

Dear PEPPS Community

John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing."



If we want to thrive as a community vine we need to all understand that **we are part of the greater whole**. We have to make the choice that serves the PEPPS vine.

We have spent the last year and a half adapting and trying our best to manage economically and educationally. At last, a possible long term solution has been presented and we are hearing resistance to working towards the greater good. Sincerely, the school wishes to reduce online teaching and learning. It is stressful for all. We cannot do this with an at-risk community.

I recognize that vaccinations may be a controversial topic, but, as a scientist and a principal, I must share facts. I am a trustee of the PEPPS Trust and I am obligated to make my decisions in the best interest of the beneficiaries of the Trust. The beneficiaries of the PEPPS Trust are the pupils of our schools. **We have to work tirelessly towards ensuring that the health and education of PEPPS pupils are protected.** It is essential that we do everything in our power to maximize the probability of pupils coming to PEPPS feeling safe. Our pupils deserve this.

We, as a society, have not felt safe for well over a year. **Our only hope of feeling safe in the future is to have as many people as possible in our community vaccinated.** A group of school Heads have agreed that we shall work TOGETHER (as part of the same vine) towards encouraging vaccines, among our parent bodies, by sharing facts. As a teaching and learning community, we endeavour to train our pupils to apply reason and critical thinking to all they encounter. We hope that our parents will lead their children by example and critically evaluate the available data.

I quote Stephen Lowrey, the Head of Mitchell House and a historian, in the following paragraph, *'Plague and pestilence are part of life for every living organism, and no less in human history. The bubonic plague in Europe in the 1350s killed 25% of the population. Smallpox imported to the Americas by European colonizers, wiped out most of the indigenous population (some estimates put it as high as 90%) within a few decades, because the populations had no natural immunity to the disease. "One of history's deadliest diseases, smallpox, is estimated to have killed more than 300 million people since 1900 alone. But a massive global vaccination campaign put an end to the disease in 1977—making it the first disease ever eradicated."* Both of these plagues and many other dangerous ailments (polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, rubella, Hib, mumps, rotavirus measles) are now seldom even heard of and are no longer a daily threat due to vaccination.'

A few months ago, I thanked God for the technology that was created by the miraculous human mind, which was created by God. This technology allowed our schools to continue to educate pupils remotely. Online teaching is not ideal and is surely something we want to minimize going forward. That said, all technological advances, including vaccines, are a celebration of the incredibility of God's work. I believe that God wants to see humanity survive and thrive. **The vaccine gives us all the opportunity to return to normality sooner rather than later.**

We know now, without any doubt, that hospital admissions are currently predominantly unvaccinated individuals. We know that vaccinated people are less likely to spread the disease due to having fewer virus-spreading symptoms such as coughing. **We know that vaccines save lives.** PEPPS really wants to see as many people from our community emerge unscathed. We are deeply

saddened by the passing of some of our parents and other family members of our pupils and we hold those families in our prayers.

The human rights argument is unlikely to hold up in court since **the rights of the group usually supersede the rights of the individual.** (There is an excellent *Daily Maverick* argument for this in the resources.) An example of this is that we place a single person in prison (a clear violation of their individual human rights) in order to keep the community safe. **Vaccinations protect the group** and the group is more important than the individual.

Concerns have been raised about not knowing exactly what is in the vaccine. I doubt most people know exactly what was in the dinner that they ate last night. Honestly, we are not very sure about the purity of the water we drink or the air that we breathe. The ingredients of the vaccine can be researched. 11 million South Africans have been vaccinated without obvious longterm ill effects. Over 2 billion people on earth have been fully vaccinated and the data collected overwhelmingly points to the safety of the vaccines. **There is no evidence to suggest that the vaccine is significantly harmful.**

In fact, the converse is true. Pregnant and breastfeeding women protect both themselves and their babies by being vaccinated. People with co-morbidities improve their chances of not landing up in the hospital, or worse, if they vaccinate. **Vaccinations are beneficial for people's long term health prognosis.**

It is our duty and responsibility to share accurate information regarding Covid 19 vaccinations. Social media has a lot to answer for in terms of spreading misinformation. It is important that the school and all its stakeholders join the national effort to disseminate as much accurate information as possible regarding the Covid 19 and vaccinations. **We appeal to all in our community to be involved in encouraging family, friends and all you interact with to get themselves and their loved ones vaccinated.**

Vaccinations are not a conspiracy. They are life-saving technology that will help us return to normality more quickly. **We want to return to normality as quickly as possible.**

If you are looking for more facts, please read the material provided at the end of this letter. Our minds are also open and we also invite any peer-reviewed scientific studies that contradict the thoughts that we have shared.

We respectfully request that all adults in our community get vaccinated and that as soon as children are permitted to be vaccinated that they also get vaccinated. This is how our community can safely return to an optimum excellent education.



Yours in healthy, safe and excellent education

Annabel Roberts

PEPPS Executive Head

See resources below:

RESOURCES

The one or two doctors who have expressed concerns about vaccines are outliers and should not be validated more than the thousands of doctors who are begging people to get vaccinated. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED VIDEO

<https://web.facebook.com/mark.carolissen/videos/813461216019038>

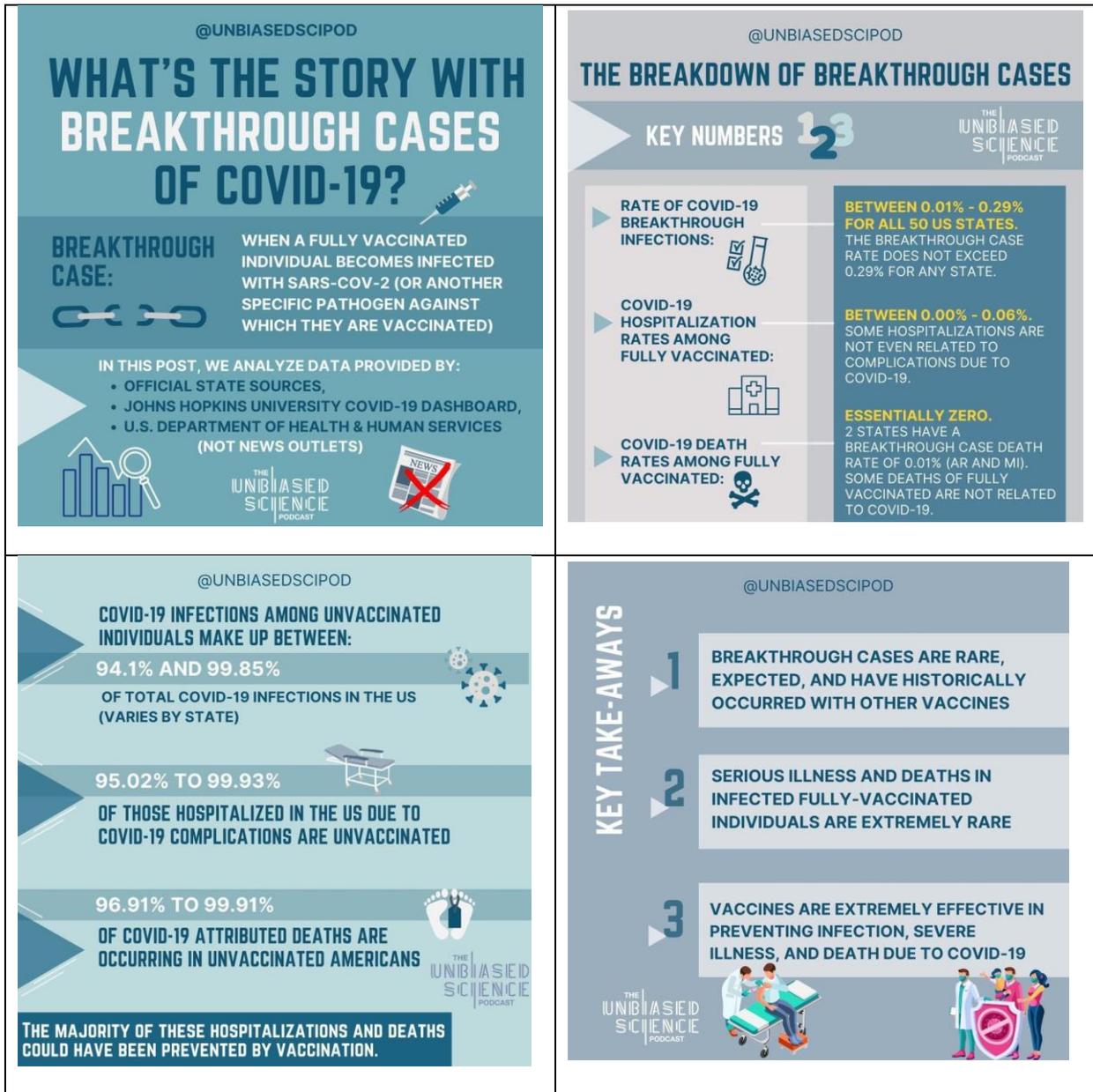
Posters / memes:

- Source: World Health Organisation



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- Source: [The Unbiased Science Podcast](#)



SA Covid-19 and vaccination statistics:

- Follow the Face Book page of [Kevin Leo-Smith](#)

Information on vaccines and immunization:

- World Health Organisation: page on [Vaccines and immunization](#)
- Scientific American: [Decoded: How do vaccines act... \(Video\)](#)

Information on Covid-19 vaccines:

- World Health Organisation: page on [Covid-19 vaccines](#)
- WebMD article: [Chance That COVID-19 Vaccines Are Gene Therapy? 'Zero'](#)

The dangers of vaccine denialism:

- Oped piece in the Daily Maverick: [Vaccine denialism kills](#)

South African experts:

- Presentation of a panel of experts hosted by the Education Labour Relations Council: [ELRC and Partners Vaccination Awareness Campaign](#)

The Constitution and Health and Safety (OHS Act) implications

- <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-08-20-can-the-government-constitutionally-require-that-everyone-be-vaccinated-against-covid-19-part-1/>
- <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-08-22-jab-for-the-job-can-an-employer-legally-require-its-employees-to-be-vaccinated-part-two/>

News links to unvaccinated people in hospital

- <https://www.google.com/search?q=hospital+admissions+vaccinated+vs+unvaccinated&oq=hospital+admissions&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i512l9.10783j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>
- <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-08-17/vaccinated-covid-doctor-shot>

Fertility, pregnancy or breastfeeding

- <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.news24.com/amp/health24/medical/infectious-diseases/coronavirus/can-the-covid-19-vaccines-cause-infertility-miscariage-experts-explain-20210715>

References

<https://www.amnh.org/explore/science-topics/disease-eradication/countdown-to-zero/smallpox>

<https://www.rainbowtoken.com/the-relationship-between-vine-branches-and-the-vine.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/forgot-14-diseases.html>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-021-01283-z#citeas>