

Developing a Successful Social Media Campaign: Findings and Future Implications

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Study Aims

To conduct a formative investigation of how to create substance prevention social media campaigns that successfully reach and engage high school students.



Campaign Message

Source

Content

Channel

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaylen-bledsoe/using-social-media-as-a-t_b_5375487.html

Methods

Sample

- Community-based and afterschool youth programs in RI (convenience sample)
- Teens in grades 9-12
- Projected final sample $n < 40$

Procedure

- 1-hour semi-structured focus group discussion
- Digitally recorded
- Facilitated to by lead moderator w/ help of second moderator
- Brief self-administered questionnaire



Preliminary Results

Sample characteristics (to-date):

- N=26 (3 groups)
- Predominantly Latino/a
- 69% female
- 10.7 average grade

SNS Usage

- 85% of teens use at least 2 types of SNS's
- 92% of teens use SNS's often (i.e. several times a day)

Exposure

- More than half (62%) of teens see people their age posting messages about drinking or getting drunk and smoking marijuana often or always





Preliminary Results

Source

How might different individual/social factors influence teens' willingness to serve as the source of the message?

Barriers:

- Looking “uncool” and getting judged
- Lack of incentive (e.g. attention)
- Shaming/offending friends
- Cognitive dissonance

“For example, if I post – every time I post a picture of me doing community service and [my friend] posted a picture of him smoking or something, he would get more attention.”

“It’ll take a lot, because they can have friends who do it and they don’t want to seem like they are disrespecting their friends and telling them they’re bad for doing those types of things.”

“If you ‘like’ something, that means you agree with that person’s opinion or thought, if you share something, that means you think alike, and if you post something yourself, that means you endorse it 100%”



Preliminary Results

Source

How might different social factors influence teens' willingness to serve as the source of the message?

Facilitators:

- Message must align with values
- School climate matters
"It depends if they're into school activities and stuff, if they have school spirit."
- Incentive (e.g. monetary, attention)

"Like I would think of my social media, my brand, per se, it's mine. It's my entity, I have full control over it. If you want me to post something, you have to give something in return for it."

Hailee Dunn
@haileedunn926

I just supported Go Purple for Prevention on @ThunderclapIt // @reenehobbs thndr.me /ZSnzH9

SHOW US YOUR PURPLE PORTSMOUTH!

Go Purple for Prevention
I just supported Go Purple for Prevention on @ThunderclapIt // @reenehobbs thunderclap.it



Preliminary Conclusions

Is asking teens to actively participate in a substance prevention social media campaign realistic?



Back to the drawing board...

- Social media campaign or social media literacy?

What do I mean by *social media literacy*?

The ability to deconstruct pro-alcohol and other substance related messages teens/peers post online



Supplemental Results

What social factors discourage teens from posting alcohol and other substance related messages on their SNS's?

- Negatively influencing siblings

"...it [online depictions of substance use] affects younger people like you see my sister, she's 10, she's in elementary school. I'm just like so surprised because when I was in elementary or middle school, I didn't hear about all that stuff and it's like social media and the way people act in front of a younger audience. It affects them in certain ways."
- Short-term/immediate consequences
- Long-term consequences

"They [college admissions] see what you post about and what you write about on Facebook, what pictures you post on Instagram or what you write about on Twitter, and if you already give a bad impression like swearing...and posting inappropriate things... they'll reject you right away."



Supplemental Results

Can participating in small group discussions serve as a social media literacy intervention?

65% of teens hadn't really thought about how substance-related messages posted on SNS's might encourage people their age to engage in underage drinking and marijuana use

88% of teens have a better understanding of how the types of messages people post on SNS's might influence their own attitudes and behaviors

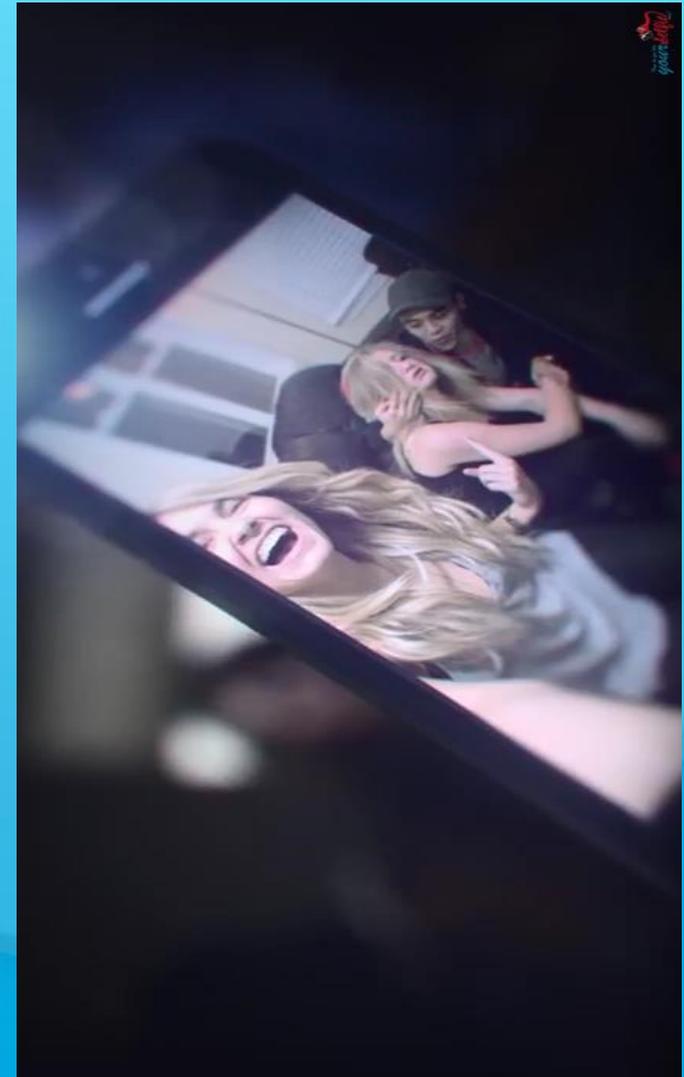
88% of teens said they have a better understanding of how posting messages on SNS's that display underage drinking may encourage people their age to drink

84% of teens said they have a better understanding of how posting messages on SNS's that display marijuana use may encourage people their age to smoke



Conclusions/ Future Directions

- Getting teens actively involved in anti-substance prevention social media campaigns is ideal but difficult to accomplish
- Anti-substance social media campaigns are still helpful and should not be thrown out altogether
- Not posting may offer more promising results
- Informal discussions can increase social media literacy



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