

Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council

#LookingForward Toolkit



Trusted resources and impactful stories are powerful tools to inform people about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine. During the pandemic, we especially want to help ensure individuals with disabilities have the resources they need to remain healthy. Please join us in this initiative!

Why spread the word?

We want to help keep individuals throughout Iowa healthy, which means protecting them against COVID-19. Receiving the vaccine and booster is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting the virus, but we know that it may also sound scary. By sharing more information, resources, and personal stories, we can help people understand that the vaccine isn't something to be afraid of! We can encourage Iowans with disabilities—as well as their family members and support professionals—to get vaccinated and create a safer environment for our entire community.

How to Help

Share our resources with your organization, friends, family, and anyone else who may be connected to the disability community. We want to reach people across the state of Iowa and beyond! We've put together some reliable resources that people can use to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and get help scheduling their vaccine appointments.

Feel free to use our email template and any of our example social media posts below to spread the word. Be sure to include the #LookingForward hashtag so other people and organizations can also get involved!

Email Template

Use this message template to share this toolkit and other resources with your audience.

Hi ____,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the Iowa DD Council wants to help keep Iowans with disabilities protected against the virus. Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and booster is the best way to prevent the spread of the virus, and our goal is to educate individuals with disabilities—as well as their family members and support staff—about the benefits and accessibility of the vaccine.

Please join this initiative by participating in our #LookingForward campaign! Through this campaign, we will share vaccine resources, personal stories from community advocates, advice from medical professionals and DSPs, and more. We want to keep looking to the future and being able to safely take part in the activities we've all been missing.

Feel free to share any of our content with your audience and help us keep #LookingForward to a healthier Iowa!

Thank you,

[Name]

Social Media Posts

Share this content on your social media pages to help people access important COVID-19 vaccine resources! The posts below are separated into groups by topic. Feel free to use the text, images, and videos provided.

TOPIC: GENERAL INFORMATION

The CDC now recommends vaccination for everyone 5 years old and older and boosters for everyone 12 and older. Visit their website for more information about which vaccines are recommended for different age groups. #LookingForward

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html>



What is a vaccine? A vaccine is medicine. It usually comes in a shot. It protects you from getting sick. Each vaccine protects you from one illness. For example, the flu vaccine protects you from getting the flu. It does not protect you from getting a cold.

(Via Green Mountain Self-Advocates: <https://bit.ly/3iPgFoN>)

Sometimes medical terms that your doctor uses can be confusing. Here is a list of some common terms people use when talking about COVID-19 with explanations of what they each mean.

<https://bit.ly/3x3pwvF>

(Via Green Mountain Self-Advocates: <https://bit.ly/3r80JCT>)

Do you know how to protect yourself against COVID-19? Do you know if it's safe for you to travel to other places? This decision-making tree from the Green Mountain Self-Advocates can help you make good decisions about going out in public during the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://bit.ly/3NvgZqU>

The CDC has created graphics that show the process of getting a vaccine! Check out the full story to learn more: <https://bit.ly/3tRrtZW>

This toolkit from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is a great resource for parents of adolescents ages 5-17! <https://wecandothis.hhs.gov/resource/parents-toolkit>

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) created an easy-to-understand video with the information you should know about COVID-19.

<https://youtu.be/KHgCKyNtzDY>

People who are immunocompromised have a higher risk of getting sick with COVID-19. This video has helpful information about what it means to be immunocompromised and how the vaccine can help keep you healthy. <https://youtu.be/sgta4m2xt1M>

What are you most looking forward to doing this summer? Going to the movie theater, watching a baseball game, hosting BBQs with family and friends—there are so many great options! But before you get back to all these fun activities, make sure you're ready to do them safely.

What are you #LookingForward to doing this summer? Do your part to help keep yourself and others healthy by getting the COVID-19 vaccine so we can safely enjoy all of Iowa's exciting activities.

Visit the @IowaDDCouncil's website or follow them on Facebook for more vaccine resources!

People across Iowa are #LookingForward to so many exciting activities with friends and family—and most of all, they're happy to be able to do them safely! Watch the video below to learn why some of our self-advocates, family advocates, and providers decided to get the COVID-vaccine and help keep their community members healthy.

<https://youtu.be/EyJqv--Lv2k>

We're #LookingForward to a summer full of exciting events and gatherings with friends and family—but it's important to make sure we're doing these activities safely! Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is an effective way to help keep ourselves, our loved ones, and other people in our communities healthy.

Help us keep #LookingForward and creating a healthier community! By getting vaccinated against COVID-19, you can play an important role in protecting others from getting sick.

Some people can't receive the COVID-19 vaccine because of their health conditions. That's why it's important for those of us who are able to get vaccinated to schedule an appointment! We want to keep #LookingForward to a healthy environment for everyone.

Want to talk to someone about the COVID-19 vaccine before you schedule your appointment? Visit www.iowacompass.org for information and support. @compassiowa provides services and supports that will keep you confidently #LookingForward to your vaccine decision.

Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to help protect yourself, Iowans with disabilities, our senior citizens, and your loved ones against the virus. It's quick, effective, and free!

Visit the @IowaDDCouncil's website or follow them on Facebook for more resources.

With the vaccine, we can keep #LookingForward to exciting days ahead.

TOPIC: COVID-19 RECOVERY AND BOOSTERS

Certain immunocompromised people and people over the age of 50 who received their first booster at least 4 months ago are now eligible for another booster. Visit the FDA's website to find out if you are eligible.

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-second-booster-dose-two-covid-19-vaccines-older-and>

For the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the White House published a comprehensive package of resources for people with disabilities, including people with long COVID. The ACL has compiled some of the resources that most directly impact our community. #LookingForward

<https://acl.gov/covid19/resources-people-experiencing-long-covid>

How long do you need to quarantine if you have COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has the virus? What steps should you take next? Use this tool from the CDC to find out.

#LookingForward

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

When you get the COVID-19 vaccine, always get your second shot—even if you had side effects with the first one. You need both shots for the vaccine to work. <https://bit.ly/3iPgFoN>

Do you need an at-home COVID-19 test? You can order them for free! Visit covidtests.gov to learn more.

Should you get vaccinated even if you've already had COVID-19? Yes!

According to the CDC, "getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 provides added protection to your immune system. People who already had COVID-19 and do not get vaccinated after their recovery are more likely to get COVID-19 again than those who get vaccinated after their recovery."

Visit the CDC's website to learn more: <https://bit.ly/36AV6WL>

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION AND EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

Does your job require you to work outside of your home? Be sure to keep these helpful tips in mind during the COVID-19 pandemic. <https://bit.ly/3LoUMc7>

(Via Green Mountain Self-Advocates: <https://bit.ly/3r80JCT>)

Get a FREE ride to your COVID-19 vaccine appointment! DART is allowing passengers to ride to their appointments for free on all Local and Express Routes, On Call, and Paratransit's Bus Plus services. Take a look at the bus stops near you and start #LookingForward to your next ride.

<https://ridedart.com/news-archive/dart-offers-free-rides-covid-vaccine-appointments>

Are you worried about not having access to transportation to get your COVID-19 vaccine? Vaxi Taxi (@1855VAXIOWA) can help! With this service, pharmacists can deliver vaccines to your home or office. Just submit your request and receive a vaccine in a location where you feel comfortable. Vaxi Taxi also hosts pop-up clinics with vaccines available. <https://www.vaxitaxi.com/>

Keep #LookingForward to a healthier future.

TOPIC: SCHEDULING VACCINE APPOINTMENTS AND FINDING LOCATIONS

Need help getting a COVID-19 vaccine or test? The Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL) is here to assist you. Contact DIAL by calling 888-677-1199 Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Eastern) or email DIAL@usaginganddisability.org. #LookingForward

Need help finding your local health department or pharmacies providing the COVID-19 vaccine? There are a few easy ways.

- Visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>
- Call 1-800-232-0233
- Text your zip code to 438829

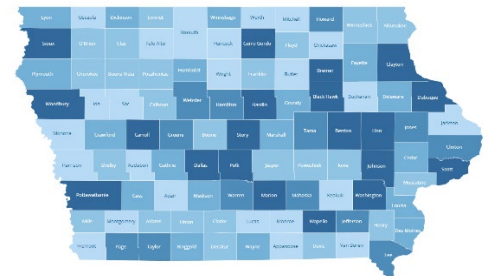
Not sure how to schedule your COVID-19 vaccine appointment? Vaccinate Iowa makes it easy. Call 211 or 800-244-7431 to speak with a vaccine navigator who will help find a time and place that works for you! You can also use their online tool to search for vaccine providers in your area.

<https://vaccinate.iowa.gov/>

Let's keep #LookingForward to safely enjoying the summer!

Find all of the COVID-19 vaccine providers in your area with this easy-to-use map from coronavirus.iowa.gov! Click on your county to see all the nearby vaccination sites and ways you can contact them.

<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/pages/vaccineinformation#VaccineProviders>



With the vaccine, we can keep #LookingForward to a healthier, happier summer.

If you have a busy schedule, it might seem tough to find a time for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. But now, many providers are accepting walk-ins—with no appointment needed! Take a look at the providers in your area, and call or check their website to see if walk-ins are an option.

The sooner we all get vaccinated, the sooner we can safely get back to the activities we've been #LookingForward to.

DIAL (the Disability Information and Access Line) is making it easier for people with disabilities to find COVID-19 vaccination locations in their communities. DIAL helps callers make vaccination appointments

and connects them to local services like transportation that make the vaccine more accessible. The hotline can also provide information and resources to answer questions and address concerns about the vaccines.

Call 888-677-1199 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. or click here to learn more: <https://acl.gov/DIAL>

Let's keep #LookingForward to a healthier future.

There are many ways to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and schedule your appointment! You can call 2-1-1 for help setting up a time at a location near you. Or, if you'd rather do it online, you can visit www.vaccinate.iowa.gov.

Let's keep #LookingForward to healthier days ahead.

TOPIC: POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Talk to your doctor about what will happen when you get the COVID-19 vaccine. There are some side effects. For example:

- Your arm will be sore where you get the shot (just like when you get a flu shot).
- You might feel tired or have a fever after you get the shot.

(Via Green Mountain Self-Advocates: <https://bit.ly/3iPgFoN>)

If you're scared of the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine, you're not alone. But most people who receive the vaccine will have very mild side effects—just ask our advocates! They've shared the stories of their vaccination experiences, and they want you to know there's nothing to worry about.

<https://youtu.be/EyJqv--Lv2k>

Lisa Spencer has a tip for anyone who doesn't know if they should receive the COVID-19 vaccine. "If you're not sure, talk to your doctor and consult with them. They'll give the best advice."

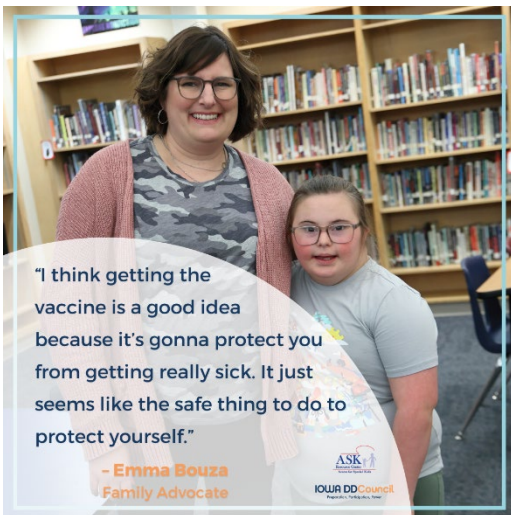
<https://youtu.be/5XfGWyaJT14>

"There is potential to bring [us] back to normalcy with the vaccination...I would strongly recommend to consider the COVID vaccines. More and more proof is coming out that all are safe," says Dr. Shah, who works at Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines. <https://youtu.be/TkT-s4y2yS4>

ADVICE FROM OUR ADVOCATES

Emma Bouza, Hawarden – Family Advocate

<https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>



Emma Bouza's daughter Ruby has Down syndrome. In this video, Emma explains why that means Ruby is at a higher risk for getting sick from COVID-19, why her family decided to get the vaccine, and what they were able to do after being vaccinated!

<https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>

"I think getting the vaccine is a good idea because it's gonna protect you from getting really sick. It just seems like the safe thing to do to protect yourself." – Emma Bouza, Family Advocate

<https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>

“I think we need to always be cognizant of doing what we can to protect everybody around us.” – Emma Bouza,

Family Advocate <https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>

“Since we were all vaccinated, we actually went on vacation. We’re finally starting to get out and do a little more stuff, too, just more comfortable having [Ruby] around larger groups of people.” – Emma Bouza, Family Advocate <https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>

Rob Fisher, Waterloo – DD Council Member and Self-Advocate

<https://youtu.be/FnvcD-h9MJ8>



“Don’t be nervous, don’t be scared. If there’s pain in your arm [after the vaccine], it’s okay. You can feel a little bit, and then it goes away and then you can go back to what you normally do!”

Rob Fisher, Waterloo – DD Council Member and Self-Advocate



What are you **#LookingForward** to?

A graphic featuring a quote from Rob Fisher. The quote is in white text on a dark blue background. Below the quote is an illustration of a man in a suit and a woman in a wheelchair. The background of the graphic is a photograph of Rob Fisher in a red polo shirt, smiling, with a HyVee store counter in the background.

“I want people to know, don’t be nervous, don’t be scared. If there’s pain in your arm [after the vaccine], it’s okay. You can feel a little bit, and then after you feel a little bit it goes away and then you can go back to what you normally do!” – Rob Fisher

Before his vaccine, Rob was #LookingForward to eating at restaurants and going back to the movie theater. Now, he's excited to be doing those activities safely!

Now that he's vaccinated, Rob is happy to be working at Hy-Vee again, sharing orange juice samples with his customers! Hy-Vee is also one of the providers accepting walk-ins for the vaccine. You don't need to schedule an appointment, just head over to the pharmacy!

Brady Werger, Glenwood – DD Council Vice Chair and Self-Advocate

<https://youtu.be/zkxpyoy2SCo>



The COVID-19 pandemic stopped Brady from being able to play guitar in his church band. But now that he's vaccinated, he's #LookingForward to playing the music he loves with his friends!

"The reason why I decided to get the COVID-19 vaccine is because, I wanted to make sure I stayed healthy, I wanted to make sure the people I work with and the people I live with are healthy."

"I'm a go, go, go person, I like to get out there and do things and volunteer and help and get together with mentors and volunteers, and when COVID started, it just put a damper to all that," said Brady. Now that he's received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, he can't wait to get back out into his community!

Lisa Yunek, Mason City – Family Advocate

<https://youtu.be/1yByCkPV7r8>



Lisa and her daughter Alecia had to decide whether getting the COVID-19 vaccine was the right choice for Alecia. After talking to her doctor and learning more about the vaccine, they decided it was the safest option—and they’re happy with their decision!

“What is the bigger risk? Will I get sicker with the vaccine or without the vaccine? We felt confident we would get sicker without it. And that was scarier.”

“With Down syndrome, there is a little bit higher risk of getting illnesses, and so we were very cautious in teaching Alecia what to do and how to have safe hygiene.” Learn what else Lisa had to say about how she and her family navigated the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We felt like with the vaccine, if there was a mild side effect—like there is with every other medicine that we take—then we should take it.”

Lisa Spencer, Johnston – Candeo, Self-Advocate

<https://youtu.be/5XfGWyaJT14>



From riding horses to going bowling, Lisa is #LookingForward to safely getting back to the activities she loves!

"I think people with disabilities should get the vaccine because it protects them, it protects their family."
– Lisa Spencer

Marcy Davis, Ankeny – Candeo, Service Provider

<https://youtu.be/wV96JawIVkg>



“Don't be nervous, don't be scared. If there's pain in your arm [after the vaccine], it's okay. You can feel a little bit, and then it goes away and then you can go back to what you normally do!”

Rob Fisher, Waterloo – DD Council Member and Self-Advocate

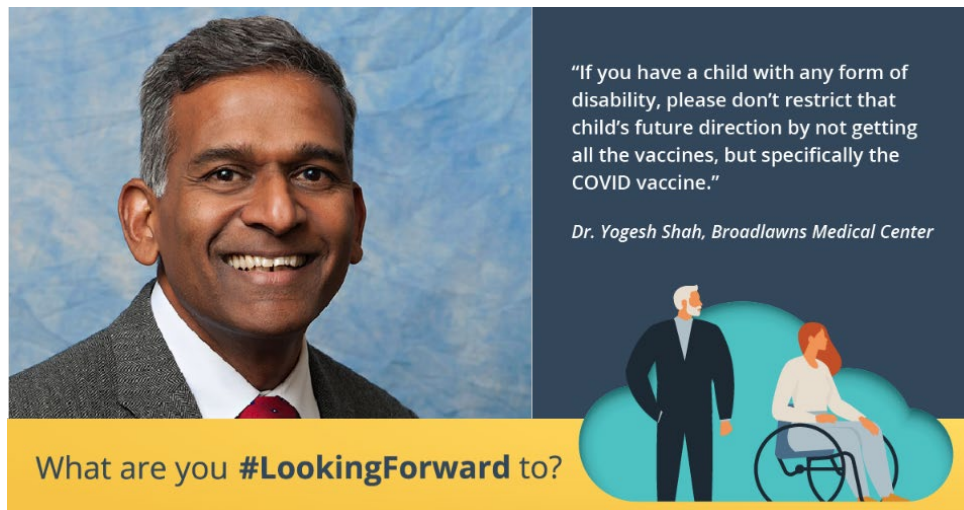
What are you **#LookingForward** to?

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Marcy was #LookingForward to spending time with her loved ones. After they all received their vaccinations, they were finally able to see each other again! “It wasn’t just that we were able to get together, we were able to get together and still feel safe,” she said.

“I really do believe people should be serious about getting the vaccine, especially those with disabilities. We understand that many people who have disabilities also have underlying health conditions. So it puts them at a higher risk of a more intense illness and potential loss of life, and, of course, we want all of our individuals that we support to be able to be healthy.” – Marcy Davis

Dr. Yogesh Shah, Broadlawns Medical Center

<https://youtu.be/TkT-s4y2yS4>



In order to achieve herd immunity, 60-70% of the U.S. population needs to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This will help reduce the risk of the virus returning in the future.

Hy-Vee and CVS are just a couple of the places that offer the COVID-19 vaccine. Find out which other resources Dr. Shah recommends using!

"It's extremely important that we protect ourselves and others through getting any vaccine, but especially COVID." – Dr. Shah

Lisa Heddens, Family Advocate

<https://youtu.be/foU-QXefmlo>



Lisa Heddens' son lives in a group home, and during COVID they were often unable to be near each other. "I was going to do whatever I could so that we didn't go through another scenario like that, and I didn't want anyone else to go through anything...like that," she said.

"Now [my son] is vaccinated, I'm vaccinated...we're together for dinner once in a while or we're going to the movies or out at a parade, just doing some of those normal things that we were doing before." – Lisa Heddens

Videos

Want to share all of our advocate videos? Here are the links to each one!

Emma and Ruby Bouza – Family and Self-Advocates: <https://youtu.be/VKEbD2NN5Rc>

Rob Fisher – Iowa DD Council Member, Self-Advocate: <https://youtu.be/FnvcD-h9MJ8>

Lisa Yunek – Family Advocate: <https://youtu.be/1yByCkPV7r8>

Marcy Davis – CEO of Candeo, Service Provider: <https://youtu.be/wV96JawIVkg>

Brady Werger – Iowa DD Council Vice Chair, Self-Advocate: <https://youtu.be/zkxpyoy2SCo>

Lisa Heddens – Family Advocate: <https://youtu.be/foU-QXefmlo>

Dr. Yogesh Shah – Broadlawns Medical Center: <https://youtu.be/TkT-s4y2yS4>

Lisa Spencer – Self-Advocate: <https://youtu.be/5XfGWyaJTI4>

Full video with all advocates: <https://youtu.be/EyJqv--Lv2k>

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