

Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect 2015 Public Awareness Campaign

Overview

In SFY 2012-13, CDHS spent \$60,313 General Fund to hire a marketing firm to assess the best manner in which to conduct a child abuse and neglect public awareness campaign. Pure Brand Communications was contracted to:

- 1) Develop a proposed marketing and communications strategy;
- 2) Conduct qualitative and quantitative public opinion research for an evidence-based public awareness campaign in 2015; and
- 3) Provide an assessment of costs, thereby informing the SFY2013-14 Public Awareness budget request.

Public Opinion Research Methodology

Two focus groups were held and 500 Coloradans were surveyed by telephone regarding child abuse and neglect. Mandatory reporters and Latino populations were oversampled to develop strategic and more inclusive communications for these target audiences.

Key Findings from the Public Opinion Research

- Coloradans are well aware child abuse and neglect is a problem, believing that one in four children experience abuse or neglect.
- Strong majorities of Coloradans say they are confident that they can identify signs of abuse and they *say* that they are very likely to report a litany of typical abuse and neglect situations.
- More than half of Coloradans (51%) say they have personally encountered a child that they suspected was a victim of abuse or neglect.
- Perception is very different from reality. During SFY12-13, it is estimated that 75% of reports came from mandatory reporters, 15% came from family members, and only 10% came from the general public.
- Only half of Coloradans (51%) can name a proper next step (call child protection services, county hotline, police, or 911) in circumstances where they have encountered suspected abuse or neglect and *know* the suspected abuser.
 - Less than two-thirds of mandatory reporters surveyed (65%) named a proper step when they knew the suspected abuser well, rising to just 70% when they *did not know* the abuser.
 - More than 30% mandatory reporters surveyed do not know the proper steps to report child abuse or neglect.

- The biggest perceived barrier to reporting child abuse and neglect: *“I don’t know enough about the situation and worry that I might be wrong”* (65% said this lack of complete information would make them less likely to report).

Recommended marketing strategy from Pure Brand Communications

Focus on paid media channels throughout the calendar year including back-to-school, awareness months and holiday seasons.

Next Steps & Timeline for Implementation

The Division of Child Welfare completed funding requests for the hotline reporting system and public awareness campaign as per the committee’s decisions. Both funding requests were submitted to the JBC on January 2, 2014.

A work group is currently drafting the RFP for the Public Awareness Campaign seeking external professional services for the development of creative content, media purchasing, and assistance with public relations to implement the 2015 Public Awareness Campaign. CDHS anticipates issuing this Request for Proposal in January 2014 following the JBC approval of the funding requests.

In the meantime, CDHS will continue to expand and strengthen existing public awareness outreach efforts by helping to coordinate and collaborate with all stakeholders actively working in Colorado to prevent and raise awareness of child abuse and neglect.

CDHS, in collaboration with the Public Awareness Subcommittee, is creating a communications & outreach plan to distribute the results of the public opinion research to committees, workgroups and key stakeholders and gain additional feedback on the 2015 public awareness campaign.