

Building trust is more than communication. Communication is more than words.

Listening

- Humility
- Bi-directional
- Reaching next generation
- Lived experience

Power Sharing

- Non-traditional trusted messengers
- Local leaders
- Co-created messages

Little bit of magic

- Storytelling
- Words matter
- Cultural resonance
- Anticipation of needs

This requires new, modernized infrastructure. YLE's new program called **Project Stethoscope** built this for health systems and public health

Project Stethoscope: Measles Insights

1. People are asking a lot of questions = information voids = opportunity to enter conversation

- Do I need a booster if I was born before 1957?*
- What do I do if I don't have vaccination records?*
- I'm so nervous for my 6 week old! What do I do?!*
- What else can I do to protect my child?*
- Small outbreak, why are you fear mongering?*
- Vaccine ingredients, how vaccines work*
- Bubbling up concern: Vaccine data surveillance*

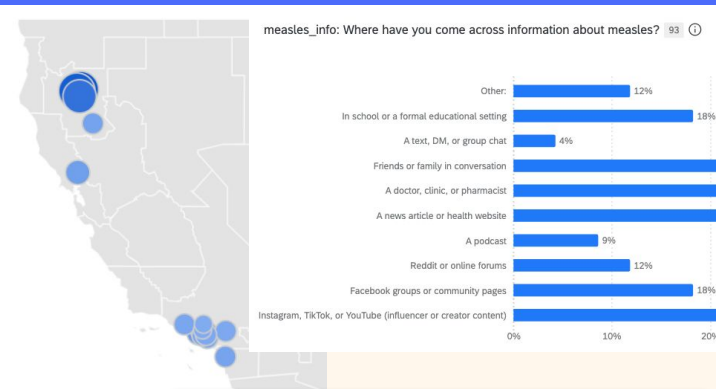
2. Meet people where they are at

3. Partner with trusted messengers, like faith leaders

- Conversations are *not* widespread among faith based community
- Immense willingness to be engaged
- Co-develop messages to specific populations.

4. Words matter

- Don't use the word "mandate" or "misinformation"
- Shaming doesn't work
- Connect over shared values



THE EVIDENCE COLLECTIVE Your Local Epidemiologist

Christian Communicator Brief: Measles Outbreaks

Measles is spreading in some Christian communities. This brief is intended to support 1-focused communicators who seek to protect Christian communities as outbreaks grow.

What's Happening

- The U.S. has had the worst year of measles cases since 1991
- Outbreaks (more than 3 cases) and sporadic cases (random cases due to travel) have been reported across 26 states, including South Carolina, California, and Wisconsin.
- Some Christian communities have been hit harder by low vaccination rates.
- The vast majority of cases in these outbreaks are among unvaccinated individuals (90-95%), and children and teens are most affected (90%). Of the cases, about 1 in 5 are hospitalized. As of Feb 2026, no one has died in the 2026 outbreak, [three people died](#) in 2025.

Why It Matters

- Measles is one of the **most contagious viruses** in the world. It spreads very easily and can make people very sick. It causes fever and a rash, but it can also lead to hearing loss, vision problems, pneumonia, diarrhea, and swelling of the brain. Measles also weakens your immune system, making it harder to fight off other infections later.
 - One of the scariest complications is called **SSE**, which slowly damages the brain and leads to coma and death. There is no cure, and it is almost always fatal. This can happen years after someone has measles.

Effects per 10,000 people who...

Scenario	Estimated Deaths	Estimated Hospitalizations	Estimated Permanent Disabilities
get measles	~100	~1,000	~100
get the MMR vaccine	~0.0001	~0.001	~0.0001

Source: [Unbiased Science](#)

- The good news is that we can prevent measles. The measles vaccine (MMR) is **97% effective** at stopping illness. It is very rare for vaccinated people to be hospitalized or die from measles. The vaccine also helps stop the virus from spreading. That is important because one person with measles can infect 12 to 18 other people if no one is protected. The vaccine is much safer than contracting the disease (as shown in the figure above).