

Lessons from Vaccine Hesitancy Listening Sessions at NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center

Purpose: The listening sessions were held to understand community concerns, beliefs and experiences related to childhood immunizations among Black/African American-Identifying and Spanish-speaking Latine community members. In total 12 Latine and 10 Black/African American-identifying community members participated in the two separate sessions. Below is the outcome of the sessions.

Prompts/Question themes	Latine/ Hispanic/ Spanish Speaking	Black/ African American
<i>Common Concerns and Questions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COVID-19 vaccines: new strains, unclear schedule, unknown long-term effects - Secondary side effects - Different side effects for different vaccines - Understanding vaccine mechanisms - Legal and medical obligations - Benefits for children and communities - Risks of not vaccinating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns about multiple shots being given at once - Side effects of vaccines - Skepticism about vaccine effectiveness - Lack of education about vaccine contents and functions
<i>Decision-Making and Trusted Sources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child’s primary care doctor - Nurses during appointments - County public health nurses - Vaccine pamphlets and print materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-directed research (Google, online sources) - Trust peers and friends for shared experiences
<i>Cultural and Personal Beliefs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - News information - Religious beliefs - Trust in natural medicine - Misconceptions about vaccine necessity - Influence of elders and extended family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following parents' decisions - Family history influences vaccine views
<i>Community Experiences</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overwhelming information during appointments - News stories about preventable diseases - Misinformation about COVID vaccines - Social norms of vaccination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports of vaccinated people still getting sick - Doubts about vaccine effectiveness
<i>Challenges in Vaccination</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canceled appointments due to late arrivals - Lack of childcare during appointments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling disrespected or dismissed, especially young mothers

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation difficulties - Inconvenient appointment times - Discrimination and racism in care settings - Lack of confidence in providers - Insensitivity during vaccinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incomplete information from providers - Misinformation about vaccines - Feeling pressured to vaccinate - Logistical issues with scheduling multiple children - Transportation issues
Healthcare Access Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty securing appointments - Perceptions of emergency room services - Use of ER as a workaround - Inadequate explanation of diagnoses and treatments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive experiences with some health plans - Challenges with scheduling and transportation
Positive Healthcare Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct communication with children - Positive attitude and active listening from providers - Use of visual tools for comprehension - Providers speaking Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - System support and access to resources - Clear answers to questions - Discovery of helpful services - Support from doula during pregnancy
Negative Healthcare Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language barriers and interpreter logistics - Trust issues with interpreters - Harsh treatment of children - Dismissive scheduling and reception staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling unheard or invalidated, especially teen moms - Frustration with student involvement without consent - Insurance not covering certain services - Lack of clear information on high-risk pregnancies - Providers not explaining diagnoses - Neglectful or insensitive behavior during delivery and ER visits - Delays in pain management during labor - Repeated prescriptions without identifying root causes
Provider Treatment of Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stereotypes and assumptions about Latine families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Condescending attitudes from some providers - Quality of care varies by facility

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Racism and dismissiveness - Positive experiences in diverse and culturally humble clinics - Frustration with interpreter use - Lack of cultural understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative provider attitudes lead to tension or disengagement
<i>Trusted Community Figures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternal instinct and parenting experience - Family members, especially elders - Compassionate and knowledgeable providers - Culturally aligned messengers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Therapists, doulas, lactation consultants - Elders and experienced family members - non-medical support staff
<i>Effective Information and Outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing information before appointments - Clear explanations of consequences of not vaccinating - Social media outreach - Transparency about side effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mom groups offering education and peer support - Culturally congruent providers, especially Black doctors - Media such as podcasts, newsletters, social media - Real stories from community members
<i>Improvements for Timely Immunizations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanded appointment times after 3 PM - Weekend appointments - More Spanish-speaking and culturally competent providers - Insurance-based vaccination incentives - Culturally representative campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start vaccine education earlier in pregnancy - Combat misinformation directly - Clarity around vaccine rights - More providers who "look like us" - Flexible or phased vaccine schedules
<i>Supporting New Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group education sessions in Spanish - Active involvement of partners - Introduction of vaccine schedules during prenatal visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be professional, respectful, and empathetic - Build trust with clear, early, and detailed information - Explain vaccine contents - Share provider's own experiences
<i>Additional Insights</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social workers - Positive care coordination experiences - Support from public health nurses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No additional comments noted during this session

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Crosscutting Themes

Themes	Details
Strong Desire for Transparency and Education Around Vaccines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding what vaccines do and how they work inside the body - Information on short- and long-term side effects, especially for newer vaccines like COVID-19 - Explanation of why multiple shots are administered at once and the purpose of each - Risks to individuals and communities if a child is not vaccinated
Structural and Logistical Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scheduling challenges, including cancellations due to minor delays - Transportation difficulties, especially for families with limited vehicle access or multiple children - Inflexible appointment times, often limited to mornings or weekdays - Interpreter-related delays or limited access to providers who speak the family's language
Demand for Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value of providers who reflect their community (racially, culturally, linguistically) - Need for care teams trained in cultural humility - Importance of receiving information in their primary language, communicated with cultural relevance
Importance of Early, Proactive Education During Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporating immunization information into prenatal classes - Educating both parents, not just the birthing parent - Offering group-based or community-hosted sessions in trusted settings (e.g., clinics, churches, WIC centers)
Positive Perceptions of Respectful, Compassionate Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providers taking time to listen and address concerns - Clear explanations of diagnoses and vaccine plans - Acknowledgment of children's emotions during visits - Demonstration of warmth, patience, and humility

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Key Differences between the two populations

Themes	Latine/Hispanic/ Spanish Speakers	Black/African American
Source of Information and Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rely on in-person conversations with providers and public health nurses - Trust backed by printed materials in Spanish - Trust rooted in medical personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rely on peer networks, doulas, and independent research (especially Google) - Skepticism about provider motives and pharmaceutical marketing
Types of Mistrust and Provider Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues related to language barriers and interpreter use - Concerns about accuracy and impersonality - Discriminatory or dismissive attitudes tied to ethnicity and language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age-related dismissal, especially of young or teen mothers - Concerns about racism and disrespect in hospital and delivery settings - Historical mistrust and repeated examples of not being believed or heard
Vaccine-Specific Hesitancy and Messaging Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions and uncertainty around COVID-19 vaccines - Concerns about side effects, necessity, and new strains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General vaccine skepticism - Confusion about vaccine necessity if people still get sick - Mistrust in vaccine ingredients
Role of Community Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust family elders, maternal instincts, and community-facing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust doulas, lactation consultants, therapists, and peers - Emphasize representation in media and care staff