



COVID-19 Vaccine Perceptions in Southwest Georgia

A summary of results from a survey and interviews with residents of Southwest Georgia

What did we want to know?

- 1 COVID-19 vaccine Status
- 2 Trusted sources of COVID-19 information
- 3 Reasons for getting or not getting the vaccine
- 4 Reasons for low vaccine acceptance among certain groups and lower vaccine rates in the region

What did we do?

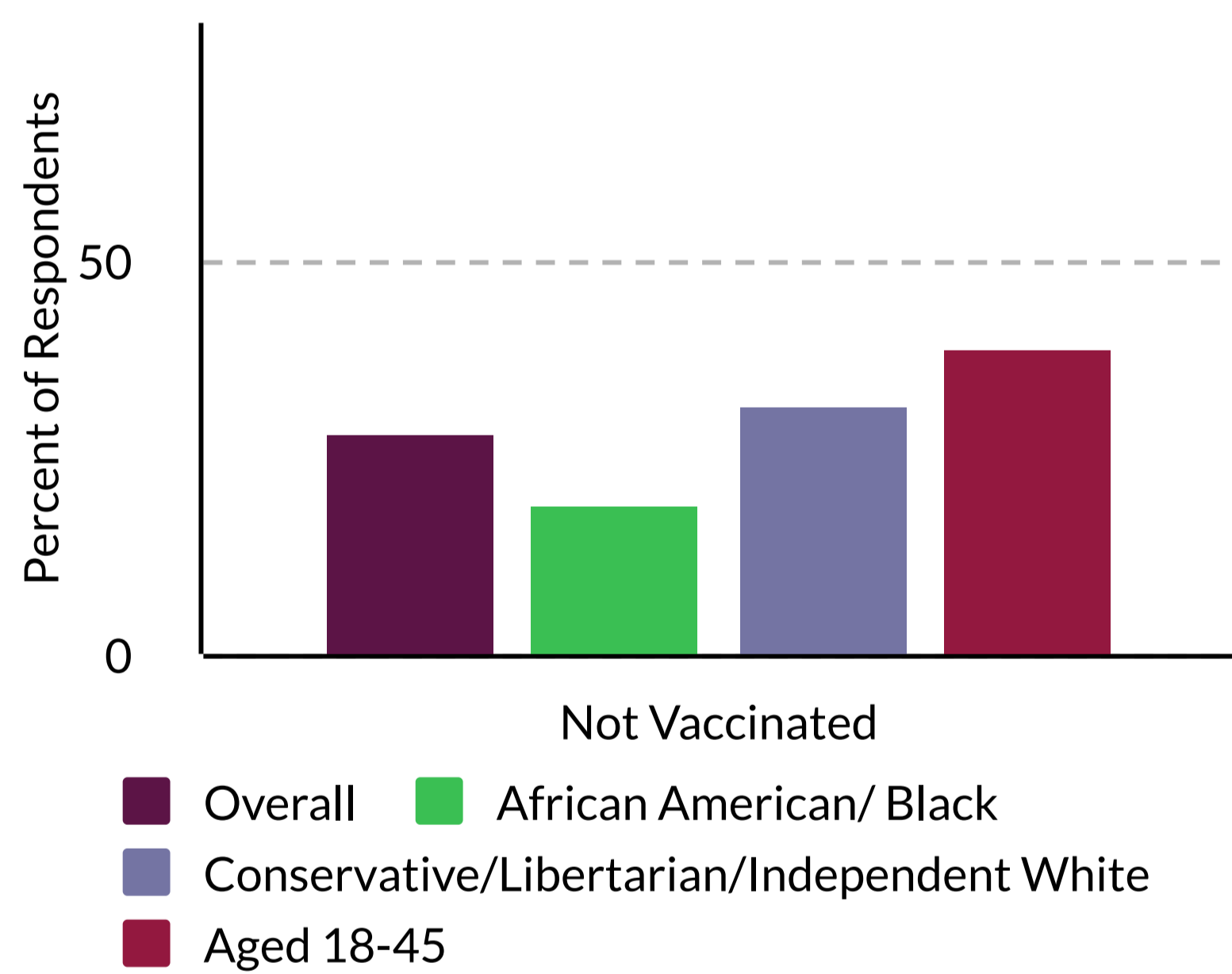
We conducted a survey with 138 people in Southwest Georgia. Then, we conducted 42 interviews to further explore local perspectives on vaccination - selected quotes are included below.

What did we find?

Overall, most participants:

- ✓ Were vaccinated
- ✓ Felt that the vaccines prevent the spread and severity of symptoms from COVID-19
- ✓ Liked collectivist messages such as wanting to protect older people and keep our schools open

COVID-19 Vaccination Status



Almost a third of our participants were not vaccinated.

More **Black** participants were vaccinated than other subgroups.

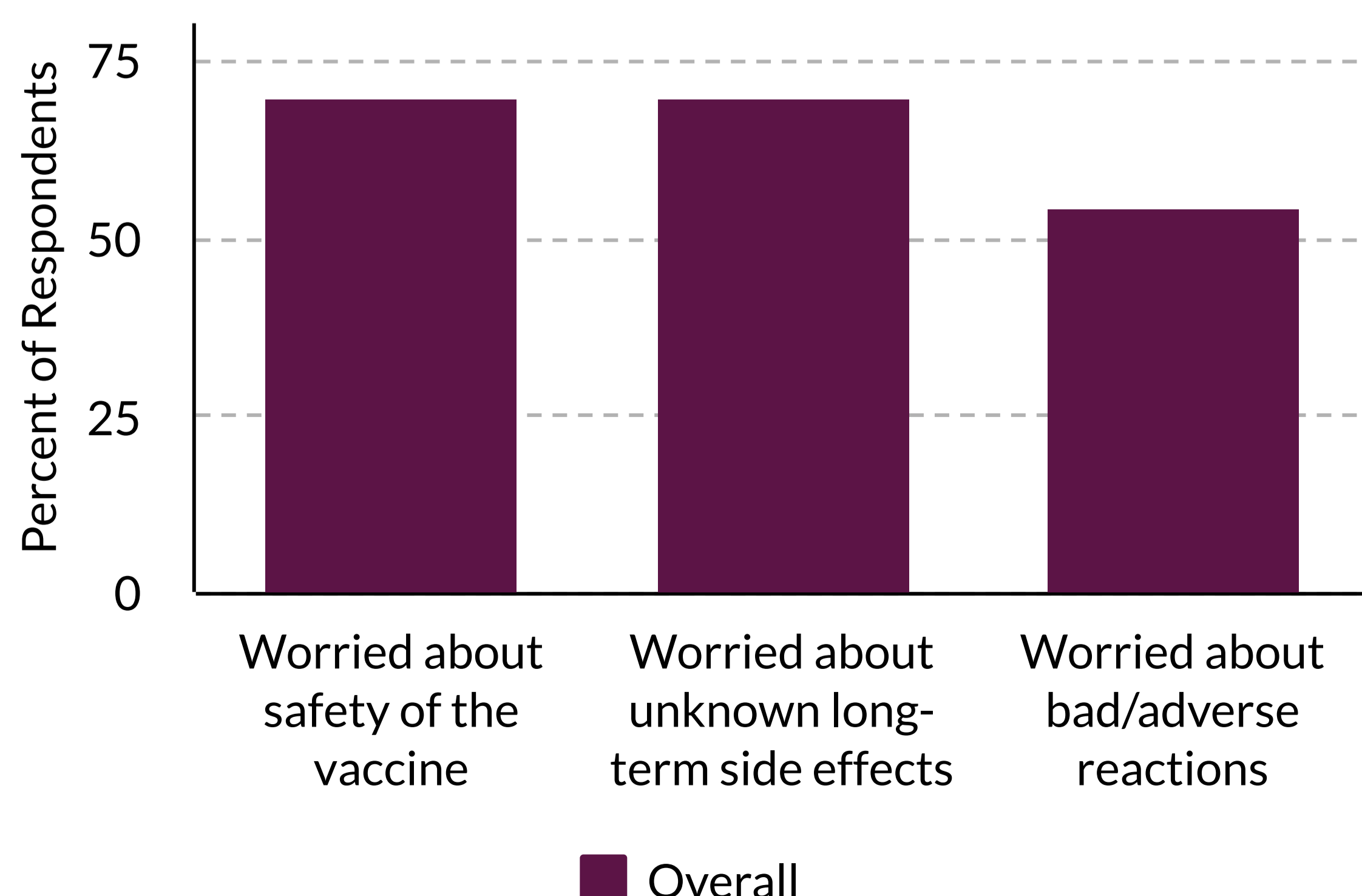
The least vaccinated group was **young adults**, followed by **Conservative White** participants.



"I think it's safe and effective and it is important for people of all ages that are able to get it to help them have a better chance of surviving if they get the virus".

Those who were unvaccinated described many factors regarding their decision. Their most common responses and relevant interview quotes are included here.

Reasons for not getting the vaccine / vaccine hesitancy (among individuals who were unvaccinated)

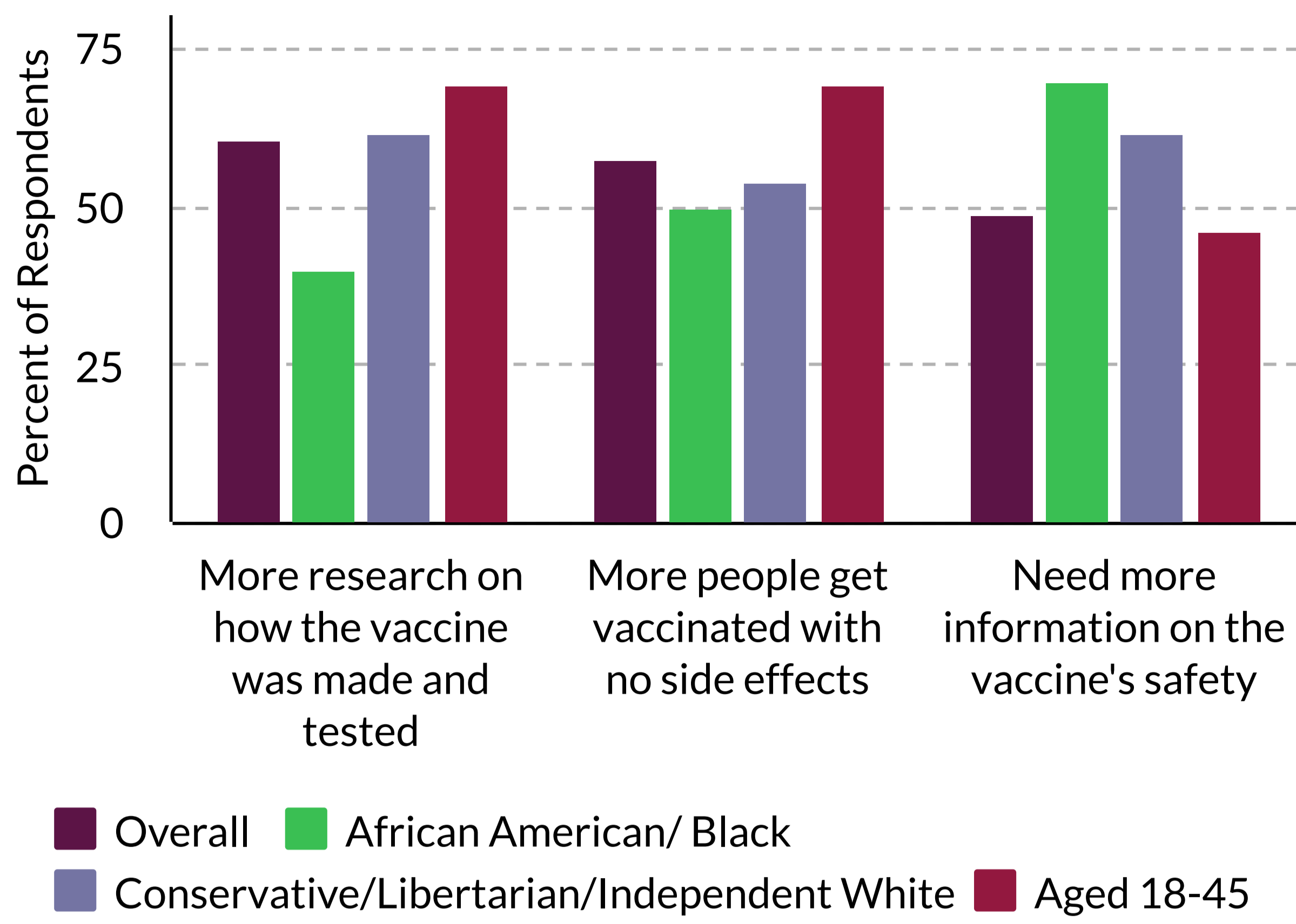


Vaccine safety and long-term side effects were the most common reason for not getting vaccinated, followed by concern about reactions to the vaccine.



"{My boyfriend} feels like we don't know what we're putting in our bodies... So those are his concerns."

What would it take for you to get the vaccine? (among individuals who were unvaccinated)



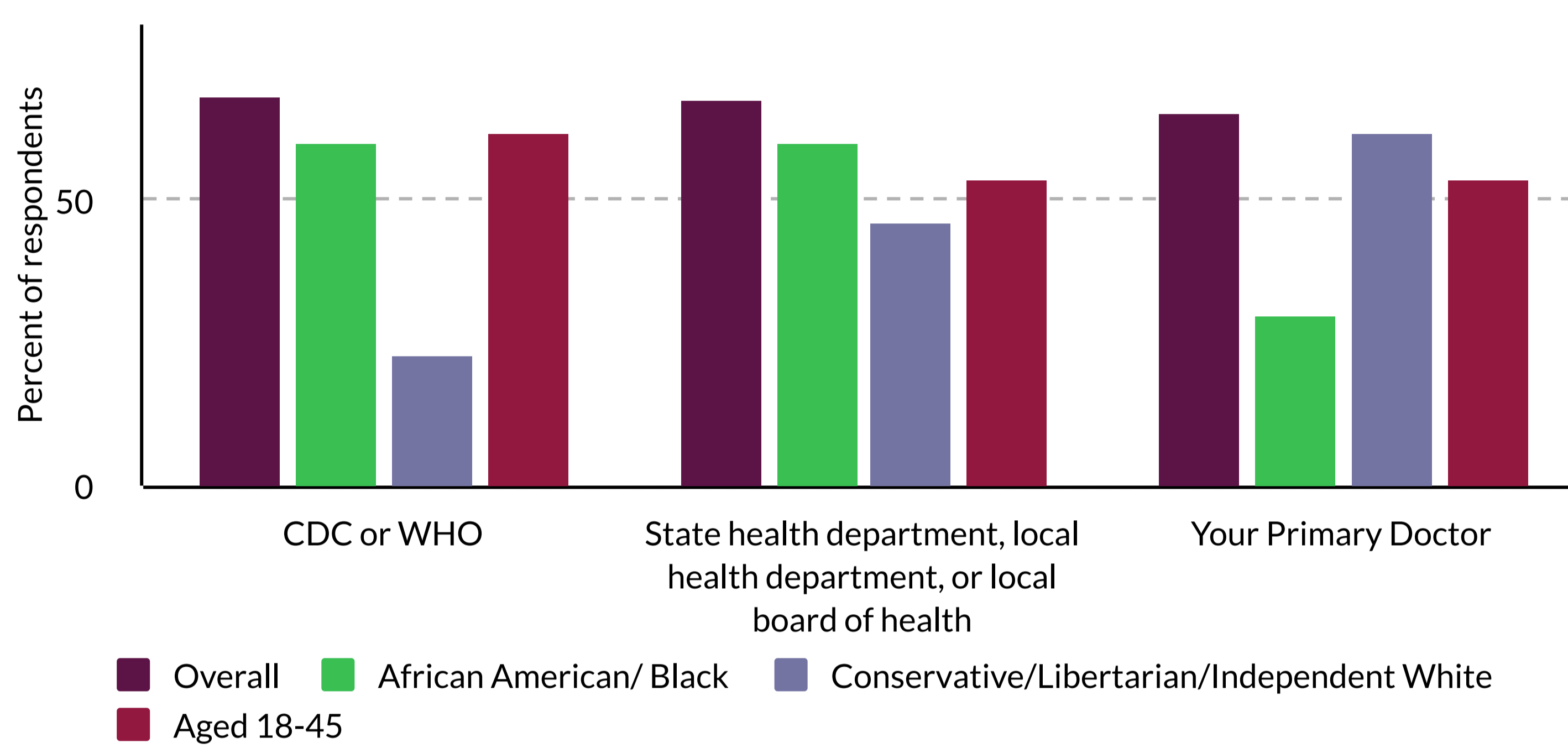
More research on how the vaccine was made and tested was the most common response among all unvaccinated participants.

Information on vaccine safety was the most common response among unvaccinated **Black** respondents.



"I'm wanting to know what was in it, like the ingredients. What's in it. And it seemed like no one could provide that".

Main source of trusted information regarding COVID-19 (among individuals who were unvaccinated and not planning to)



Overall, the **CDC or WHO** were the main sources of trusted COVID-19 information.

However, less than a quarter of **Conservative White** respondents felt this way, with their **primary doctor** more often the most trusted information source.

What does this mean?



To increase vaccination in SW Georgia, public health practitioners and medical providers should provide more information about the concerns listed above.



This information should come from the CDC or WHO, primary care doctors, and those embedded in the local community such as religious leaders, health practitioners, hospitals, and the local public health department.



Messaging should be tailored to different audiences.

- For example, messages targeting Conservative, Libertarian, and Independent White residents should emphasize vaccine safety.

Phase 2: Increasing vaccinations



Using the information from the survey and interviews, Phase 2 of VaxUp! Southwest Georgia aims to increase vaccine confidence and uptake by:

- Training and deploying Natural Helpers to deliver vaccine-related education to their communities
- Training Natural Helpers to:
 - deliver tailored education
 - utilize effective messaging strategies
 - schedule vaccine appointments



Read more about the VaxUp project here:
<https://web1.sph.emory.edu/eprc/research/vaxup.html>

The quotes included here were from the following thesis: Vincent, S. (2021) A qualitative assessment of the needs and attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination among young adult residents of Southwest Georgia [Unpublished master's thesis]. Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

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