccine education into food pantries, local health fairs, libraries, and senior centers to reach high-risk populations.
- Equipped community pharmacists with vaccine messaging assets to promote clinic locations and combat vaccine fatigue.



TARGETED OUTREACH & SOCIAL MEDIA

- Created bilingual (English/Spanish) digital content addressing vaccine safety and hesitancy.
- Implemented social media campaigns to amplify messages about vaccine safety and effectiveness.
- Utilized billboards and newspaper ads to bring awareness non-biased vaccine resources developed by the UADA.
- Scan the QR code or follow the link to see the online toolkit: uaex.uada.edu/vaccines



EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

Online Course

- Launched the *How to Talk to Your Patient about Vaccination* online course for healthcare and Extension professionals.
- Integrated motivational interviewing techniques to help providers engage hesitant individuals.
 - 34 registrants - 20 completions - 90% Course Grade Average
 - 13 course evaluations (e.g., % Increase in confidence post-training)

- Scan the QR Code below or follow the link to enroll in our online training course and start enhancing your vaccine communication skills: <https://learn.uada.edu/>
- Search for the *How to Talk to Your Patient about Vaccination* course and enroll!



Course Impact

% (n)	Course Impact - Post Assessment	% (n)	Course Impact - Post Assessment
100% (13)	Intend to communicate with patients about immunizations confidently.	100% (13)	Believe discussing immunizations with patients is acceptable and useful.
100% (13)	Believe it is ethically important to communicate about immunizations.	100% (13)	Found communication about immunizations to be easy and beneficial.
93% (12)	Feel confident about communicating with patients about immunizations if needed.	93% (12)	Plan to actively engage in immunization communication.

Education Integration Pilot

How to Talk Your Doctor: This program aims to build participant confidence when talking to their healthcare provider, equipping the participant with the right questions to ask, and provides helpful tools to take along to their visits.

Learn. Understand. Decide. about Vaccines: Integrated into the *How to Talk to Your Doctor* program, this is a structured educational session focusing on vaccine science, safety, and effectiveness providing participants with the knowledge to make informed decisions on vaccination.

Preliminary Data:

- Course Enrollment - 90 participants across 9 sessions in 5 counties.
- Evaluation Findings -
 - Top Motivations for Vaccination:
 - 1) Protecting their own health
 - 2) Protecting the health of family/friends
 - Top Barriers to Access:
 - 1) Lack of transportation
 - 2) Being too busy
 - 3) Difficulty scheduling an appointment
 - Perceived Vaccine Accessibility:
 - 12% feel that getting vaccinated is “somewhat difficult” or “very difficult” for them.
 - 88% find it “somewhat” to “very easy” to access a vaccine.
 - Vaccine Safety Perception: 11.98% of respondents shifted from believing vaccines are “*not at all safe*” to viewing them as at least “*a little safe*” or more.
 - Trust in Public Health Departments:
 - 44% of respondents still do not trust public health departments that recommend vaccines after the intervention.
 - Vaccine Perception & Intentions:
 - Overall vaccine perception improved by 35.1% post-evaluation.
 - Trust in vaccines as a method to prevent serious illness/death was *maintained*.
 - 6% increase in intention to discuss vaccines with a healthcare provider.
 - 19% increase in intention to schedule a vaccination appointment.
 - 17% increase in intention to talk to a family member or friend about vaccines.