

TIPS FOR ASIAN AMERICAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



TIPS FOR ASIAN AMERICAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AA NHPI) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This guide was developed courtesy of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA NHPI) Interest Group within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL). The purpose of this document is to provide helpful insights to new CEAL researchers and community partners seeking to engage with AA NHPI populations. The team is led by Dr. Keawe Kaholokula (University of Hawai'i at Manoa) and Dr. Grace Ma (Temple University) and includes members from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, Mississippi State Department of Health, NICOS Chinese Health Coalition, NIH, NYU Grossman School of Medicine, Philly Counts, Scripps, SoCal Pacific Islander COVID-19 Response Team, UCLA, University of California at Riverside, University of California at San Francisco, University of Houston, University of North Texas Health Science Center. A special thank you to Kawaiopua Alo and Kawen Young (SoCal Pacific Islander Response Team), Mona AuYoung (Scripps) and Gloria Kim (UCLA) for sharing their insights, expertise, and recommendations for CEAL teams as well as others.

How to Best Engage and Communicate: Lessons Learned So Far from COVID-19

Face-to-Face Outreach — Direct offline communication and support are often needed and most effective for cultural and linguistic reasons. This helps to overcome language, digital, and age barriers.

- **Consider partnering with known/trusted community partners** and media channels, especially to help with needed and culturally appropriate translations
- **Gain familiarity with areas where community members gather**
 - Churches/church leaders
 - Some AA grocery stores (some have bulletin boards or send out mailers to returning customers)
 - Parks (in some ethnic enclaves, there are recreational places where elders often gather)
- **Link to trusted information sources.** For example, the [Asian American Voices](#) website collects incidents about linguistic barriers to vaccine access

Awareness and Sharing of the Recommended Channels and Mechanisms for Communication and Misinformation Spread

- **WeChat** is a popular chat environment used amongst Asian communities; otherwise, **Facebook and Instagram** have a lot of COVID content
- **Ethnic and/or in-language** newspapers, TV, radio stations, social media channels
- **Measures of English proficiency are imperfect** because respondents don't want to say that they are not capable of understanding English (same with measures of computer literacy)

Understanding and Awareness of the Development of New Words and Concepts Related to COVID

- **“Koviki”** is the Pasifika transliteration of the word COVID-19; **some cultures have words to describe the concept of disaster and not specific terms**; these concepts can be specific to time periods/events, so people can have a common point of reference

Cultural Commonality of Respect

- **Behaviors that are protective of elders** and the community (i.e., handwashing, mask wearing) **tend to be adopted**
- **Focus on entire household/families** including access to vaccines, because decisions about health are often made as a family
 - Many members of the community live in multi-generational households
 - Families are motivated by keeping everyone safe and by service to their communities
 - Broadening focus on the family unit is a pathway to effectively reaching trusted elders in communities
- **It is helpful to have clear messaging about how to keep populations at greatest risk for COVID-19 safe** (explaining to young people that entering and leaving households where at-risk family members are quarantining can still put those members at higher risk)

Acknowledge and Understand Relevant Concerns

- **Acknowledge and address anti-AA NHPI sentiment** and the resulting fear in your interventions. This resulting climate of fear is often a bigger barrier to accessing vaccine and testing access than is hesitancy
- **Acknowledge concerns** about immigration status, insurance status, costs, and vaccine eligibility

Effective Storytelling Tools to Create Community Impact

- **“Talk Story”** series aimed at talking about COVID, vaccination fears, and development
- Many cultures are **based on oral histories and storytelling**

Additional Resources

Central Repository of Information for AA NHPI Communities

The CEAL AA NHPI Interest Group has collected and made accessible resources that can be shared on the CEAL website [here](#)