



The Medicine Abuse Project - Preventing Half a Million Teens from Abusing Medicine

CRT/tanaka and Partnership at Drugfree.org, Jan 1, 2013

Summary: 2013 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Public Service — Partnerships (Funded jointly by businesses and other organizations including nonprofit and government)

Together with The Partnership at Drugfree.org, CRT/tanaka helped create The Medicine Abuse Project, a campaign with a goal of preventing half a million teens from abusing medicine within five years. Launched during the week of September 23 – 29, 2012, The Medicine Abuse Project is a multi-year effort to help educate parents, teens and the public about the dangers of medicine abuse and unite parents, educators, health care providers, coaches, government officials, law enforcement officers and other partners to help save lives. During the launch week, the campaign engaged stakeholders through a series of events and a petition called the Pledge.

Public service includes programs that advance public understanding of societal issues, problems or concerns. The partnerships subcategory is intended for public service programs that are funded jointly by businesses and other organizations, including nonprofit or government.

Full Text: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM

The Partnership at Drugfree.org is a national leader in the effort to reduce drug use and drinking among teens. Because one in six teens has used a prescription drug (when a doctor had not prescribed it for them) in order to get high or change their mood, and most have gotten it from family or friends, the nonprofit organization planned a new campaign focused on teen medicine abuse. The Partnership at Drugfree.org turned to CRT/tanaka to help it elevate the issue during a weeklong campaign launch for the multi-year effort entitled The Medicine Abuse Project.

RESEARCH

The Partnership at Drugfree.org conducted new proprietary research that showed that teen medicine abuse was far more widespread than parents thought. Using the research, CRT/tanaka created media materials, including a graphically-appealing e-book to present the findings to the press and an infographic illustrating the issue for social sharing.

PLANNING

Campaign Goal

CRT/tanaka worked with The Partnership at Drugfree.org to create a measurable goal for the campaign to ensure that it was viewed as more than just another awareness campaign. The goal, to “prevent half a million teens from abusing medicine by 2017,” demonstrated that the campaign was focused on action and results.

Objectives

- Obtain 5,000 pledges in Phase I
- Increase engagement through The Partnership at Drugfree.org's social media properties
- Secure top-tier media impressions
- Engage top social media influencers

Strategy

- Generating conversation among influencers in social media to increase awareness and link people to take action.
- Developing a series of virtual and brick-and-mortar events that would allow people to learn more and take a pledge to take action.
- Utilizing proprietary research and spokespeople to generate a steady drumbeat of coverage leading up to, during and following the launch week.

EXECUTION

Social Media

CRT/tanaka developed the hashtag #endmedicineabuse to allow people to share their own stories and follow the global conversation. Working with The Partnership at Drugfree.org, CRT/tanaka created and gathered assets to inform people about the issue:

- Sample social media posts for The Partnership at Drugfree.org and its partners
- Infographic
- Personal stories (video and written)
- Link to a pledge to take action

The agency reached out to a variety of influencers to recruit them to join the campaign and share information with their followers through posts on Facebook, Twitter or their blog.

Throughout the week, people interacted with [The Medicine Abuse Project](#) through a series of virtual events, including a Twitter chat with iVillage, a live webinar in partnership with A&E Networks that featured panelist Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and a Facebook chat with *Celebrity Rehab* host Dr. Drew Pinsky and model Amber Smith.

Live Events

The virtual events were complemented by brick-and-mortar events, including a live installation at Grand Central Terminal and a Drug Enforcement Administration-facilitated Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, with more than 5,000 locations across the country. The live installation was a compelling digital exhibit featuring giant medicine bottles, personal stories from teens and families affected by medicine abuse and iPad stations where exhibit visitors could sign the Pledge to take action. A media event at the live installation included remarks from New York City Health Commissioner Thomas Farley, actress Melissa Gilbert and President and CEO of The Partnership at Drugfree.org Steve Pasierb.

Traditional Media

CRT/tanaka secured media interviews for spokesperson Melissa Gilbert, President and CEO Steve Pasierb and families affected by medicine abuse. In addition to national media outreach and a New York media tour, the agency conducted regional outreach in the top 20 markets using local spokespeople from organizations such as the Drug Enforcement Administration, the American College of Emergency Room Physicians and the U.S. Attorney's Offices.

EVALUATION

During Phase I of The Medicine Abuse Project, CRT/tanaka garnered the following results:

- Total impressions: **More than 86 million**
- Total media impressions: **More than 45 million**

- Media coverage included:
 - **USA Today**
 - **CNN.com**
 - **DoctorOz.com**
 - **Entertainment Tonight**
 - **Access Hollywood Live**
 - **More.com**
 - **48 regional print and broadcast hits, including WNBC-TV and *The Dallas Morning News*, *NY Live* and *CBS Live from the Couch***
- Total social media impressions: **41,265,758**
- Total social media mentions: **4,089**
- Social media influencers that posted about The Medicine Abuse Project included:
 - **Dr. Oz**
 - **Larry King**
 - **LIVESTRONG**
 - **Maria Shriver**
 - **The Justice Department**
 - **Andrew Zimmern**
- Results from the live installation at Grand Central Terminal:
 - **5,000 information cards** distributed
 - Approximately **700 pledges** signed on the day of the event
- More than **5,000 pledges** signed at MedicineAbuseProject.org

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