



Quick Tip 32

Evaluate the Impact of a Media Campaign: Tobacco Control Example

Many local coalitions sponsor media campaigns as a strategy to provide education and promotion of tobacco control efforts. How do you know if your media campaign was effective? The first step in answering this question is to determine what the coalition and its stakeholders want or need to know. Write out questions you want answered, being as specific as possible. There are different levels of information that will be useful.

Evaluation of activities: Documenting what was done.

- Did the media piece actually run or air as the contract/agreement stated? How do we know?

Evaluation of the product of the activities: Was the message received?

- Does the target audience regularly use the medium chosen? Which media channels were chosen – newspaper, radio, TV, internet, brochures, etc.? Was a combination of media channels used? Was the messages the same or mixed?
- Do members of the target audience recall having been exposed to the message? How many times? When?
- Do members of the target audience indicate that they paid attention to the message? How closely? How might they demonstrate having paid attention?
- How do we know they saw the message and not another message? Is there a catch phrase they can repeat that shows they paid attention? Can they repeat it without prompting? Is there an image they remember?

Evaluation of the affects on the target audience: Identifying the impact and outcome of the intervention.

- Did the target audience experience changes in beliefs, knowledge or attitudes as a result of the media message? How do we know?

FOR EXAMPLE . . .

As part of their campaign to educate youth regarding environmental tobacco smoke, the Tobacco Free Central County Coalition is staging a media campaign.

Documenting the Intervention

The coalition begins evaluating its efforts by documenting the time it purchased from a local radio station. A second radio station agreed to broadcast free public service announcements and it asks for information about when the spots ran.

Identifying “What do we want to know?”

The coalition also wants to know how its media campaign affected the community. The coordinator facilitated a discussion to help the coalition write more specific questions that would guide it to the information it wanted to know. Below are some of the questions:

- How did our media campaign affect the community?
- How did our media campaign affect youth (ages 8-19)?
- How did our media campaign affect youth (ages 8-19) in the Jackson School district?

- How did one-minute radio spots on the negative effects of secondhand smoke affect youth (ages 8-19) in the Jackson School District?
- How did one-minute radio spots aired twice nightly between June and September 2001 on WHIP, Hip-Hop 108.8 FM and WHOT Hard Rock 94 FM on the negative effects of secondhand smoke affect youth (ages 8-19) in the Jackson School District?
- Did one-minute radio spots aired twice nightly between June and September 2001 on WHIP, Hip-Hop 108.8 FM and WHOT Hard Rock 94 FM on the negative effects of secondhand smoke change beliefs, knowledge and attitudes of youth (ages 8-19) in the Jackson School District?

Collecting Baseline Data

A very specific question that identifies the “need-to-know” information can be translated to survey, interview or focus group questions. The coalition first collected baseline by asking the target population the following questions:

- How many hours per week do you listen to WHIP, Hip-Hop 108.8 FM?
- How many hours per week do you listen to WHOT, Hard Rock 94 FM?
- Do you *strongly agree, agree, disagree* or *strongly disagree* with the following statement, “Breathing secondhand smoke is harmful to your health?”

Collecting Data After the Intervention

Additional data was collected after the radio spots aired.

- Did you listen to WHIP, Hip-Hop 108.8 FM between June and September 2001?
- Did you listen to WHOT, Hard Rock 94 FM between June and September 2001?
- Did you hear a commercial or Public Service Announcement about tobacco or smoking?
- If yes, what did the commercial say?
- Who sponsored the commercials?
- The group “Tobacco Free Central County” sponsored commercials between June and September 2001 on WHIP and WHOT. Did you hear any of these commercials?
- What message did the commercials tell the audience?
- Did you hear a commercial sponsored by “Tobacco Free Central County” that featured: A classroom of kids, a pregnant woman, a mother and her daughter and/or restaurant diners?
- If yes, how many times?
- Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement, “Breathing secondhand smoke is harmful to your health?”

Analyzing the Data

With their planned, thoughtful evaluation, Tobacco Free Central County gained useful information. Analysis of the data looked at:

- The effectiveness of the selected media channels in reaching the target population.
- The number of youth who heard the coalition’s message.
- The number of youth who said they heard the radio spot and changed whether they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “Breathing secondhand smoke is harmful to your health.”
- The number of youth who did not hear the radio spots and changed their answer to this question.

Prepared by: Mary D. Michaud, Consultant, and Heather H. Boyd, Evaluation Specialist (2005). *Quick tip #32: Evaluate the Impact of a Media Campaign: Tobacco Control Example, Quick Tips #32*, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison, WI.