



AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
Campus COVID-19 Vaccination and Mitigation Initiative

# Workshop Lesson Plan

Updated August 2023

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# Your Guide to Creating a COVID-19 and Flu Risk Reduction Workshop

You can help your campus community stay healthy by educating students about COVID-19 and flu risk reduction. **Risk reduction** means taking steps to reduce the chances of people getting sick or hurt. For example, students can lower their risk of getting the flu and spreading it to others by getting a flu vaccine and staying home when they're sick.

One way to reach students to lead a **risk reduction workshop** on campus. You can use this lesson plan to develop your own interactive workshop.



This lesson plan is part of the American College Health Association's (ACHA) COVID-19 [Student Ambassador Toolkit](#). The toolkit includes resources about health and media literacy, COVID-19 and flu risk reduction, and more. You can use the toolkit to start a student ambassador program on campus, or just use the materials provided to educate your campus community.

This plan was updated in August 2023. For the latest guidance on protecting yourself and others from COVID-19 and the flu, check out these resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- [COVID-19](#)
- [The flu](#)

# Step 1:

## Decide who, when, and where

The first step is to decide **who** will be part of your workshop. You can choose to make your workshop available to all students or consider offering your workshop to a specific organization or group. Here are a few examples:

- Fraternities and sororities
- Cultural or religious organizations
- Student government/student council organizations
- International student organizations
- Transfer or first-year student organizations
- Athletic teams
- Residence halls

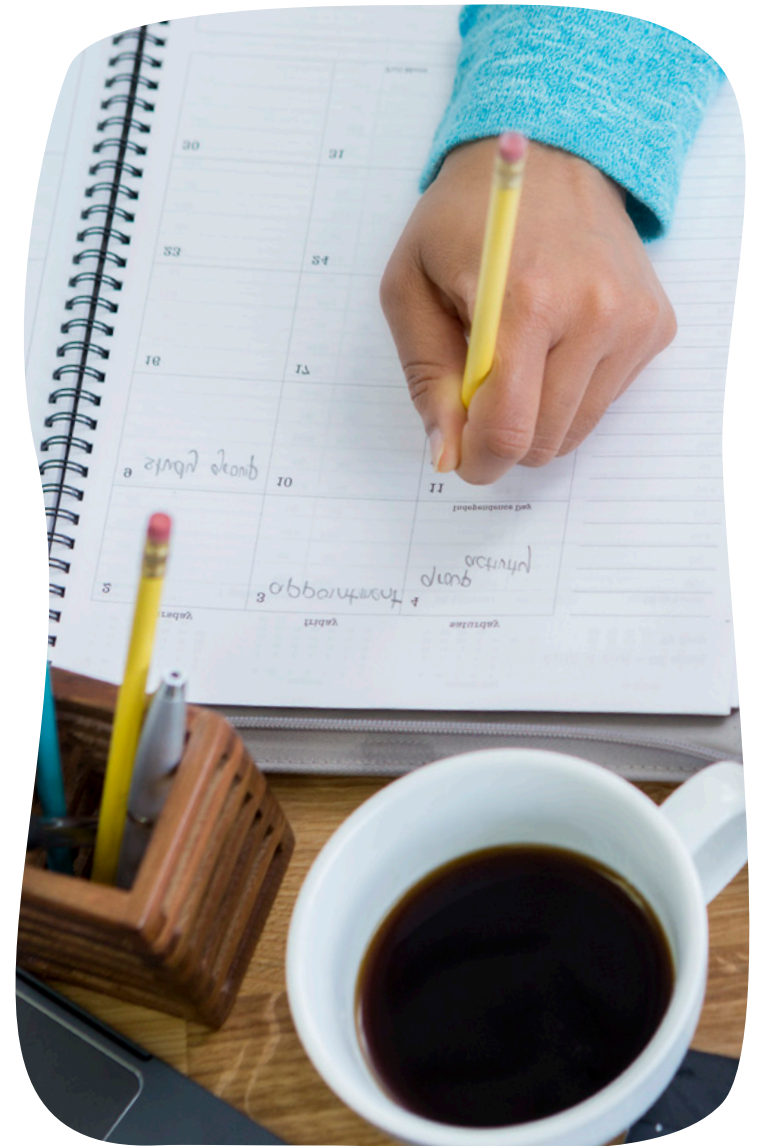
You can even partner with campus organizations to plan and facilitate a workshop together.



## WHO AND WHEN

Once you've decided **who** will participate in your workshop, the next step is to figure out **when** it will happen. If you're partnering with a student organization, you can work together to find a time that works for everyone's schedule.

If you're offering a workshop for all students on campus, look for a time that doesn't conflict with midterms, finals, school breaks, or social events (e.g., football games or other events that many people on campus will probably want to attend). Consider presenting your workshop more than once so that people can attend at a time that works for their schedule.



## WHERE

Finally, you'll need to decide **where** to hold your workshop. Consider how many people are likely to join and choose a space that's accessible to everyone. Reserving a room in your student union, library, recreation building, or other common areas on campus is probably your easiest bet. If you're presenting a workshop for a specific organization or residence hall, you may be able to use their space for your event.

You might consider livestreaming your workshop on social media, too. Livestreaming is a great way to reach a wider audience and make your event more accessible. For example, students who have a long commute to campus and those who are at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 or the flu may prefer to join online. You can also post a recording of the livestream for people to watch on their own time.



### LEARN HOW TO PLAN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE EVENTS

For helpful tips on planning in-person, virtual, and hybrid events, check out our [Event Planning Guide](#).



# Step 2:

## Choose topics to focus on

Next, it's time to decide what you'll talk about in your workshop. Think about what the people who are going to attend your workshop want to know about COVID-19 and the flu.

### KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

If you're not sure what your audience wants to know, ask them! You can get input from other students by:



Posting a question or poll on your university's social media accounts



Asking student government/student council members to spread the word



Asking campus organizations to post on their social media accounts — or talk to members at their next meeting



Talking to friends and acquaintances on campus



## SAMPLE WORKSHOP TOPICS

Not sure what topic to focus on? Check out these examples for inspiration.

### COVID-19 AND THE FLU

Help students protect themselves and others from COVID-19 and flu with these workshop topics:



**Campus health guidelines.** Educate students about any campus health guidelines related to COVID-19 and the flu (like how to get an excused absence for class or have meals delivered to your room when you're sick). Explain how the guidelines help keep students safe.



**Making health care decisions.** Offer tips to help students make their own health care decisions, like when to go to the doctor or campus health center with COVID-19 or flu symptoms.



**COVID-19 and flu vaccines.** Explain why it's important for students to stay up to date on vaccines, address misinformation, and help students make a plan to get vaccinated. Refer students to credible resources like [We Can Do This](#) or [Vaccinate Your Family](#) to learn more about vaccines.



**Protecting yourself and others.** Discuss steps that students can take to lower their risk of getting COVID-19 or the flu. Suggest ways to support friends who are at risk of getting very sick (e.g., students with disabilities or chronic health conditions).



## BEYOND COVID-19 AND THE FLU

Workshops are a great way to educate students about other health topics, too. Here are just a few examples:



**Mental health.** Educate students about common mental health concerns and where to find support during difficult times. Offer strategies to help students care for themselves and others in their community.



**Building health and media literacy skills.** Educate students about how to find trustworthy health information and how to spot misinformation. You can use our [Health and Media Literacy](#) guide as a starting point.



**Storytelling open mic night.** Sharing personal stories can be a powerful way to communicate about health topics. Host an open mic event and invite students to share health-related stories. Check out our [Storytelling for Health Communication](#) guide for inspiration.



# Step 3:

## Create your workshop content

Next, it's time to create the content for your workshop. Below are a few sample lesson plans to help you get started. You can also reach out to your campus health or counseling centers for information and resources to share. You could even ask a staff member to help you facilitate the workshop.

### COVID-19 AND FLU VACCINES

- Explain the basics about vaccines and how they work. For example, you could say: "Think of vaccines like a study guide. They teach your body how to fight off illnesses like COVID-19 and the flu — and you don't have to get sick for your body to learn the lesson."
- Point out that by getting vaccinated, students aren't only protecting themselves. They're also protecting other people who are more likely to get very sick — like older people, pregnant people, and people with disabilities or chronic health conditions.
- Tell students where they can get vaccinated close to campus. Most local pharmacies offer COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Let students know if your campus health center offers these vaccines, too.



- Recommend that students get a flu vaccine each fall. Refer students to reliable sources like this [CDC webpage](#) for the latest details on COVID-19 vaccines.
- Encourage students to talk to their doctor or the campus health center if they have any questions about getting vaccinated.
- Note that it's a good idea for students who have chronic health conditions or disabilities to talk to their doctor before getting vaccinated. Their doctor may have specific recommendations based on their health care needs.
- Refer students to credible resources like [We Can Do This](#) or [Vaccinate Your Family](#) to learn more about vaccines.



## MENTAL HEALTH

- Educate students about the signs of depression, anxiety, and other common mental health concerns. Your campus health or counseling center may have resources you can use as a starting point.
- Encourage students to reach out to the campus counseling center when they need help. Let them know what hours the counseling center is available and show them how to make an appointment.
- Highlight any other mental health resources available on campus, like peer support groups. You can also recommend resources in your local community.
- Provide guidance on what to do in case of a mental health crisis (e.g., when to call 911 or get help from a resident assistant or campus staff member).
- Encourage students to care for the campus community through volunteer opportunities, [mutual aid](#), or even doing something nice for a friend.



### HELP STUDENTS FIND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TAILORED TO THEIR NEEDS

Depending on your audience, you may want to direct students to mental health resources designed for specific communities. For example:

- [The Trevor Project](#) offers mental health support for LGBTQ+ youth.
- The [Inclusive Therapists](#) directory can help people of color, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and others find a therapist who understands their experiences.
- Check out this list of [mental health resources for underrepresented communities](#), created by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

# Step 4:

## Make it interactive

Keep people engaged in your workshop by adding some interactive activities. Here are a few examples:



**Pair and share.** Ask students to get in groups of 2 to 3 people and share their personal experiences with the workshop topic (e.g., making health care decisions or getting vaccinated).



**Use arts and crafts.** Get creative ideas flowing by encouraging students to draw on large sticky notes. For example, you could ask students to draw what comes to mind when you say common phrases like “mental health” or “flu season.”



**Get moving.** Divide the room in half and ask “agree or disagree” questions. Ask students to go to the left side if they agree and the right side of the room if they disagree. Then choose a few students to explain their perspective.



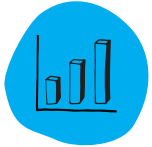
**Host a game show.** Ask for volunteers to participate in a Jeopardy-style challenge to test their knowledge of the workshop topic.



### **HELP ATTENDEES STAY HEALTHY**

If there are lots of COVID-19 or flu cases in your area, you may want to skip activities that involve sharing supplies. You could also encourage attendees to wear masks or even switch to a virtual format. For more risk reduction strategies, check out our [Event Planning guide](#).

Even if all your participants are online, you can still make it interactive! Here are a few ideas:



If you're on Zoom, **create a poll** or simply ask students to share their opinions in the chat.



Create your own quizzes and games with [Mentimeter](#) or [Kahoot](#).



Invite everyone to draw on a digital whiteboard with [Google's Jamboard app](#).



## PRINT IT OUT

Consider creating printed materials, like worksheets that people can fill in during your workshop or summaries of main ideas to take home. These materials can help students remember what you talked about and incorporate the main ideas in their daily routine.

To make printed materials more environmentally friendly, students can take pictures of your materials and recycle the paper or reuse the back of the page.



# Step 5:

## Promote your workshop

Once you've planned your workshop, it's time to promote your event and make sure everyone knows about it! Here are a few ways to get the word out on campus:



Post on your university's social media accounts or online event calendar.



Ask student organizations to post on their own social media pages or calendars. You can also ask organizations to make an announcement about the workshop at their next meeting.



Ask professors if you can visit their classes to make a short announcement about the workshop. You can also suggest that professors give extra credit for attending your event.



Post flyers or digital signs in common areas like the student union, cafeteria, or residence halls.



Spread the word to your friends and post on your own social media accounts.



## Step 6:

# Wrap up after the workshop

When the workshop is over, don't forget to clean up your space and put seating and furniture back in place. Within a week after your workshop, be sure to send thank you emails to anyone who helped you plan, facilitate, or promote it (e.g., professors, student organizations, campus health center or counseling center).

Meet with your fellow facilitators to talk about how the workshop went and identify areas to improve next time. You can also send out a survey to find out what participants thought of your workshop and what they might like to learn from future events.

