Workshop Lesson Plan
Updated for the 2022-2023 Academic Year
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Your Guide to Creating a COVID-19 Prevention Workshop

You can help your campus community stay healthy and safe by leading a COVID-19 prevention workshop on campus.

By leading a workshop, you can teach other students how to:

• Help slow the spread of COVID-19 on campus
• Set COVID-19 safety boundaries and choose social activities everyone feels good about
• Support people who are risk of getting very sick — like older people, pregnant people, and people who have chronic health issues or disabilities
• Take care of themselves and each other during difficult times

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. You can use the toolkit to start a student ambassador program on campus, or just use the materials provided to educate your campus community about COVID-19.

This plan was updated in July 2022. For the latest information about COVID-19, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 webpage.
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:

- Fraternity and sorority organizations
- 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 their 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.
Finally, you'll need to decide where to hold your workshop. Keep in mind that people who are at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 (like people who have chronic health issues or disabilities) may not be comfortable attending events with large groups of people. Offering the workshop online will enable them to participate and make your workshop accessible to more people on campus.

You can also plan a hybrid event — meaning you offer your workshop both online and in person. For example, you could stream the workshop on your campus’s Facebook or Instagram account or on Zoom. Remember, livestreaming will require some extra effort from your event planning team. It's a good idea to designate a helper to manage the online portion of the event.

Then, think about the physical space you’ll need for your workshop. Consider how many people are likely to join, and be sure to choose a space that's accessible to all students. If possible, look for a space where you can easily arrange furniture or seating to meet your attendees' needs. For tips to help you make your workshop more accessible, check out our Event Planning Guide.

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.
Step 2: Choose topics to focus on

Next, it’s time to decide what you’ll talk about in your workshop. Yes, your workshop will be about COVID-19 prevention on campus — but what specific topics will you focus on? Think about what the people who are going to attend your workshop want to know about campus COVID-19 guidelines, getting vaccinated, or COVID-19 in general.

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
Choose topics that meet students’ needs

Here are a few example topics to consider:

- **Socializing safely.** Offer tips to help students set COVID-19 safety boundaries, choose safe social activities, and support friends at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

- **COVID-19 vaccines.** Explain why it’s important for students to stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccines, address misinformation, and help students make a plan to get vaccinated.

- **How to make health care decisions.** Offer tips to help students make their own health care decisions, like when to go to the health center or get a COVID-19 test.

- **Taking care of yourself and others.** Discuss how the pandemic has affected mental health and give students space to share their personal experiences. Offer strategies to help students care for themselves and their community.

- **Campus guidelines.** If your campus has COVID-19 guidelines in place, explain the guidelines and how they help to keep your campus safe.

- **Building health literacy skills.** Educate students about how to find trustworthy health information and how to spot misinformation.

You can choose to cover one or more of these topics in your workshop.
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.

How to socialize safely

- Start by acknowledging that the COVID-19 pandemic has been hard for everyone, and students have had to adapt to changing rules and guidelines.
- If your school currently has COVID-19 guidelines in place, provide a quick overview of the guidelines. Thank students for making an effort to follow them.
- Let students know that guidelines may change as the pandemic evolves. For example, your campus may need to bring back mask requirements or take additional steps to keep everyone healthy if COVID-19 cases go up in your area.
- Remind students that people who have disabilities and chronic health conditions, pregnant people, and older people are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. Point out that these community members may need to keep wearing a mask and taking other steps to protect their health — no matter what guidelines are in place.
• Provide guidance on how to stay safe from COVID-19 in the cafeteria, residence halls, parties, athletic events, and other common scenarios.

• Emphasize that by working together, students can keep the whole campus community safe.

• Walk students through how to assess their own personal COVID-19 risk and how to decide what is safe and comfortable for them. Remind them that it’s okay to set boundaries about what activities they feel comfortable doing.

• Encourage students to talk to friends about COVID-19 safety boundaries. For example, before going out, students can offer to wear a mask, talk about what activities everyone feels comfortable with, and make plans that everyone can feel good about.

• Offer tips on adapting existing activities and traditions for COVID safety. For example, limit the number of people who can attend, ask everyone to wear a mask, or consider virtual or outdoor events.
Taking care of yourself and others

• Note that the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for everyone in different ways. Many people may be grieving someone or something they’ve lost over the past few years. Remind students that all losses are real and valid, whether they’re grieving the loss of a loved one, dealing with health issues, missing old routines, or feeling the disappointment of missed opportunities and milestones.

• Let students know that it’s normal to feel depressed, anxious, or overwhelmed — even when things seem to be changing for the better.

• Give students space to share how the pandemic has affected their lives. For this activity, consider placing students in smaller groups with a maximum of 5-6 people.

• Educate students about the signs of depression, anxiety, and other common mental health concerns. Your campus counseling center may have resources to share here.

• 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.

• 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.
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 2-3 people and share their personal experience with the workshop topic (e.g., socializing safely or getting vaccinated).

- **Use arts and crafts.** Encourage students to draw out different scenes on large sticky notes (e.g., ways to slow the spread of COVID-19).

- **Make “snowballs.”** Give students a prompt and a piece of paper to write down their opinion anonymously. Then, ask everyone to crumple up the piece of paper and throw it to someone else on the count of 3. Repeat this a few times, then ask everyone to uncrumple their “snowballs” and read what’s on the paper.

Remember, you may need to adapt your workshop to align with your school’s guidelines and the latest COVID-19 news. For example, if COVID-19 cases go up, you could ask participants to keep a safe distance, avoid activities that require passing items around the room, or even switch to a virtual workshop instead of meeting in person.
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.

Do an instant poll. Post a “what would you do” question on social media and ask students to answer during the workshop, then share their responses in real time. For example, you could ask, “What would you do if you’re invited to a small gathering, but it turns out to be a big party?”

Try roleplay scenarios. Use roleplay to show students what to say in common situations (e.g., if a friend says they don’t want to get a COVID-19 booster).
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 page 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 with 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.