

Background and Purpose

The effects of COVID-19 have been felt on a global scale. However, the effects of not being vaccinated are leading to unnecessary death and infection as well as the formation of new mutations and strains. Vaccine hesitancy has impacts on both the local community as well as the global community. The St. Charles County Department of Public Health reported 70-90% of hospitalizations are due to unvaccinated people and there is a decreasing number of people aged 14-20 getting vaccinated. At the time only 36% of that age group was fully vaccinated.

The St. Charles County Department of Public Health reached out to us as the vaccination rates for COVID-19 in high school and college-age students are very low in the area. Our team worked to formulate a campaign that would increase vaccination in highschoolers and young adults.

Data Collection

In order to understand why vaccine uptake among that age group was so low, team members interviewed high school capstone students from the St Charles Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS). It was learned the following reasons are the most probable causes for vaccine hesitancy among that age group:

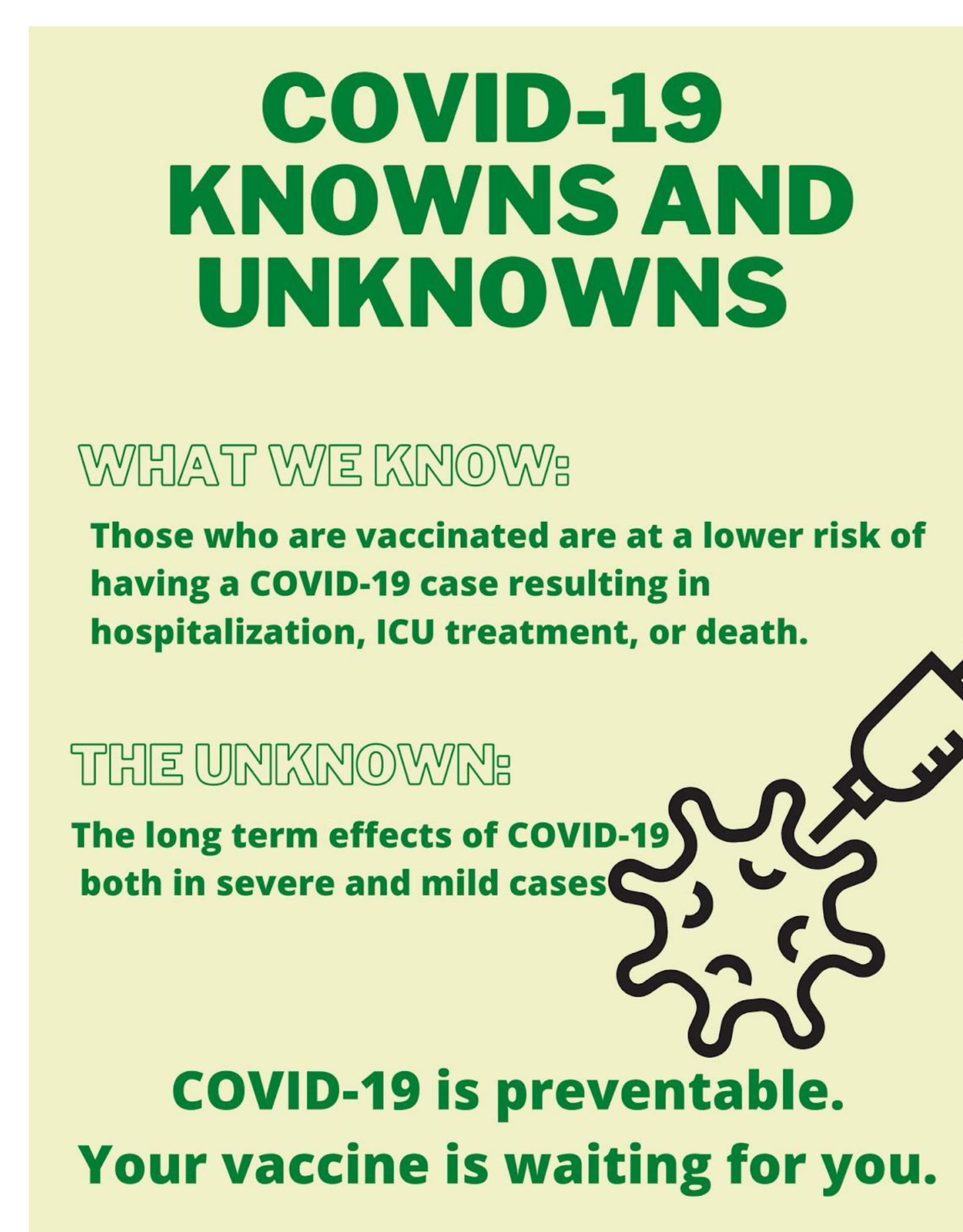
- Politics
- Parental views
- Peer views
- Access to vaccinations
- Fear of the unknown

"Heavy political persuasions"

"What if there's unknown Longterm effects"

"Parental controls and opinions"

Materials



Goals and Objectives

We aimed to increase self-efficacy in teenagers, discredit common myths and misconceptions regarding the vaccine, by gathering succinct facts to encourage COVID-19 vaccination.

- In the next 3 months, 40% of high school students will be self-empowered to have their own beliefs.
- By the end of the campaign, high school students will be able to name 3 reasons of importance for the vaccine.
- To increase vaccination rates, 40% of believed misconceptions regarding the vaccine will be diminished in the next 3 months.

Methods

Social Cognitive Theory

We applied the Social Cognitive theory that describes a dynamic ongoing process in which personal factors, environmental factors, and human behavior exert influence on each other.

Constructs:

- Behavioral capacity
- Observational learning
- Self-efficacy

Current cultural beliefs of our audience:

- Vaccines are unimportant
- Covid isn't taken seriously

A mix of humor and fear are effective approaches when targeting this audience.

"We're healthy so it won't harm us"

"It's just like the Flu" -CAPS student

Implementation

After forming messages and materials, the next steps were implementing the messages through channels that would reach the target audience.

It was necessary to reach out to:

- CAPS faculty
- Lindenwood SAC supervisors

This was to ensure the posters would be in classrooms, buildings, and areas commonly used by the target audience members.

The locations for setting up the following posters were in

- The CAPS classroom
- Lindenwood buildings such as: The LARC, SAC, Spellman Center, Evans Commons

As well as utilizing social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter. Specifically through accounts run by Lindenwood Public Health Student Association and Lindenwood Athletics

Conclusion

This campaign has taught our team members the importance of specifying the message to the group you are trying to reach and that messages may not always come across how they are intended.