



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Cortland County Health Department

Cortland County Immunization Ambassador Program

Suzanne Osterhoudt, RN, BSN - Supervising Public Health Nurse


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Cortland County Health Department

Central New York and Western New York Annual Adult Immunization Meetings

October 2023

Overview

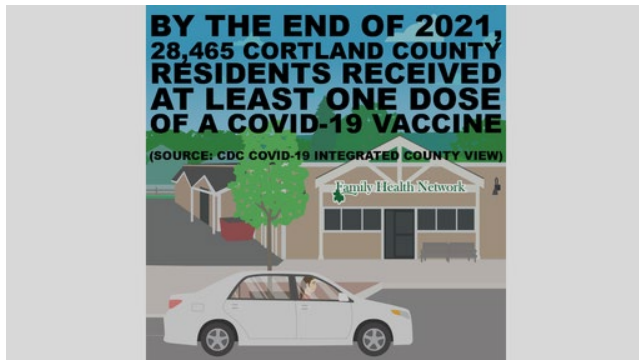
- Background (how we got here)
 - Cortland County COVID-19 Vaccine Response
 - Spring 2023 Reset
 - Ambassador Program Design
 - Program Model
 - Evidence Base
 - Program Activities
 - Initial Program Launch
 - Recruiting Volunteers
 - Planning Outreach
 - Successes/Challenges of First Events
 - Logistics
 - Budget
 - Staffing
 - Volunteer Management
 - Future Plans
- 

COVID-19 Vaccine Response Timeline

Spring/ Summer 2021: Pop Up Clinics



Spring 2022-Spring 2023: Social Marketing



Winter/ Spring 2021: Mass Vaccination Clinics



Winter 2022: Pop Up Clinics



Spring 2023 - Reset

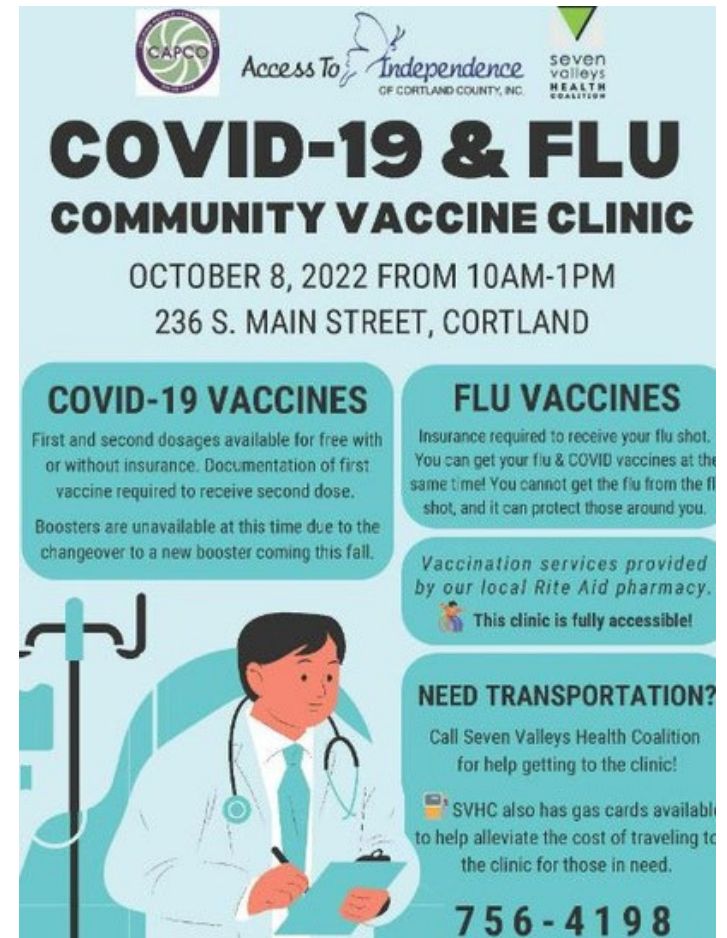
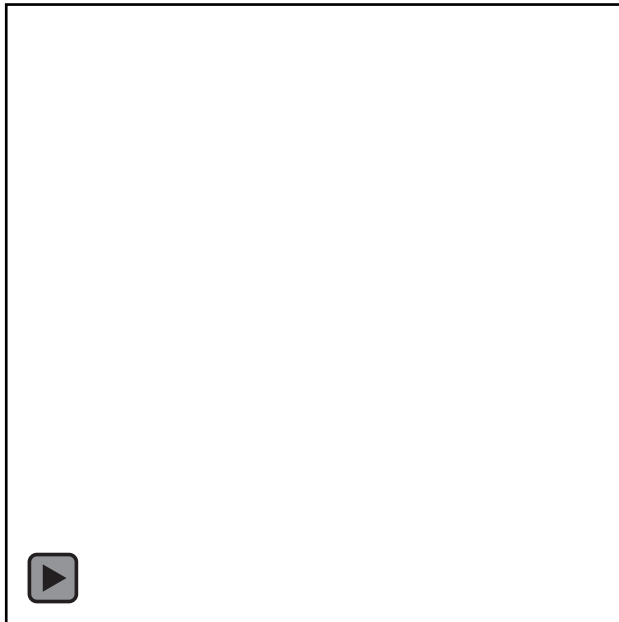
Goals of Reset:

- Look at COVID-19 Vaccine Outcomes in Cortland County (initial series and boosters)
 - Were the efforts in Cortland County working?
- Reassess the functions of the Immunization Coalition of Cortland County
 - Are key immunization partners engaged?
 - How can the coalition be better leveraged to fit the community's goals related to immunizations?
- Understand the current COVID-19 Vaccine landscape
 - What will COVID -19 vaccination look like moving into summer/fall 2023?
 - Who is our target population at this point?
- What would an Immunization Ambassador Program look like given the above information?
 - Had approval from December 2022 to implement program (submitted August 2022) - did we want to pursue this project and, if so, what changes would need to be made from initial plan?

Spring 2023 - Review of COVID-19 Vaccine Efforts

March 2022-2023 Vaccination Efforts

- Social Marketing Campaign - CCHD
 - Over 6,000,000 ads delivered from March 2022 to March 2023 via Meta, Snapchat, Radio, and newspaper
- Vaccine Clinics/Accessibility - Partners
 - Community clinics offered by Access to Independence of Cortland County and Area Agency on Aging.
 - Vaccines.gov heavily advertised via the social marketing campaign



COVID-19 & FLU COMMUNITY VACCINE CLINIC

OCTOBER 8, 2022 FROM 10AM-1PM
236 S. MAIN STREET, CORTLAND

COVID-19 VACCINES
First and second dosages available for free with or without insurance. Documentation of first vaccine required to receive second dose.
Boosters are unavailable at this time due to the changeover to a new booster coming this fall.

FLU VACCINES
Insurance required to receive your flu shot. You can get your flu & COVID vaccines at the same time! You cannot get the flu from the flu shot, and it can protect those around you.

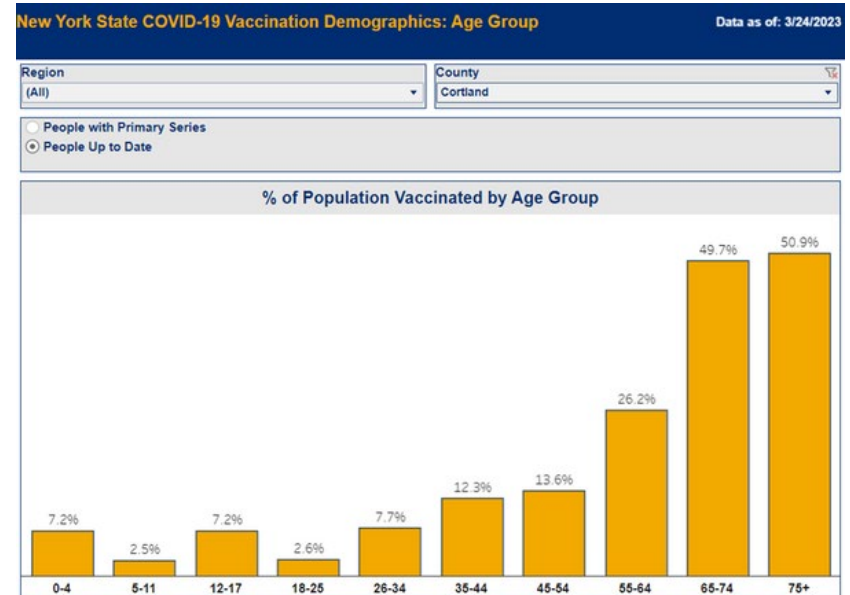
Vaccination services provided by our local Rite Aid pharmacy.
This clinic is fully accessible!

NEED TRANSPORTATION?
Call Seven Valleys Health Coalition for help getting to the clinic!
SVHC also has gas cards available to help alleviate the cost of traveling to the clinic for those in need.

756-4198

Spring 2023 - COVID-19 Vaccine Outcomes

- % of population fully vaccinated
 - February 2022 baseline = 58.1%
 - March 2023 = 61.5%
- % of population age 18-24 fully vaccinated
 - February 2022 baseline = 31.0%
 - March 2023 = 32.2%



New York State COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker: Vaccination Rate by Zip Code Vaccine Data as of 3/24/2023

☒ People with Primary series
☐ People Up to Date

Region: (All) County: Cortland Zipcode: (All)

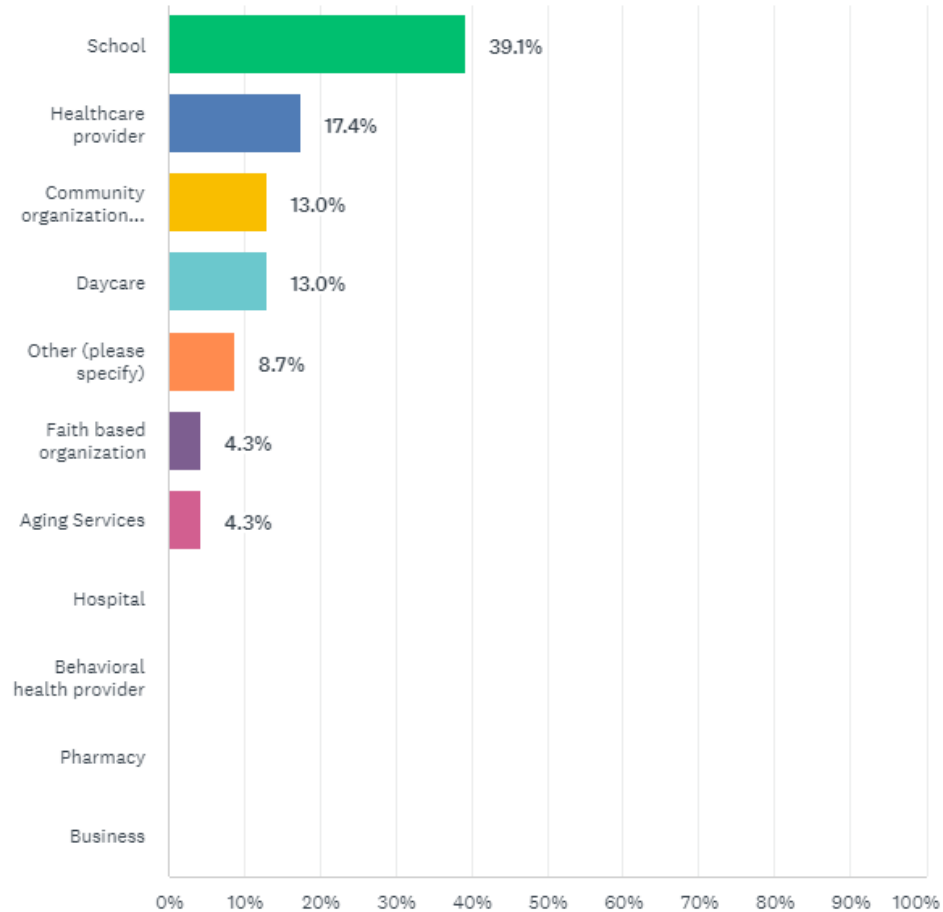
Vaccination Rate: 1.5% to 100.0%

Zipcode	City	County	Region	Vaccination Rate
13087	Little York	Cortland	Central New York	100.0%
13784	Harford	Cortland	Central New York	98.5%
13141	Preble	Cortland	Central New York	68.7%
13077	Homer	Cortland	Central New York	66.2%
13101	Mc Graw	Cortland	Central New York	63.8%
13040	Cincinnatus	Cortland	Central New York	60.3%
13045	Cortland	Cortland	Central New York	58.0%
13803	Marathon	Cortland	Central New York	54.5%
13158	Truxton	Cortland	Central New York	50.2%
13863	Willet	Cortland	Central New York	34.4%

Spring 2023 - Coalition Survey

What designation best fits your organization?

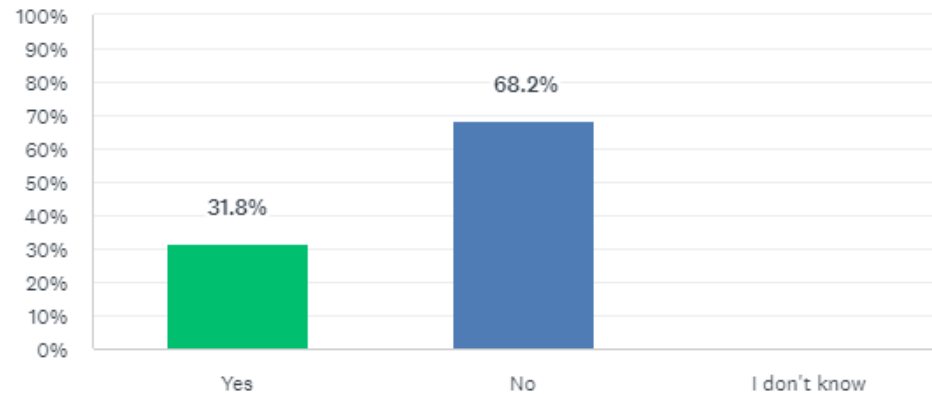
Answered: 23 Skipped: 0



Spring 2023 - Coalition Survey

In the past five years, has your organization regularly attended quarterly Immunization Coalition meetings?

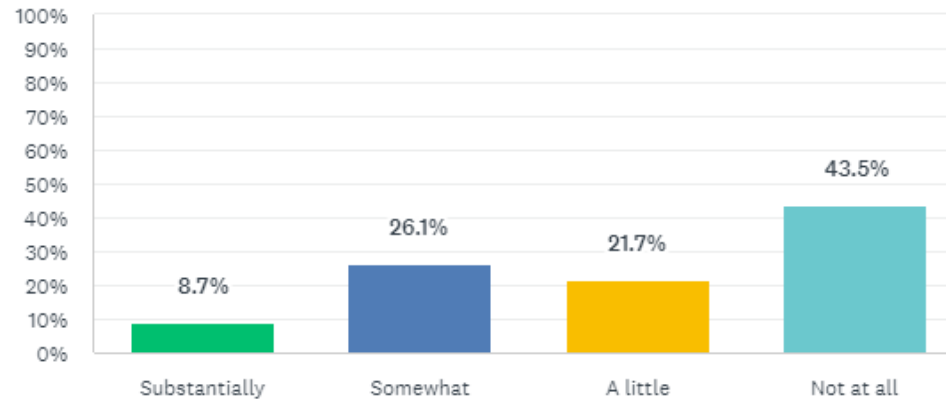
Answered: 22 Skipped: 1




Spring 2023 - Coalition Survey

In the past five years, to what extent has the immunization coalition's activities helped your organization with immunization efforts?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 0



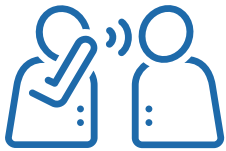
Spring 2023 Reset - Conclusions

- Results of current efforts, plus the changing COVID-19 vaccine landscape, indicated that we needed to shift our program direction related to COVID-19 vaccination efforts in Cortland County.
 - Over the past five years, coalition engagement has been low, mostly healthcare provider partners, and key stakeholders do not feel the coalition has helped immunization efforts for their programs.
 - Decided that we would pursue to the ambassador program (with some adjustments from original plan submitted to grant) to hopefully address both conclusions.
- 

Immunization Ambassador Programs

Immunization ambassadors train other community members to disseminate important health information in the community. These programs are most effective when they are trusted community members who share similar beliefs and characteristics with their peers.

Research Shows....



When people think that most people around them want to be vaccinated, they are more likely to be vaccinated as well.



Endorsement of vaccines from one's own social network can help spread credible information about vaccines.



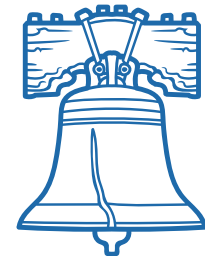
Scan for articles

Where Has it Worked...

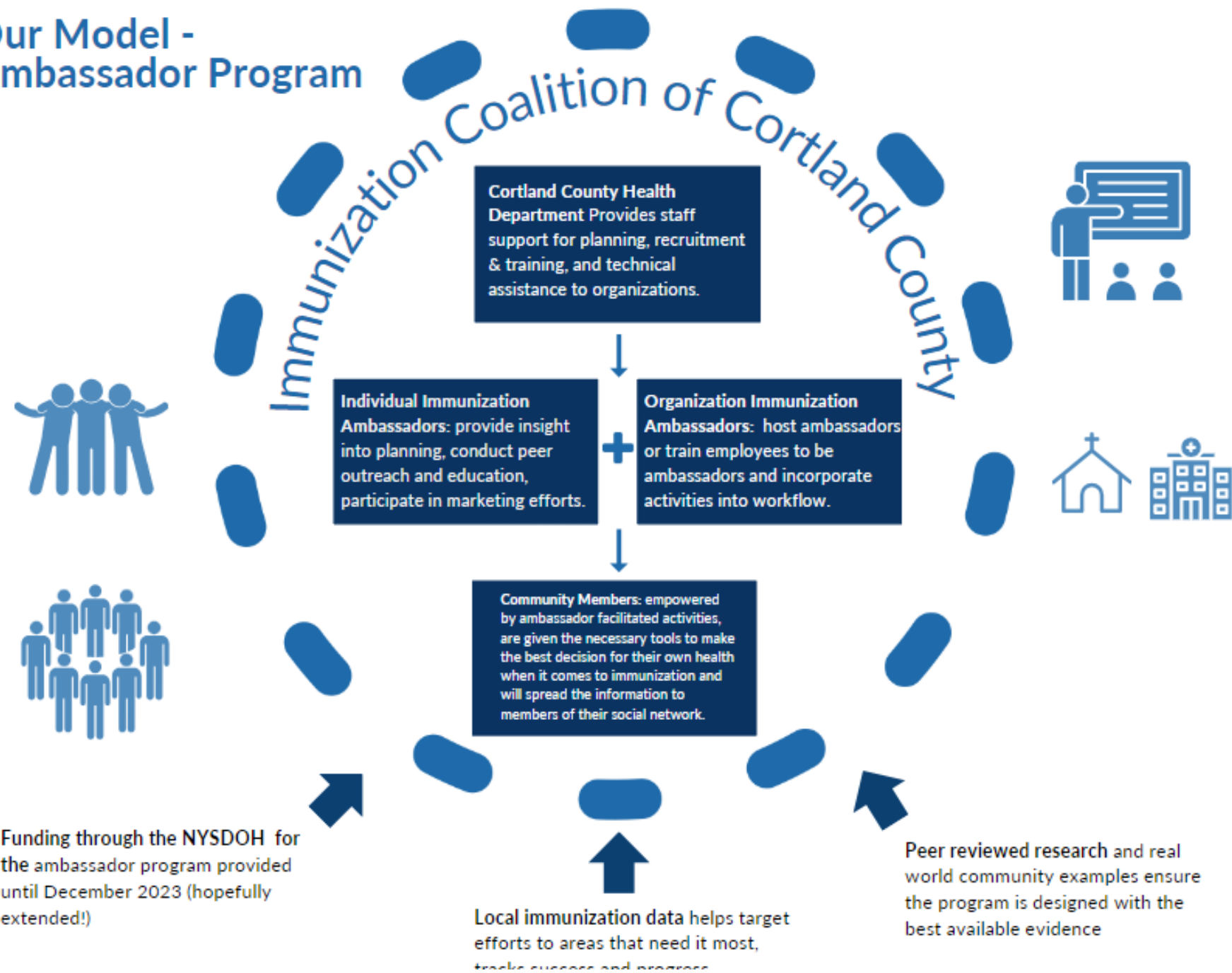


San Francisco engaged trusted messengers in one under - resourced Latine neighborhood to overcome misinformation and distrust. 90% of clients (~11,000) that participated in the program personally reached out to at least one person in their social network to recommend the COVID - 19 vaccine.

A youth led coalition in Philadelphia trained 45 teens to be vaccine ambassadors. The teens organized vaccinations events, engaged in peer to peer conversations, and corrected misinformation on social media .



Our Model - Ambassador Program



Immunization Ambassador Activities



As an Immunization Ambassador you can choose which activities you feel best fit your skills and interests. We also encourage ambassadors to suggest activities at any point!



Outreach/ Education

- Outreach throughout the community to educate and engage community members.
 - Provide <5 minute trainings on vaccines and how to talk with peers about vaccines.
 - Help community members start conversations with their peers about vaccination.
 - Collect written and photo testimonials from community members.
 - Assist community members with scheduling COVID/Flu vaccine appointments.
 - Distribute gift card incentives to community members who engage in activities.
-



Marketing

- Provide community member feedback on marketing messages, images, and other aspects of program design for the immunization programs.
 - Participate in marketing campaigns through testimonials, recording radio ads, providing comments to media, being an image model for social media etc.
-



Insight

- Use personal community connections to suggest businesses and other organizations that may want to become an ambassador agency or host volunteer ambassadors activities.
- Attend immunization coalition meetings to provide community member perspective to local healthcare organizations and agencies.
- Complete feedback surveys on immunization program initiatives.

Logistics - Staffing

- **Epidemiology Manager**

- Funded through COVID ELC grant
- Program planning/development/evaluation
- Volunteer training
- Implementation - Supervision of Public Health Fellow
- 5% - 25% of staff time (~25% for August-September 2023)

- **Supervising Public Health Nurse**

- Funded through Immunization Action Program
- Grant reporting
- Coalition leadership
- Program planning
- Public Health Nurse also provides assistance with program under IAP
- <10% of staff time for ambassador program planning, reporting, feedback etc.

- **Public Health Fellow**

- Funded through NYS Fellowship program
- Schedule/attend outreach events
- Provide technical and training assistance to volunteers
- Volunteer and coalition member engagement
- Track incentives
- Design of program materials; pamphlets, social media, etc.
- Report on program to immunization coalition
- ~50% of staff time to be spent on program implementation (~80% in September)



Logistics - Volunteer Management/ Training

- Volunteer Training

- Developed for Cortland County using the CDC recommended [City Colleges of Chicago Vaccine Ambassador Course](#) and the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health [COVID Vaccine Ambassador Training](#) as reference.

- Includes 5 modules (~1.5 hours):
 - Used embedded google slides into google website
 - Modules include: vaccine preventable disease, immunizations, vaccine hesitancy/ confidence, COVID-19, Immunization Ambassador strategies

- Immunization Ambassador Website

- Used free google site. View [here](#).
- One stop shop for volunteers & agencies involved in program - training modules, resources, link to signup.com, handbook.

- Signup.com

- Free website to organize volunteers. View [here](#).
- All outreach events on page where volunteers can sign up without creating an account.



Immunization Ambassador Hub

Vision: empowering community members and non-traditional partners - like employers, churches, and nonprofits - to be engaged in activities that will increase immunization rates in the Cortland County.



Engagement ● Action ● Outcomes



Training Modules

All Immunization Ambassadors (individual ambassador volunteers or organization staff responsible for implementing the program in an organization) are required to complete the Immunization Ambassador Training Modules and Reflection Questions (~1.5 hours). By completing the Final Reflection at the end of the training, we will know you have completed the required training.



Program Resources

This page includes printable resources and credible links that Immunization Ambassador (individuals and organizations) will use to spread cohesive and Cortland-centered messages related to. This page will be regularly updated with new resources as they are created. Ambassadors can be involved in resource design by participating in the Immunization Coalition of Cortland County.



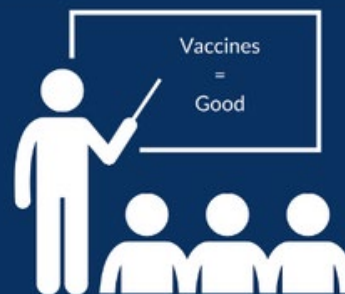
Immunization Ambassador Handbook

Access the Immunization Ambassador of Cortland County handbook for individual volunteers and organizations. These handbooks are a great reference to remind participants the "why" behind this program, to help participants communicate the purposes of the program to other stakeholders in the community, and to even help recruit other individuals or organizations.



Individual Volunteer Activity Sign-Up

After completing training and final reflection, individual ambassadors can sign up for volunteer activities. Ambassadors can use this page to access the signup.com dashboard of available activities including descriptions, incentive amounts etc. If you are aware of an activity (community event etc.) that can be added to this list, let us know and we would love to add that!



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Spots ⁴

Calendar View

List View

Filled: 41 of 92

[+ Create New Spot](#)

Previous

1

2

Next

Filter
By:

Upcoming Spots ▾



Fri Oct 13, 2023

🔄 5/8

[+ Add](#) [View](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#) [Lock](#)

Alanna Powell, William Cifaratta, Maria Bukowski and Harriet Webb

Access to Independence Outreach

🔄 2/4

9:30am – 12:30pm

[Edit](#) [Assign](#) [Comment](#) [Delete](#)

Alanna Powell and William Cifaratta

Description: We will need Ambassadors to set up, staff the table, provide education, and recruit participation in info sharing via text (and hand out incentives).

Access to Independence Outreach

🔄 3/4

12:30pm – 3:30pm



Alanna Powell, Maria Bukowski and Harriet Webb



Wed Oct 18, 2023

🔄 1/1



Alanna Powell



Thu Oct 19, 2023

👤 4/4



Paul Gugerty, Alanna Powell, Laura Swayze and Carley Anderson



Fri Oct 20, 2023

🔄 2/4



Alanna Powell and David Thon



Wed Oct 25, 2023

🔄 1/1

Logistics - Budget

- Staff Time
- Program Budget
 - Note: we are currently working under our previously approved budget (same amount of funds, allocated differently). Reflected below is what we are hoping is approved soon.
 - Program Supplies (\$3,700)
 - Printed brochures, stickers, table, tent, custom tablecloth, branded chairs, signage, t-shirts for volunteers, iPad, iPad standing kiosk
 - Vaccine Ambassador Program Incentives
 - Vaccine Ambassador Agencies (\$22,500)
 - \$500 - \$5,000 provided to agencies to support implementation of program in workflows (staffing needs, incentives for their clients etc.)
 - Waiting for approval on this
 - Vaccine Ambassador Volunteers (\$15,650)
 - \$25 - \$100 incentives provided for each activity a volunteer participates in
 - Currently approved to provide \$50 a month to each volunteer
 - Vaccine Ambassador Individual Program Participants (\$11,600)
 - \$10-\$50 incentives provided for participation in activities
 - Currently approved to provide \$15 for every 5 members of their social network they text with vaccine information

Initial Launch - Recruiting Volunteers

- Recruitment (July/ August 2023)
 - Email list of vaccine clinic volunteers
 - Facebook Advertising
 - Reached ~38,000 people
 - 1,225 link clicks
 - ~\$1,500 spent over ~three weeks
 - Cortland Standard
- Recruitment Results
 - 41 people requested more info via the google form
 - 16 people attended info sessions
 - 13 people have completed volunteer agreement with Cortland County
- Info Sessions (August/ Sept. 2023)
 - Created Ambassador “Handbook” to help communicate program purpose/expectations
 - 7 one hour long info sessions held in person (3:00 PM and 4:00 PM start times)
 - Participants given \$50 Walmart gift card to attend info session to thank them for their time.





Immunization
607-753-5036



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

For Cortland County Immunization Efforts

Volunteer Activities May Include:

- Attend Immunization Coalition meetings
- Conduct community outreach
- Engage in media campaigns
- 5-10 hours a month

Apply Now!

Interviews will be in August

Volunteers will receive monetary incentives for their time - more details will be provided at the interview!

Volunteers must be: 18 years or older, a Cortland County resident, and up to date on their COVID-19 vaccine

Initial Launch - Scheduling Outreach

- Presented on program at both April and September 2023 Immunization Coalition meetings (so some partners aware)
- Focus on scheduling outreach for October/November for “proof of concept”
- Led by SUNY Cortland Healthcare Management intern (now hired as a full-time Public Health Fellow)
 - Used existing department contacts for churches, food pantries, businesses etc.
 - Some “cold calls” as well.
- 16 (and counting!) outreach events/ days scheduled for October/November

COME CHAT WITH OUR IMMUNIZATION AMBASSADORS THIS OCTOBER	
7th & 8th	The Great Cortland Pumpkinfest 10am-5pm → Downtown Cortland Courthouse Park Church Street Cortland, NY 13045
13th & 27th	Access to Independence 10am-3pm → 26 North Main Street Cortland, NY 13045
18th & 25th	SUNY Cortland 2pm-4pm → Corey Union Snack Bar Hall, 103 Prospect Terr Cortland, NY 13045
19th	Homer Elementary Open House 6pm-7pm → Homer Elementary School, 9 Central Park Place Homer, NY 13077
20th	Catholic Charities Food Pantry 1pm-4pm → 37 Central Avenue, Cortland NY 13045
26th	The Age Well Center 9am-3pm → 165 S. Main St, in the Crescent Corset Building, Suite B4
27th	Hollenbecks Cider Mill 2pm-6pm → 1265 State Route 392 Virgil, NY 13045

Initial Launch - First Events!



Initial Launch - First Events!

HELP US SHARE COVID-19 & FLU VACCINE INFORMATION

with your friends & family

Scan the QR code for a template that fits your needs and then edit however you'd like...

- If you are unsure if the person has received their COVID-19 or Flu vaccine yet
- If they are a parent concerned about vaccinating their children for COVID-19 or Flu
- If they've already had COVID, or are frustrated about having to get more shots
- If they are worried about the cost of the vaccines or how they will get to an appointment
- If they are highly skeptical about the vaccines

Start out with the open ended question and then follow recommendations for having good conversations about vaccines.



RECEIVE \$10 FOR EVERY 5 PEOPLE* YOU
TEXT AS A THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

*UP TO 15 PEOPLE!

Initial Launch - First Events!



Reports from “the field”:

- Community support:
 - Community members thanking ambassadors for what they are doing
- Facilitation of conversations:
 - Unvaccinated and vaccinated community members coming up to table together - unvaccinated community member hearing why the other person got vaccinated.
- Community members sharing their stories:
 - Father of three children got his whole family vaccinated and does everything he can to stay up to date.
 - Many older adults saying they already are scheduled for flu and updated COVID shot.
 - Hearing why people are not getting vaccinated (i.e. got flu for the first time the year they were vaccinated)
- Sharing of information:
 - Participation in text messaging activity - ideally leads to more people being reached from outreach activities.
 - ~12 people have participated (60 people reached)

Initial Launch - Challenges/ Successes

- Challenges:

- Slow budget modifications

- Initial request - August 2022
 - Approved - December 2022
 - Budget Mod - May 2022
 - Have not received approval - means we are working with the constraints of the initial plan from August 2022 (COVID-19 vaccine landscape very different now)

- County volunteer requirements

- Initially were not aware that the county required 2+ hours of training for volunteers. Unfortunately, had to ask volunteers to do that post-on boarding.

- Getting the supplies we need designed, ordered etc.

- Balance between getting the program off the ground and wanting coalition/ambassador involvement in the design of the program (messaging on outreach materials, logos, t-shirts etc.)

- Engagement at outreach events

- Due to updated plan not being approved yet via the budget mod, we are limited in the what we can provide incentives for at outreach events currently.

- Successes:

- Coalition feedback during program in planning stage

- Gave us the confidence to pursue the program

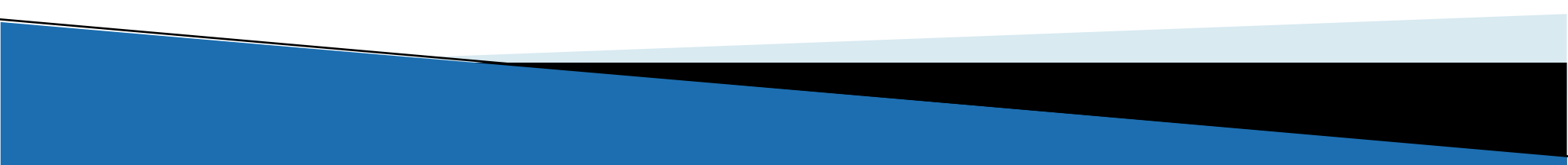
- Recruiting active volunteers

- 9 out of 13 approved volunteers scheduled for upcoming outreach events

- Engagement with existing coalition partners & new coalition partners to schedule outreach events

Future Plans

- Create workgroup of ambassador volunteers to design program materials (logos, slogans, branded items etc.)
- Incorporate ambassadors into marketing campaign (social media, radio ads etc.)
- Implement program with ambassador agencies.
- Expand funded program activities to other immunizations?



Questions?

- Margaret Broderick, Epidemiology Manager
 - Email: mbroderick@cortland-co.org
 - Phone: 607-753-5108
- Suzanne Osterhoudt, Supervising Public Health Nurse
 - Email: sosterhoudt@cortland-co.org
 - Phone: 607-758-5502



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