TuSalud

Benicio del Toro and Zoe Saldana Fight COVID-19 Misinformation Among Latinos [VIDEO]

The actors help debunk COVID-19 vaccine misconceptions in a new bilingual campaign.

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With most Americans now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, the need to address vaccine misinformation among people of color—who have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus—has grown more urgent.

To that end, Latino actors Benicio del Toro and Zoe Saldana have teamed up for a new bilingual campaign encouraging more Latinos to get vaccinated, reports NBC News.

For del Toro, the fight is personal. He lost his uncle to COVID-19 last year, and his brother, a chief medical officer of a hospital in New York City, contracted the virus while fighting the pandemic.

The video campaign is a partnership with advocacy group Momento Latino and SOMOS Community Care, a network of over 2,500 providers in New York City. In the video, del Toro and Zoe Saldana discuss COVID-19 misconceptions with del Toro's brother, Gustavo del Toro, MD. (Watch the video above.)

"We were discussing the concerns that exist right now in Latinx communities, African-American communities and other minority groups," Saldana says in the video. "The misleading information around the virus, around vaccination. Having someone like you provide scientific explanations to our concerns, I think would help our communities make better decisions around the vaccination process. "

According to recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on race and COVID-19 vaccination, an estimated 12% of Latinos have been vaccinated against the virus, a stark contrast from the 64% of white people who've been vaccinated.

Latinos are two times more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19, three times more likely to be hospitalized and 2.3 times more likely to die of the virus than white people, the CDC reports. Being vaccinated against COVID-19 could help save many Latino lives by reducing the number of cases and deaths among this community.

In addition to addressing COVID-19 misinformation, the campaign provides cultural content about vaccines and why it's important for Latinos to have access to vaccines, reports The Hollywood Reporter.

"Our intention is not to tell people what to do," said del Toro during a recent press briefing. "We just want to bring out the information about the vaccines and then let people make their own decisions."

For related coverage, read "'Latino Anti-Disinformation Lab' Will Combat COVID-19 Falsehoods"

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