

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 83 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

October 29 - 31, 2021

Stagwell and **The Harris Poll** have partnered to conduct research to monitor the pulse of the American Consumer.

The executive summaries on the pages that follow provide insight into current consumer attitudes and behavior and can be used to help navigate the changing industry landscape. We hope this information proves useful to you and your team as you address these changes in real time and strategize for your next moves.

As always, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Positively,

Ryan Linder + The Stagwell Family

Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



WAVE 83

WAVE 83 INTRODUCTION

The following research was conducted between **October 29 - 31, 2021** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **2,024** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

01

Topic:

MIXING BOOSTER JABS

Introduction:

Recently, the FDA announced that Americans vaccinated against COVID could safely mix-and-match brands for their booster shot if they choose. We got the pulse from our COVID tracker to see what Americans planned on doing as this news came out. Here's what we found:

- A majority (87%) of vaccinated Americans say that **they are likely to get a booster shot when it becomes available to them.**
- And while (70%) of those who say they're likely to get a booster **shot would be comfortable mixing brands**, only (40%) say they **actually plan on choosing a different brand.**
- J&J recipients are the **most likely to switch brands for their booster** (67%), about double that of Pfizer (38%) and Moderna (33%) recipients.
- Just under one-third (30%) of J&J recipients said they want to switch their brand of booster shot because **"I had bad side effects from my initial doses and think I'd be better off with trying another brand,"** compared to just (9%) of Pfizer and (18%) of Moderna recipients.
- [The New York Times](#) provides an overview of how to decide which booster shot to get.

Implication:

As the uncertainty of the upcoming holidays and winter months approaches, many Americans are looking for extra protection from COVID in order to feel comfortable enough to enjoy family time and winter activities safely.

Section:

02

Topic:

CONCERN OF BREAKTHROUGH CASES GROW AMID WARNING SIGNS

Introduction:

According to our latest COVID tracker data, there is growing concern of breakthrough cases as Americans see the warning signs from some states experiencing alarming COVID surges rates. Is this foreshadowing a perfect storm of people letting their guard down and vaccine protection waning? Here's what the data says:

- Among vaccinated Americans who are aware of some states experiencing rising cases, hospitalizations and deaths, (73%) **are at least somewhat concerned they will get a breakthrough case of COVID**. This is up from (58%) just a month ago.
- Americans who received the J&J shot are **most likely to be concerned about getting a breakthrough case** at (77%), followed by (75%) of Moderna and (71%) of Pfizer recipients.
- Half of respondents say rising cases are due to **people letting their guard down about COVID**. Other factors include **people spending more time with loved ones due to the holidays** (35%), a **“twindemic”** with flu season (34%), initial vaccine immunity wearing off (27%), and **cooling weather** (26%).
- Three-quarters (76%) of vaccinated respondents say the news of surging cases, hospitalizations, and deaths make them more likely to get a booster shot.

Implication:

Our data finds that (75%) of Americans are concerned about the unpredictability of COVID surges and declines overall, which coincides with state public health officials in [Colorado](#) saying they don't know why the state is one of the trouble spots on the COVID map.

Section:

03

Topic:

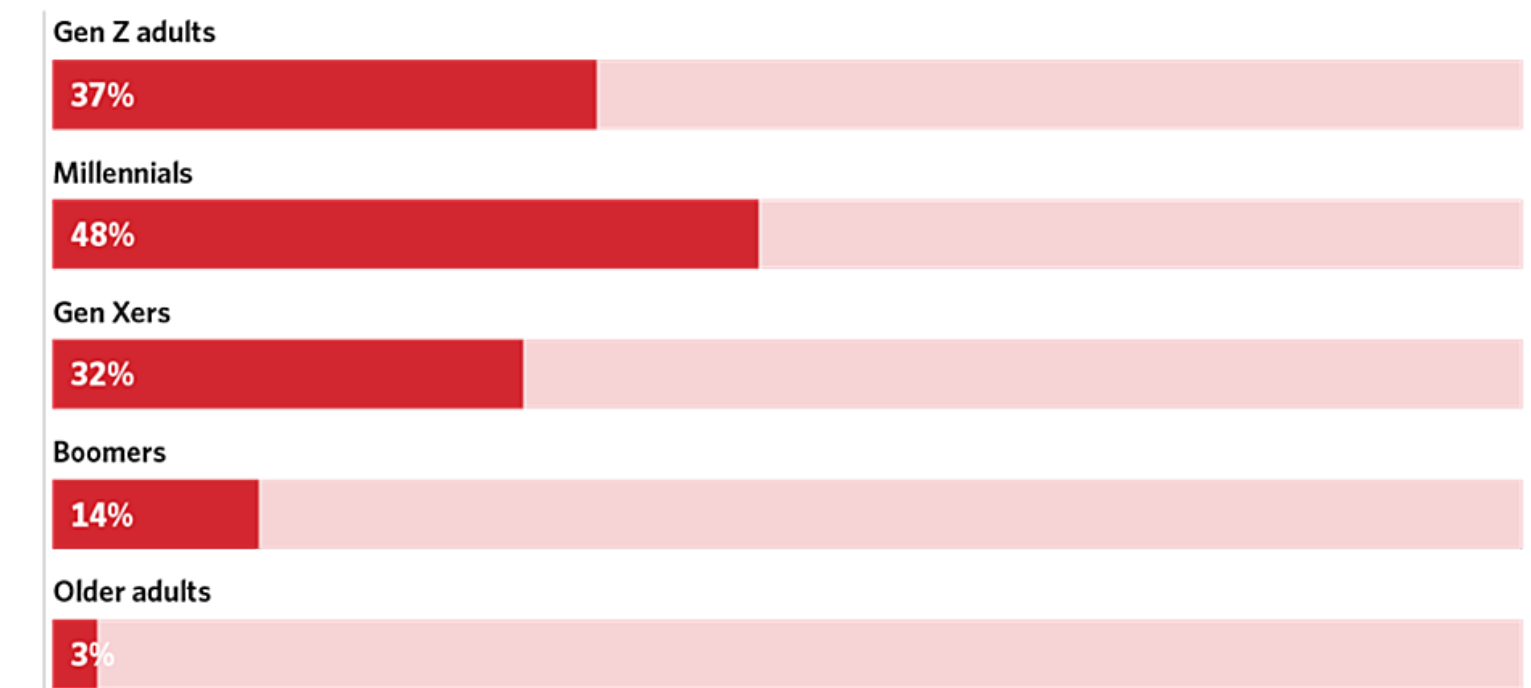
STRESS AND DECISION-MAKING DURING THE PANDEMIC: APA- HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Our new survey conducted in partnership with the [American Psychological Association](#) found that stress levels are holding steady from recent years, and despite many struggles, U.S. adults retain a positive outlook. However, behind this professed optimism about the future, day-to-day struggles are overwhelming many. Here's what else we found:

- **U.S. adults are struggling with daily decisions:** Nearly one-third of adults (32%) said sometimes they are so stressed about the coronavirus pandemic that they struggle to make basic decisions, such as what to wear or what to eat.
- Millennials (48%) **were particularly likely to struggle with making daily decisions**, especially when compared with other groups (Gen Z adults: 37%, Gen Xers: 32%, Boomers: 14%).
- Meanwhile, the majority of parents **made at least one major life decision during the pandemic** (62% vs. 35% of non-parents), illustrating a decision-making paradox that seems to have emerged: **despite uncertainty and decision difficulty, major life changes still occur.**
- As a result of stress, nearly three-quarters (74%) **have experienced various impacts in the last month**, such as headaches (34%), feeling overwhelmed (34%), fatigue (32%), or changes in sleeping habits (32%).

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE



STRESS IN AMERICA™ 2021: STRESS AND DECISION-MAKING DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Implication:

Generally speaking, U.S. adults are adjusting through the pandemic, but some show fewer signs of resiliency than others. More than half of U.S. adults (53%) agreed they are struggling with the ups and downs of the coronavirus pandemic.

Section:

04

Topic:

CONSUMERS MAY ALREADY BE TIRED OF HOLIDAY MARKETING: AD AGE-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

Despite warnings that people should begin holiday shopping sooner due to supply issues, a majority of consumers don't want to see festive ads until after Thanksgiving, according to a new survey conducted in partnership with [Ad Age](#). Here's what Americans had to say about the pending Christmas ad creep:

- More than two-thirds of U.S. adults (68%) agree that **holiday marketing should not begin until at least Turkey Day**.
- Yet more than half (51%) of those consumers said they have **already seen at least one Christmas or holiday advertisement** with more than seven weeks to go until Christmas.
- Since mid-August, (58%) of consumers said **they have not been able to purchase at least one item because of stocking shortages** and more than half (54%) said they **have faced shipping delays in the last two months**.

Implication:

While consumers might mind the early advertising, it's having some effect at spurring them to shop, according to the [National Retail Federation](#). Last year, (42%) of shoppers began holiday buying before November; this year it's up to (49%).

Section:

05

Topic:

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE “CANCEL CULTURE” BATTLE AT NETFLIX

Introduction:

Dave Chappelle is at the center of a cancel culture debate due to content from his newest Netflix special that many deemed insensitive towards the LGBTQ+ community. We checked in with Americans to see how they felt about the latest cancel culture controversy and here's what we found:

- Among Americans aware of the controversy, the majority (54%) **sided with Chappelle and Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos** over protests against the company and comedy special.
- More than half (54%) **said they support Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos over Netflix employees** who walked off the job last week in protest of the special (46%), but LGBTQ Americans, however, **sided with Netflix employees** (62%).
- Nearly three-fifths (58%) said the controversy **hasn't impacted their opinion of Netflix in any way**, but one-third (34%) of LGBTQ Americans said they have a **more negative opinion of Netflix**, twice that of the general public (17%) or Black Americans (17%).
- In the wake of the continued controversy, two transgender Netflix employees have filed labor charges **against the company**, citing alleged retaliation against them for speaking out against the comedian's special.

Implication:

When a company's values – in this case, freedom of speech – conflict with the concerns of employees or other stakeholders, companies will need to listen to the concerns of all parties in order to protect its brand.

Questions?

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