

Sharing community education campaigns: Postcard and bus advertisements

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

Women's Health Statewide and Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service are running a two-part community awareness and education campaign on childhood sexual assault.

The first is a "Postcard Campaign", which will take place throughout South Australia in 2005 and is based on the "Truthaboutrape" postcard campaign previously run in Manchester in the United Kingdom. The postcard campaign is being coordinated by Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service and Women's Health Statewide as part of the new Children, Youth and Women's Health Service in South Australia.

The second part is an Adelaide-metro "Bus Campaign", which started in January 2003 and was developed as part of Women's Health Statewide's activities for the international "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence"¹. Both parts of the campaign use a dandelion image, which was chosen as it evoked memories of making childlike wishes, and blowing spores as an indication of the passing of time.

The target group for both parts of the campaign is the general community, including adult survivors, male victims, Indigenous people, people from a diverse range of cultures, people with disabilities, rural populations, service providers, criminal justice and police personnel, and offenders. The bus campaign is limited to Adelaide, and the postcard campaign will cover the whole of South Australia. Both parts of the campaign are based on a philosophy incorporating a feminist view of the rape victim's rights approach and an understanding of the barriers associated with disclosing sexual assault.

A 36-page evaluation of the campaign is available from Yarrow Place (contact details are in the table on page 15). The evaluation criteria that was used measured:

- demand and distribution for posters and postcards;
- creation of an identity (for example, identification of the dandelion image); and
- anecdotal stories from workers.

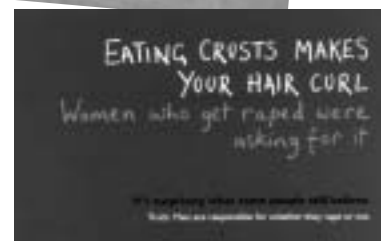
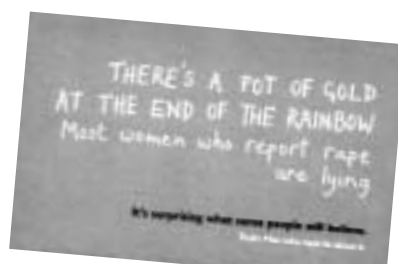
An unexpected outcome was discovered when an evaluation was undertaken with survivor groups: that of the positive therapeutic impact of the community campaign on women in the groups. Therefore, although the general community was the target group, women and men in the community who have been subjected to sexual abuse during childhood would be expected to benefit. With this in mind, the program developers aimed to be accountable to the general public but ultimately to the women and men it sought to support.

Postcard campaign

The postcards were developed by the United Kingdom "Truthaboutrape" campaign to expose the truth about rape in an imaginative and thought-provoking way. They use humour and "shock tactics" to stimulate and challenge people's perceptions and assumptions about rape. All postcards consist of a pair of myths followed by the "strap-line", for example:

"It's surprising what some people still believe" . . . followed by a "truth-line" or "fact-line".

1 The "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence" Campaign was a highly successful collaborative venture between government and non-government organisations to raise awareness of the prevalence of adults who have been subjected to childhood sexual abuse and the importance of listening and believing adults who have been subjected to sexual abuse during childhood when they disclose. ➤



The final truth-line on the cards read:

- Truth: Women of all ages, backgrounds and races get raped
- Truth: Men are responsible for whether they rape or not
- Truth: Rape is always a crime – whether he’s a relative, friend, acquaintance or stranger
- Truth: Women are raped every day in this country
- Truth: Men who rape lie about it
- Truth: Rape is a form of control not a loss of control

The objective is to adapt and/or further develop postcards from the United Kingdom “Truthaboutrape” campaign to a South Australian context.

Bus campaign

The objectives of the bus campaign were: firstly, to develop, design and promote with key stakeholders an advertising campaign that elevates the level of consciousness in the general community about the prevalence of childhood sexual abuse using the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence” international campaign as a platform; and secondly, to build the capacity of the community to respond appropriately to disclosures made by adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.

In order to achieve these objectives, Women’s Health Statewide and Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service decided to:

- develop and design an advertisement to be displayed on Adelaide buses over the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”;
- develop and design posters to be available to organisations and others in the community;
- create a logo or symbol to be used as a representation for adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood;
- hold a launch to draw the media, departmental and political decision makers to the campaign, which will include a speech by a well-known South Australian personality;
- develop an “Avant Card” postcard to be distributed to community areas (cafes, cinemas and retail outlets); and
- develop, design and promote a pamphlet for partners, family members and friends of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.

The aim of the Adelaide bus campaign was to link with the international “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”, in order to raise community consciousness of the prevalence of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood, as well as highlight the importance of listening to and believing adults when they disclose sexual abuse that occurred in childhood. The slogans used were:

*One in three women are survivors of childhood sexual abuse; we are your grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, partners, cousins, friends . . .
Listen, believe, make our journey easier . . .*

*One in six men are survivors of childhood sexual abuse; we are your grandfathers, fathers, brothers, sons, partners, cousins, friends . . .
Listen, believe, make our journey easier . . .*

The campaign was important and unique in that it was the first awareness-raising event in the world to focus on the experiences of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.

