



THE TENNESSEE POLL

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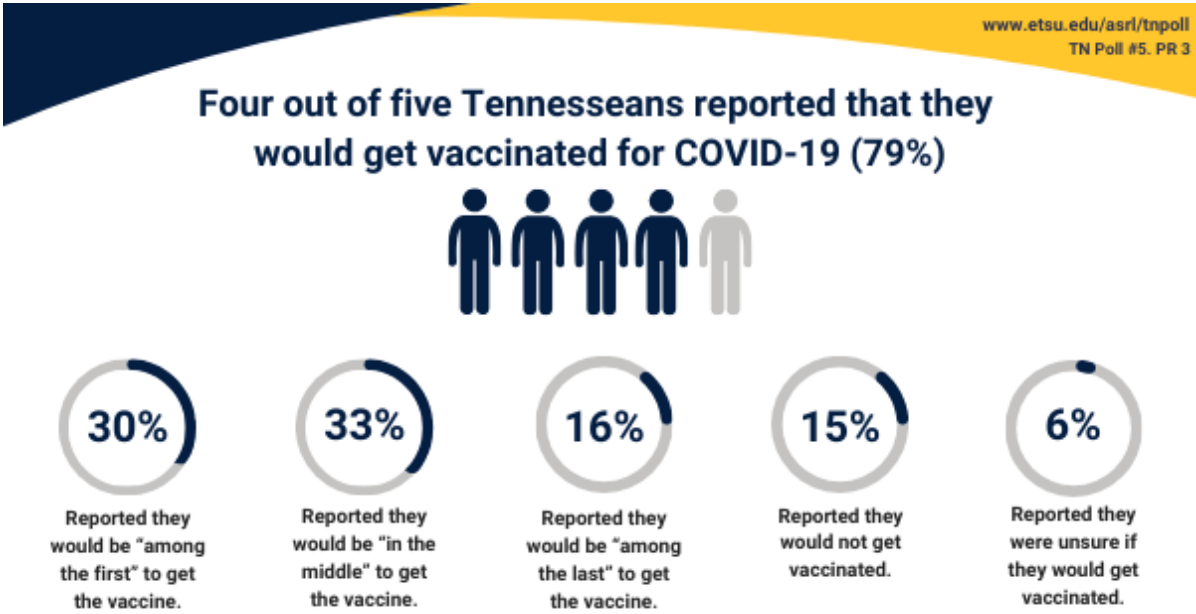
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TENNESSEE POLL FINDS MOST TENNESSEANS WOULD GET VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19, AND THOSE WHO WOULD ARE ALSO STRICT IN FOLLOWING SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

JOHNSON CITY (May 21, 2020) – A majority of Tennesseans will seek out a COVID-19 vaccine if it becomes available, but not everyone will be “among the first” to get vaccinated, according to the most recent Tennessee Poll conducted by the Applied Social Research Lab at East Tennessee State University. The poll, which surveyed 618 Tennesseans from April 22-May 1, 2020, asked respondents where they go for news they can trust on the coronavirus and how quickly they would get vaccinated if a coronavirus vaccine became available.

Overall, four out of five Tennesseans reported that they would eventually get vaccinated for COVID-19. However, only 30% of respondents reported they would be “among the first” to get the vaccine once it becomes available. An additional 33% reported they would be “in the middle” and 16% reported they would be “among the last” to get the vaccine. Fifteen percent of respondents reported they “would not get vaccinated.” Only 6% of respondents were unsure on the issue. Those who think they are very likely or likely to get COVID-19 express more willingness to get vaccinated than those who feel it is unlikely or very unlikely they will get the virus (88% and 77%, respectively). Respondents with health insurance reported a greater likelihood of vaccination than those without (80%, compared to 71% for respondents without health insurance).

Figure 1. Tennesseans’ preference for if and when they would receive a COVID-19 vaccine.



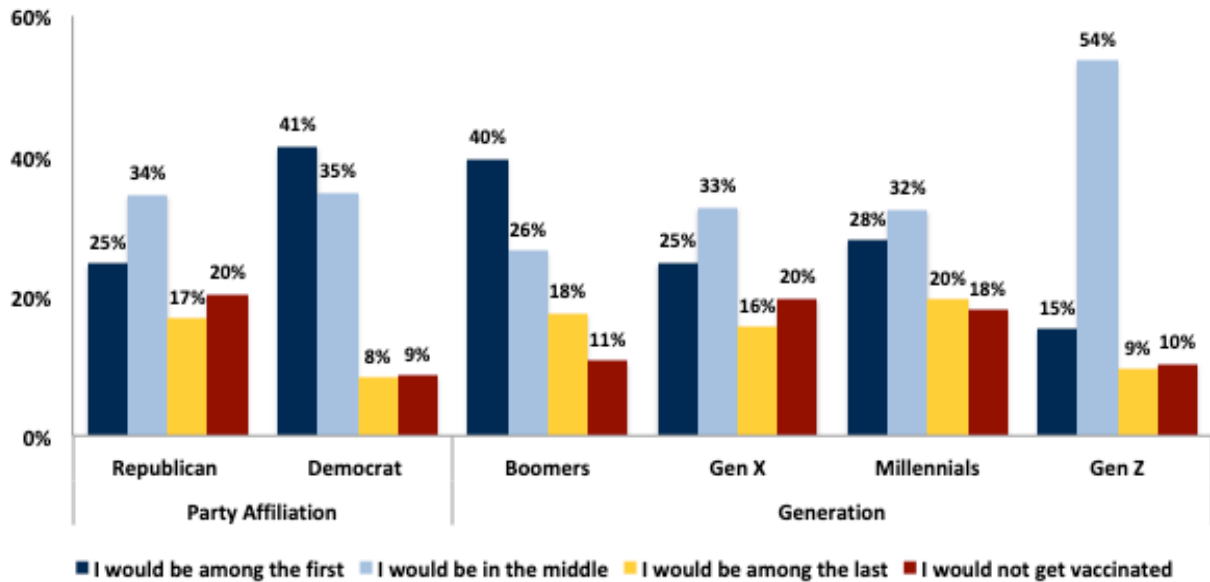
Demographic Differences

While there was minimal difference by gender, race, level of educational attainment, and grand divisions of the state, there were notable differences in how quickly they would seek out the vaccine by political affiliation and generation. Black respondents (10%), Generation Z (11%) and respondents from West Tennessee (10%) were the mostly likely to state they were unsure or undecided on the issue.

Democrats were more likely to report that they would be among the first (41% compared to 25% for Republicans), while Republicans were more likely to report that they would not get vaccinated at all (20% compared to 9% for Democrats). There is a similar difference when examining rates of annual flu shot vaccination in which Democrats are more significantly more likely to report getting a flu shot in the past 12 months than are Republicans (62% and 48%, respectively).

Not surprisingly, the generation most at risk from complications with COVID-19 is the generation most willing to be the first in line for a vaccine. Tennesseans in the Baby Boomer generation were more likely to say they would be first in line for a vaccine (40%, compared to 26% for “in the middle”) and Generation Z were more likely to be in the middle (54%, compared to 15% for “first in line”). Despite what seems to be a general public narrative that younger Americans do not feel at risk from the virus, Generation Z Tennesseans were the least likely to say they wouldn’t get vaccinated (10%), followed closely by Baby Boomers (11%, compared to 20% for Generation X and 18% for Millennials). See Figure 2.

Figure 2. How quickly would you get vaccinated if a coronavirus vaccine became available?



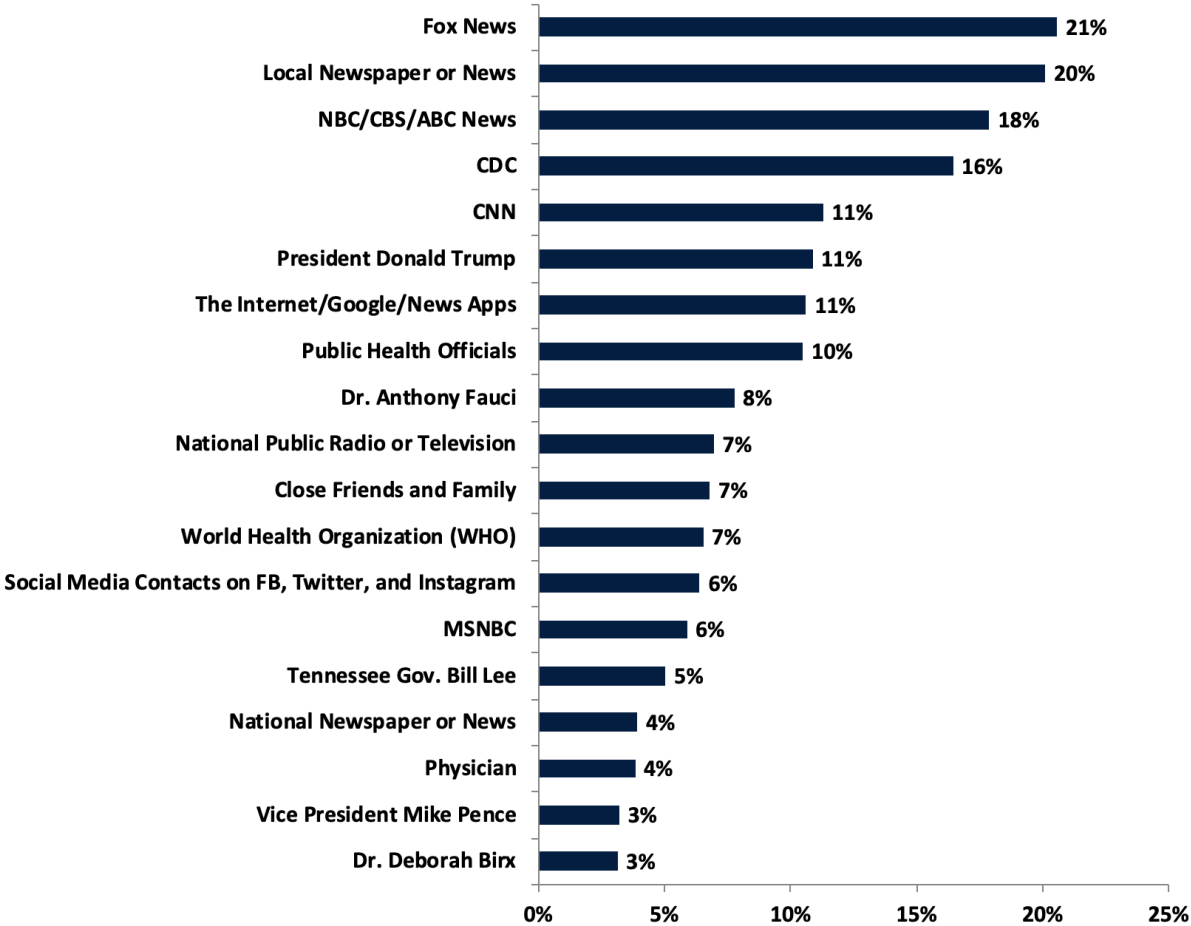
TN Poll #5 PR 3.

Graph By: ETSU ASRL

We were interested in where Tennesseans felt they could go to for trusted information on COVID-19 to help them inform decisions for themselves and their family and interestingly this seems to impact their thoughts on when and if they will vaccinate against coronavirus. When asked where they go for news they feel they can trust on the COVID-19 pandemic, the consumption patterns are similar to general news consumption patterns (see TN Poll [press release 2](#)) though somewhat more varied. For COVID-19 related news, Tennesseans report going to Fox News (21%) more than any other source followed by local news (20%), CBS/NBC/ABC news (18%), and the CDC (16%). The fifth most frequently cited response for COVID-19 news is tied between the internet/Google (11%), President Trump (11%), and CNN (11%). Very few Tennesseans indicated that if they want news they can trust on COVID-19 they go to public health officials (10%) or their physician (4%)¹. See Figure 3.

¹ Though this question was intended to measure where respondents went for information they trust on COVID-19, it was worded as “news you can trust on COVID-19,” thereby possibly predisposing the respondent to indicate news organizations over other individuals or organizations. This question was asked open-ended and then coded into categories based on responses.

Figure 3. Where do you go for news you can trust on COVID-19?



TN Poll #5 PR. 3

Graph By: ETSU ASRL

Tennesseans who choose Fox News as their trusted source for COVID-19 information are significantly more likely to report that they will NOT get a coronavirus vaccine than Tennesseans who get their coronavirus news from any other source (21%, compared to 13%). On the opposite end of the political news spectrum, Tennesseans who choose MSNBC as their trusted source of COVID-19 news are significantly more likely to report that they would be the first to get a coronavirus vaccine than those who choose other sources (51%, compared to 28%). Other news sources do not seem to have such significant differences in Tennesseans thoughts on vaccinating for COVID-19 possibly indicating the role that partisan news reporting may have on public health education and intervention campaigns in the future.

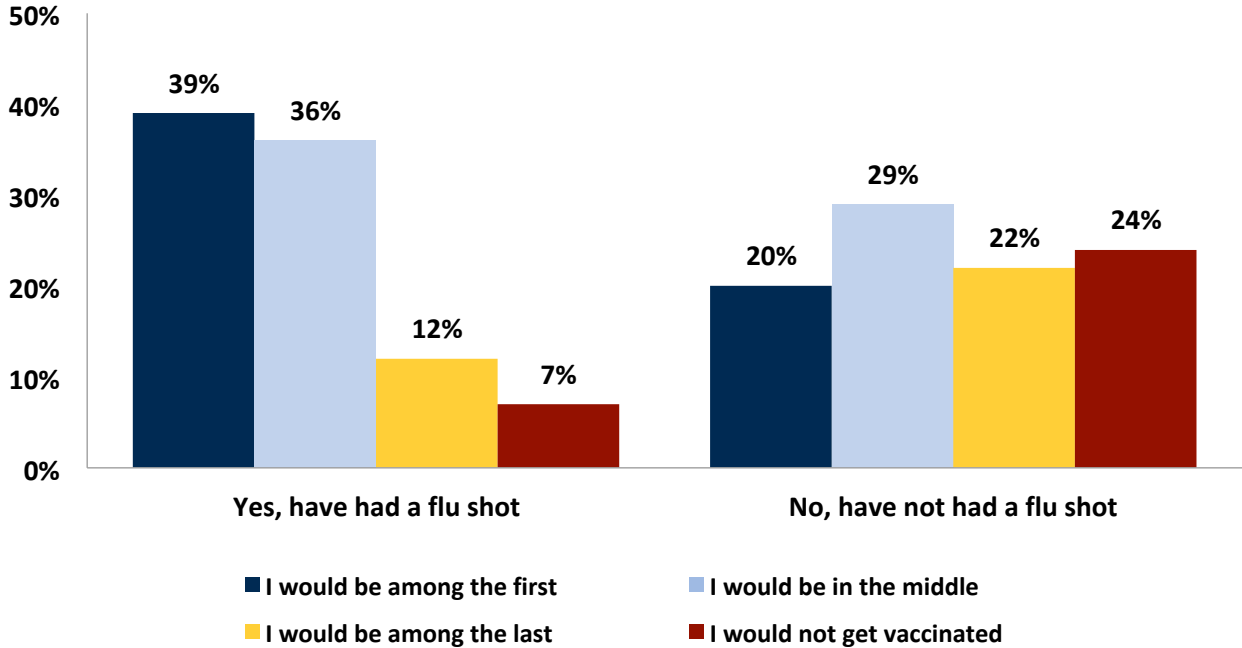
COVID-19 Vaccine and the Flu Shot

The majority of respondents (52%) reported having a flu shot in the past 12 months. Of respondents who received the flu shot, 39% said they would be among the first to get the

For more information about this study or about the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) at East Tennessee State University, please visit us on the web at www.etsu.edu/asrl. You may also contact the director of ASRL, Dr. Kelly N. Foster, at fosterkn@etsu.edu or by phone 423-439-4374.

coronavirus vaccine and 36% would be in the middle. However, of those who did not have the flu shot, 20% would be among the first and 29% would be in the middle. A quarter (24%) of respondents who did not get a flu shot in the past 12 months reported that would not get vaccinated for COVID-19 when the vaccine becomes available, compared to only 6.9% of those who did get a flu shot. See Figure 4.

Figure 4. Likelihood of seeking out COVID-19 vaccine based on if respondent received flu shot



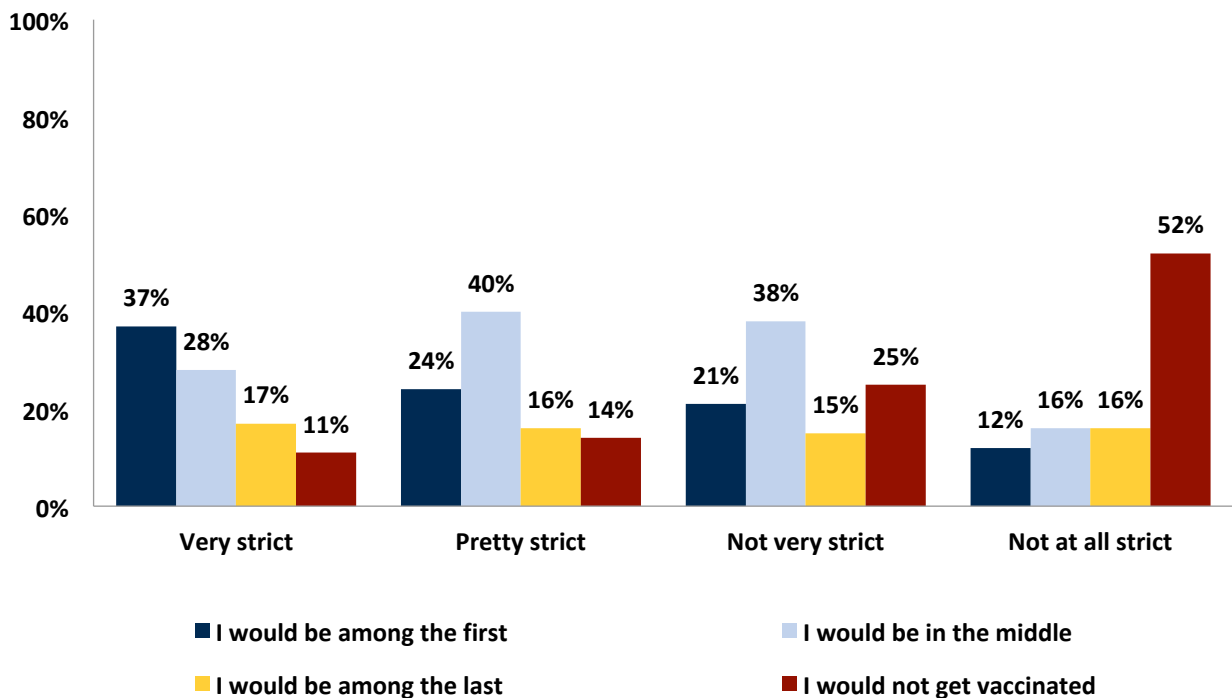
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COVID-19 Vaccine and Social Distancing

The likelihood of getting vaccinated decreases as respondents report less adherence to social distancing guidelines. Respondents who reported they were “very strict” about social distancing measures were more likely to report that they would get vaccinated once a vaccine becomes available (82%, compared to 80% for “pretty strict,” 75% for “not very strict,” and 44% for “not strict at all”), while respondents who reported that they were “not very strict” or “not strict at all” were more likely to report that they would not get vaccinated (25% and 52% respectively). Respondents who reported they were “very strict” about social distancing measures were also the most likely to report that they were unsure if they would get vaccinated (7%). See Figure 5.

Figure 5. Relationship between social distancing efforts and seeking out the COVID-19 vaccine



TN Poll #5 PR 3.

Graph By: ETSU ASRL

About the Tennessee Poll

The Tennessee Poll is conducted by the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at East Tennessee State University. ASRL is directed by Dr. Kelly N. Foster, associate professor of sociology.

The Tennessee Poll is an annual public opinion poll funded by East Tennessee State University. The mission of The Tennessee Poll is to provide the citizens and governance of Tennessee with neutral, unbiased information on Tennesseans’ perceptions of issues that impact their health, education, and quality of life.

Though the project has been internally funded to date, there exists the possibility of outside researchers or organizations being given the option to purchase space for questions on future polls. Should this occur, any and all funding sources will be noted in the methodology report for that particular poll.

The Applied Social Research Lab is a member of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations (AASRO) and adheres to the reporting requirements of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative standards in research reporting.

For more information about this study or about the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) at East Tennessee State University, please visit us on the web at www.etsu.edu/asrl. You may also contact the director of ASRL, Dr. Kelly N. Foster, at fosterkn@etsu.edu or by phone 423-439-4374.

For detailed information on The Tennessee Poll, including methodology and additional analysis, please visit www.etsu.edu/asrl/tnpoll.

Survey Methodology

The Tennessee Poll uses random digit dialing (RDD) to ensure that all Tennesseans are represented. Phone numbers were drawn from a dual frame RDD sample of cell phone and landline numbers. Braun Research Inc. acquired the cell phone sample and completed the telephone interviews. It is important to note that this particular Tennessee Poll (poll #5) was fielded during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Though ASRL maintains an active computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) lab for research purposes that utilizes ETSU student callers, the phone lab was closed due to state regulations during this time. Braun Research Inc. had capabilities and utilized secure remote calling with their phone interviewers during this time so in addition to acquiring the sample, they also completed the interviews.

The final sample includes a total of 618 completed interviews, 188 completed by landline (30% percent) and 430 completed by cell phone (70% percent). The final data are weighted by age, education, gender, and race to adjust for differential response rates in order to assure that the data are as representative of the state's actual adult population as closely as possible. The margin of error for a sample of 618 is +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample. Any subpopulation analysis entails a greater margin of error. For detailed methodology on The Tennessee Poll as well as margin of error reports and additional analysis, please go to www.etsu.edu/asrl/tnpoll.

About the Authors

Candace Forbes Bright, Ph.D. Dr. Bright is an assistant professor of sociology and faculty affiliate of the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) at ETSU. Her expertise is in research methodology and social issues, including public health and race.

Kelly N. Foster, Ph.D. Dr. Foster is an associate professor of sociology and director of the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) at ETSU. Her expertise is in survey research methodology and she has worked in public opinion research for 17 years. She is a member in good standing of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and currently serves on the executive council for the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations (AASRO) where ASRL is a member organization. She is a co-editor of *Polling America: An Encyclopedia of Public Opinion*, Second Edition, due out in September 2020.

Morgan Kidd, M.A. Ms. Kidd is the assistant director for the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) at ETSU. She received her Master of Arts in Sociology from ETSU. She is an active member in good standing with the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and is active with the International Field Directors & Technologies Conference annually.