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**Centre for Youth Drug Studies**  
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# Social marketing: prevention and practice review

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The current issue of *Prevention Research Quarterly* addresses social marketing within the context of drug and alcohol prevention campaigns. Theoretical and practical aspects of social marketing are discussed, as are the implementation of mass media campaigns as an important tool within the social marketing approach. In order to provide the reader with a good grasp of the theoretical and practical aspects of mass media campaigns, practitioners' comments are integrated within this part of the review. A review of studies that have evaluated and assessed the effectiveness of mass social marketing campaigns is presented. Two areas of social marketing campaigns are examined: anti-drug and alcohol mass media campaigns.

## Introduction

Drug and alcohol use constitute major social and health problems globally. In Australia, 90 per cent of the population aged 14 years and older have experimented with alcohol at some stage, and approximately 10 per cent of the general population drink on a daily basis. In addition, almost 40 per cent of Australians have used illicit drugs (AIHW 2002, 2004). Cannabis appears to be the most commonly used illicit drug (around 33 per cent of people aged 14 and over), with approximately 20 per cent of recent users reporting weekly drug use (AIHW 2004, White & Hayman 2004).

Given these statistics, it is unsurprising that substantial effort is exerted to reduce user numbers and educate the public about the consequences associated with alcohol and drug use. Over the past 20 years, health promotion organisations have delivered information to the public via education campaigns that have aimed to discourage people from engaging in risky behaviours (for example, irresponsible alcohol consumption and drug use). Since the goals of these campaigns are to convey information about risk factors associated with drug and alcohol use to the general public and to achieve

maximal behavioural change, it is essential that this information be "marketed" in an effective way. One method frequently used to achieve desirable behavioural change at the societal level is "social marketing". This method employs mass marketing techniques to spread information to the general public in order to correct misperceptions, and to increase the acceptability of a social idea, or practice, among a large target group (for example, parents, young people or alcohol users).

## Defining "social marketing"

Various definitions of social marketing exist in the literature. Kotler and Zaltman (1971) first recognised the potential usefulness of the concept in promoting solutions to different health-related and social problems. They argued that, given the success of corporate marketing as a tool in the promotion of consumer products, a similar approach might encourage the same people ("market") to adopt healthy behaviour/s.

According to Kotler and Zaltman, social marketing refers to "... the design, implementation and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas" (1971, p.5). Their definition

emphasises two elements of social marketing: the practical aspects that ought to be under consideration while using social marketing techniques, such as product planning, pricing, communication and marketing research, as well as ethical aspects. The latter stresses that, in contrast to commercial marketing (for example, of products and brands such as Coca-Cola or Adidas), social marketing is utilised by “not-for-profit” organisations, and the products are mostly health related, benefiting society as a whole. In a similar vein, O’Connor and Parker (1995) refer to social marketing as the application of marketing models and methods to the marketing of ideas, or behaviours, for the benefit of society.

By contrast, Andreasen’s (1995) conceptualisation places greater emphasis on voluntary behaviour, defining social marketing as “... the application of commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution, and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society” (Andreasen 1995 p.7). While Andreasen’s definition appears to be widely accepted by researchers in the field, it has been recently criticised by Donovan and Henley (2003) for its emphasis on *voluntary* behaviour. Consequently, these researchers have modified Andreasen’s (1995) definition to include the term *involuntary* behaviour as well.

### What types of issue are addressed by social marketing campaigns?

While social marketing has enjoyed increased prominence over the past two decades, such campaigns are not a new phenomenon. For example, some 2000 years ago campaigns were launched in Ancient Greece and Rome to emancipate slaves. Toward the end of the 18th century, campaigns in England were conducted to grant voting rights to women (Kotler & Roberto 1989). Campaigns were also launched during the Second World War by both the Germans and the Allies to encourage their respective populations to contribute to the national war effort (Donovan & Henley 2003). During the 1960s, commercial marketing technologies began to be applied to health promotion campaigns in

developing countries (Ling, Franklin, Lindsteadt & Gearion 1992, Manoff 1985). India adopted social marketing strategies to extend the coverage of family planning programs, and examined the distribution of contraceptives through pharmacies and small shops. Other campaigns in developing countries were launched in a variety of areas, such as general hygiene and rat control (Rice & Atkin 1989). More recently, and especially within developed countries, social marketing campaigns have been used to target unhealthy and risky behaviours such as smoking, drink driving, illicit drug use and sun exposure, while also encouraging healthy behaviours such as improving diet and physical activity.

### The role of mass media within the framework of social marketing

During the past two decades, the role of mass media has evolved substantially, from the provision of information transfer technology alone, to a more interactive and supportive role in the enhancement of public well being and quality of life. Today, mass media campaigns are utilised around the globe in order to address a wide range of social issues, including drug use, road safety, tobacco smoking, disease control and political issues. Given the multifaceted nature of mass media, such as film, television, radio, information brochures, billboard advertising (Green & Tones 1999; Richards & Carroll 2002) and the Internet (Hillier, Kurdas & Horsley 2001), mass media campaigns have enormous potential to reach a diverse and vast audience. In the following section, the role of mass media as a tool to deliver, and achieve, a desired change is discussed. We present some of the core elements of mass media campaigns. Then, the focus moves to expectations concerning mass media campaign outcomes, in terms of level of effectiveness, the characteristics of a successful campaign and the limitations of mass media campaigns.

According to Tones (1996), there are two core elements that are unique to mass media campaigns. Firstly, they can reach a large proportion of the population and, secondly, given that there is no direct interpersonal communication with the audience, the delivered messages are mediated in some way.

Atkin (2004) emphasises the importance of a clear communication strategy. These should be relevant to a specific target population, as well as to the target behaviours. Additionally, mass media campaign designers are faced with other unique issues such as funding, types of message (for example, motivating behavioural change by intense fear appeals), channels and distribution options (Atkin 2004). For instance, when selecting the “medium” to be used, the campaign designer must consider which medium the target population/s is/are more likely to be exposed to (Atkin, Wallack & DeJong 1992).

More specifically, for alcohol and drug campaigns, Miller and Ware (1989) presented a seven-step procedure for the development and implementation of effective campaigns. These include:

- 1 Research the factors affecting the use of the targeted drug or alcohol.
- 2 Develop familiarity with existing local infrastructures for dealing with these problems.
- 3 Conduct qualitative and quantitative research within the target group in order to gain a better understanding of the nature of the problem.
- 4 Redefine purposes, aims and target group, and decide upon the most appropriate media to be used.
- 5 Pre-test strategies.
- 6 Implement and track the campaign.
- 7 Evaluate the campaign.

In terms of evaluation, there is a need in the long term to reassess the needs of the target population, as well as the assumptions formulated about the causes of the population-related problems (Green 1999).

### *Practitioner’s views—Social marketing and the role of mass media campaigns*

Consistent with the research literature, practitioners indicated that social marketing and mass media campaigns have a crucial role within health promotion. They perceive mass media campaigns as a major contributor in influencing social norms, and regard the technique as the most powerful means of reaching a large number of people with health messages. All practitioners highlighted the

importance of relying upon research results and theoretical approaches. One practitioner described the role of social marketing and mass media campaigns as follows:

“It’s a framework, a way of applying what we know about communication, attitude and behavioural change in a range of different areas, in health and environment to achieving change in behaviour (increase, decrease or maintenance of behaviour—in terms of prevention). When it’s done properly it can be a very effective medium as part of broader programs in health... Overall, media has an important role—but [with regard to alcohol and anti drug campaigns] we need to integrate it with the legalistic framework and penalty regime.”

### **How can mass media campaigns best be used?**

As detailed earlier, media campaigns have the potential to play a significant role in the prevention of harm associated with different social and health-related problems, such as drugs and alcohol (Carroll 2001). However, to fully realise this potential, campaign designers require knowledge regarding the characteristics of a successful campaign, how such campaigns can be best used and how effective mass media campaigns are. After more than two decades of mass media campaigns and evaluation studies, cumulative knowledge is available to assist campaign designers in achieving the maximum impact on the selected target group. By reviewing the literature we identified some key points regarding the characteristics of a successful mass media campaign.

Atkin (2004) argues that designers should adopt a research-based approach and employ the most promising ideas and techniques available. Additionally, he stresses that it would be an advantage to rely on research results during each phase of the production process. While planning the campaign, there is a need to use a careful selection of role models, and to be sure that they have high credibility among the target group. Therefore, the designers should have a clear definition and

understanding of the target group (Tones 1996). In addition, the campaign plan should guarantee exposure of the target group to the campaign messages (DeJong & Winsten 1990)

In monetary terms, a greater investment of resources will significantly increase the likelihood of outcome achievement (Atkin 2004). In contrast, over-reliance on unpaid public services and volunteers might minimise the odds of success (Miller & Ware 1989). However, the use of indirect, unpaid advertising in the form of news stories could be an advantage (Tones 1996). The timing of a campaign's launch should be chosen carefully, and it would be a significant advantage to link mass media campaigns with community based programs (Boots & Midford 2001, Casswell, Ransom & Gilmore 1990, Carroll 1996, DeJong & Winsten 1990, Miller & Ware 1989). Additionally, in order to have more impact, campaigns must be sustained (rather than occasional), repeated and updated (Atkin 2004). An important point to be made regarding the effectiveness of mass media campaigns is that designers should set realistic goals and expectations, and not overestimate the medium's potential. A recent meta-analytic study conducted by Snyder (2001) on community campaigns revealed that media does have some impact on behavioural change, contributing between 5 to 10 per cent.

In terms of evaluating the level of success of mass media campaigns, desirable behavioural change would be the best measure of campaign effectiveness. However, other ways to assess campaign effectiveness include intentions for behavioural change (which has been found to predict actual behaviours), and changes in attitudes, beliefs and perceptions. Many mass media campaign evaluation studies attempt to demonstrate a direct relationship between individuals' exposure to campaign materials and messages, and rapid changes in the above-mentioned evaluation parameters (Lapinski & Witte 1998). However, as many researchers have noted, this line of research may produce inconclusive evidence for campaign effects on targeted population (for example, Atkin & Wallack 1990, Hornik 1997).

### *Practitioners' views—How can mass media campaigns best be used?*

In keeping with the literature, practitioners acknowledged five main themes that need to be considered while planning a mass media campaign. Firstly, it was consistently stressed that the characteristics of each targeted group should be researched prior to the campaign. Based on these findings, a message should be tailored for a targeted group of audiences. Secondly, all practitioners pointed out that it is highly important to assure maximum levels of exposure of the target audiences to the campaign messages. Thirdly, funding and campaign duration were identified as being crucial elements that maximise success rates. As one of the practitioners observed "... you need to have enough money to consistently buy advertising time... it's expensive but it also reaches the population so it's very efficient as well". Fourthly, consistent with the research literature, several practitioners argued that campaigns should be based on theoretical principles and practices of social marketing. The following quote provides the reader with a specific example from the anti-smoking domain:

"... for the tobacco campaign we've seen a significant decline in smoking among our targeted group as well as with children, and that's resulting from consistent year after year campaigning delivering a very consistent message which was based on research with the target audience and exposed in the right type of environments, at the right frequency, in the right period of time."

Finally, in terms of evaluation, all practitioners emphasised the importance and the complexity of this stage. An interesting point of view was provided by a practitioner who was involved in anti-drug media campaigns:

"It's interesting in terms of the drug area... when we talk about prevention of drug use, it's very difficult to measure because, for instance, if you are in a stage where there is about to be an increase in consumption, and a prevention campaign helps, and it's effective, what you

might see is no change (in drug intake), so evaluation of effectiveness of this sort of campaign is very complex.”

One of the questions that practitioners were asked during the interview concerned the most useful campaign material for reaching audiences. Unsurprisingly, all practitioners argued that television is the most powerful medium to reach large numbers of people. *“If we talk simply about the number of people reached, and the frequency with which they are reached, then television can’t be beaten”*. However, if we take into account the fact that campaign materials are multifaceted, it seems that other media play an important role as well. For example, the role of cinema: *“If we are talking about very high emotional impact, then cinema, now with the quality of sounds and vision can be a powerful experience in reaching young people”*. Moreover, as one of the practitioners pointed out *“... if information is important (as in the case of anti-drug or safe sex campaigns), you need to be supported with print or web page resources which are presented in a credible sort of way to young people”*.

A practitioner from the road safety sector acknowledged the role of radio advertising within campaigns:

*“... television is the most pervasive, but radio and outdoor advertising are also good because you provide messages to the audience while they are on the road”*.

Finally, another practitioner commented

*“... the population’s attention is divided among a very large array of media and entrainment opportunities... [and therefore] finding the right balance between the different channels (TV, Radio, ads etc) is very important”*.

## Limitations of mass media campaigns

Every method of encouraging behavioural change, including mass media campaigns, has some limitations. Part of the problem with assessing change is the difficulty associated with measuring campaign effectiveness on the target groups (Agostinelli &

Grube 2002). A second problematic issue regarding the measurement of campaign outcomes is the possibility of other confounding factors that may have some unknown impact on overall outcomes. Given that it’s difficult to isolate campaign messages during evaluation, it appears that the overall campaign effect is smaller than previously proposed. Moreover, the fact that campaigns are usually short in duration does not assist in changing deeply rooted cultural norms and values. Another possible explanation for the limited effect of health promotion campaigns on the population, especially alcohol and smoking campaigns, is the counter-advertising of these industries. The alcohol and tobacco industries have seemingly unlimited funds and their advertising techniques are increasingly sophisticated. In order to overcome these obstacles, it is important that mass media campaigns be well designed, as part of a wider, long-term strategy that aims to integrate mass media campaigns with community based programs (Coggans & Watson 1995).

### *Practitioner’s views—Limitations of mass media campaigns and possible solutions*

Consistent with the evidence base, practitioners argued that some of the main limitations of mass media campaigns are related to the measurement of campaign outcomes, in terms of both the effect of other unknown factors, and the overall effect on the target group. Two of the practitioners emphasised the role of science within the approach. Interestingly, their comments derived from two different perspectives: the first practitioner claimed that

*“They [mass media campaigns] are weak if insufficient formative research has been done to make sure that the communication material is relevant to young people and presented in a way that will engage them...”*.

Another stated that:

*“... one of the issues is to base the development of messages on behavioural principles and to develop the message properly... I think that there is a tendency for health promotion people to just assume that it’s all got to do with creativity, but it does not. You know, advertising*

agencies can help you get your message noticed with creative inputs, but you need to have a very clear brief about what you're trying to achieve, and clear evidence basis for why you think the messages that you're asking for are likely to achieve behavioural change. So it really needs to be behavioural science working with creative people..."

Practitioners also noted that cost efficiency is another limitation of mass media campaigns. Consequently, when campaigns are ineffective, millions of dollars, and in some instances billions of dollars, are wasted. In keeping with the concerns noted in the research literature, a few practitioners argued that in some instances campaign messages did not communicate efficiently with the target audiences. As a possible solution, it was suggested that pilot studies and group focus discussions be conducted prior to campaign: "... you need to have the time before the campaign for pre-testing and to dump it if it goes pear shaped". Another issue that was raised, specifically regarding anti-alcohol campaigns, is the effect of competitive industries:

"...in areas like alcohol, it's far more complex because we are operating within a very competitive environment, the audience is being continually bombarded with very positive messages about alcohol and the benefits associated with that... thus the funding is a very important element."

In terms of possible solutions, all practitioners' responses were consistent with the literature. All argued that mass media campaigns played a very important role. However, in order to improve its efficiency, there is a need for an integrated approach that consists of both mass media campaigns and educational programs at the community level and practical solutions for individuals in need. One practitioner described it very clearly:

"I think that campaigns also need to be integrated with other strategies in the community. In the areas of smoking, for example, if you also have resources which are there to help people quit, your campaign would have more effect on helping people to

quit because it will point them on the direction of quit smoking services. But if you motivate people to quit but don't give them any practical help that's not going to be as effective."

Finally, while comparing anti-tobacco campaigns with alcohol and drug campaigns, one practitioner commented that the long learning experience in the field of tobacco control could be applied to improve campaigns in other fields, such as alcohol and other drugs.

### Evaluation

The aim of evaluating mass media campaigns is two-fold: to improve current and future interventions and to provide campaign designers with the means by which to assess behavioural change within a target population, post-campaign (Valente 2001). While preparing and conducting an evaluation study, several issues require careful consideration. These include the elements comprising a successful campaign, ways of measuring campaign outcomes and how to distinguish the unique contribution of the campaign on the targeted behaviour/s from those of other sources (Hornik & Yanovitsky 2003). Timing of evaluation may also be critical. For instance, an early evaluation of outcomes may lead to erroneous conclusions (Hornik & Yanovitzky 2003). Finally, researchers should evaluate whether the target population has received the campaign message/s, and whether or not the desired effects are moving in the right direction (David 2004). The following literature review begins by describing the criteria for study inclusion. Then, two types of mass media campaign are presented: a) anti-drug campaigns (illicit drugs) and b) alcohol campaigns.

### Inclusion criteria

For the following studies, a set of inclusion criteria was developed for both anti-drugs and alcohol media campaigns. Comprehensive literature searches were conducted to identify evaluations of interventions aiming to reduce drug and alcohol use through the media. The following electronic data bases were explored to identify suitable studies: *Medline*; *Psychinfo*; *Drug*; *ScienceDirect*; *Social Science Plus*;

*Expanded Academic ASAP*; and *PubMed*. Studies were selected based on:

- a reported evaluation of mass media drug and alcohol prevention campaign
- b a clearly defined target audience
- c a description of all of the media employed
- d evaluation of the campaign that corresponds with the key aims of this review
- e studies from 1998 to the current.

Eight studies met these criteria. For each evaluation study, comprehensive details are provided regarding the intervention program (for example, the campaign) and outcomes. This includes campaign objectives and plans, campaign components, targeted group and evaluation report.

## Anti-drugs mass media campaigns

The following review focuses on campaigns targeting illicit drugs (for example, cannabis, cocaine, inhalants, hallucinogens including LSD, PCP, or ecstasy and heroin). Initially, the Australian National Campaign 2001 is presented, followed by United States National Youth Anti Drug Media Campaign 1998–2003. Finally, the evaluation of media campaigns targeting high sensation seekers is discussed.

### *Australian National Drug Campaign 2001*

**Aims:** The National Drug Campaign 2001 commenced in March 2001. Its aims were to deter children from initiating or furthering drug use. The campaign was designed to prompt parents to discuss the consequences of drug use with their children, to increase parents' knowledge and awareness about different drug-related issues, and to enhance their role in drug prevention. The campaign comprised two phases. The first focused on informing parents of 8–17-year-olds on their central role in preventing drug use by their children, and to provide them with practical support for this role. The second phase, which is currently under development, will target the children directly (Bertram, Barbir, Ball & Carroll 2003).

**Target groups** 1) main target groups: parents of 12–17 and 8–11-year-olds; 2) secondary target groups:

general community members and adolescents aged 12–17 years

**Key campaign messages:** Campaign messages addressed the responsibility of parents and their possible positive impact on their children as central role models. In addition, general information and different ways of accessing drug-related information was emphasised.

### *Campaign materials*

- A television campaign
- Press, print and billboard advertising
- Two booklets providing the parents with information about illicit drugs and about effective ways to approach and communicate with adolescents about drugs
- An information/counselling hotline
- Internet channel—a campaign website
- Public relation activities through different channels (for example, national television news; radio news and print editorial)
- Different campaign materials were supplied for parents of non-English speaking backgrounds

**Evaluation:** The first phase evaluation results are based on the report produced by the Research and Marketing Group, Department of Health and Aged Care by Bertram *et al.* (2003). Evaluation of the National Drug Campaign was conducted on four different samples through a series of telephone surveys. Sampled groups were: a) parents; b) parents from non-English speaking backgrounds; c) young people and d) the general community. Participants were selected randomly through the White Pages telephone directories.

Given the plethora of results produced by the researchers, we generated some specific questions in order to provide the reader with valuable information regarding the effectiveness of the campaign, and the quality of the evaluation study. In addition, our focus here is on the primary target group; that is, the parents of children aged 8–11 and 12–17 years.

*Did the ANDC 2001 campaign achieve its objectives?*

**Levels of knowledge, awareness post campaign:** A similar percentage of parents, pre- and post-campaign, indicated that they had sufficient

*Knowledge* about drugs to be confident in discussing the issue with their children. However, 14 per cent of parents indicated that they had learned something new about illegal drugs pre-campaign, in comparison with 19 per cent during the campaign. The new information was found to be related to increased availability and use of drugs, and to campaign materials. In addition, almost 97 per cent of parents were conscious of at least one of the campaign materials, with television materials being the most salient. That means that the campaign achieved high levels of awareness among key audiences.

*Changes in attitudes and perceptions towards illicit drugs post-campaign:* Overall, it seems that the campaign has achieved some level of change in individuals' perceptions of illicit drugs. Perceptions of the importance of illicit drugs as a major social problem in Australia increased from 37 per cent pre-campaign to 43 per cent post campaign, and in both surveys, illicit drugs were rated as the most pressing problem in Australian society. The relevance of the drug problem to self and family was also assessed. Findings suggested a slight increase (around 3 per cent) in parents' perceptions that drug problems maybe an issue in their family. However, most parents, in both surveys, indicated that drugs could be a problem in each and every family.

*Evaluation of behavioural change:* As mentioned above, intention to behave in a particular manner is a good proxy measure for behaviour. Bertram et al.'s (2003) statistical analysis presented a significant increase in parents' intention to discuss drug-related issues with their children. Parents who recalled at least one of the campaign's materials were asked what type of action they had taken to address possible drug-related problems.

Seventy-seven per cent had indicated that they talked to their children about drugs, while the rest had thought about, or had some intention to, read information about the issue. However, no information was given regarding the action taken by parents who did not recognise any elements of the campaign. This is unfortunate, as this type of information may provide a potentially valuable avenue in assessing the direct effect of the campaign on parents exposed to the campaign material, versus those who were

not. Finally, post-campaign, there was a significant increase in parents' communication about drugs in general, and specifically with their children.

*Effectiveness of different media applied:* The effectiveness of the different materials applied during the campaign could indicate whether or not the chosen materials were appropriate to deliver the key messages to the target groups. The findings suggest that the media had the most important role in promoting conversations about drugs between parents and their children, both pre- and post-campaign. This can be regarded as key evidence for the role of mass media in preventing the uptake of illicit drugs.

More specifically, approximately 20 per cent of parents reported that one of the campaign materials had triggered conversations. Television commercials were found to be the most useful in terms of campaign material recall, closely followed by exposure to the information booklet. However, what the report does not tell us is whether behavioural change (parent-child conversation on drug-related issues, or intention to discuss such issues) was solely attributable to the media campaign. It is possible that during the campaign other sources of anti-drug interventions were available, and that they might have also impacted on people's behaviour.

*Timing of evaluation:* The first phase of the campaign was launched on March 2001, and ran for eight weeks. Evaluation of phase one was conducted in May-June 2001. This timeline provides us with the immediate effects of the campaign on the targeted population, and as the findings indicate, the campaign has been effective in reaching the immediate key objectives. However, to our knowledge, there is no available data of the effects of the campaign on these groups in the long term. Thus, we are unable to answer the question: "How practical were parents' intentions to discuss drug related issues with their children's behaviour?"

### The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign

*Aims:* The United States' National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign is a multi-dimensional effort to

educate and empower young people to reject illicit drugs. The campaign was launched in 1998 for a total of five years. The campaign had three key aims, to:

- educate and enable young people in the United States to reject illegal drugs
- prevent young people from initiating use of drugs, especially marijuana and inhalants
- encourage people who occasionally use drugs to stop using drugs.

The campaign included three phases:

- Phase I—a 12-city pilot, which ran from January 1998 through July 1998
- Phase II—a nationwide extension of the pilot, which included all media types, and ran from July 1998 through December 1998
- Phase III—a continuation of the nationwide advertising campaign, with implementation of all campaign materials from January 1999 through December 2002. The current review will focus on this phase, which marks the full implementation of the campaign.

*Target groups:* The campaign targeted young people aged 9–18 years, their parents and other adults who influence the choices young people make.

*Key campaign messages:* The following communication objectives were applied for young people:

- 1 Instill the belief that most young people do not use drugs.
- 2 Enhance perceptions of negative consequences of drug use and positive outcomes of a drug-free lifestyle.

For parents, communication objectives were to:

- Enhance perceptions of harm associated with their children's use of marijuana and inhalants.
- Become aware that their children are at risk of using drugs
- Enhance their perceptions of personal responsibility to prevent adolescent drug use.
- Communicate parenting strategies to help prevent drug use among their children.
- Encourage parents who use psychoactive substances to consider the effects of their drug use on their children (Worden & Slater 2004).

*Campaign materials:* The campaign employed a variety of media to reach parents and young people, including television ads, radio, transit ads, movie theatres, educational materials, web sites and print publications (newspapers and magazines).

*Evaluation:* The primary tool of evaluation was the National Survey of Parents and Youth (NSPY). The survey collected data from nationally representative samples of the targeted groups. Seven waves of data collection were conducted during and after phase three (short term). The questionnaires assessed participants' exposure to media campaign messages, and their beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behaviours with regard to drugs.

*Did the campaign achieve its objectives?*

*Direct and indirect exposure to the campaign:* Level of recall and exposure to key campaign messages would provide initial evidence that the campaign reached the target groups. Results indicated rapidly increasing level of recall of specific television ads by young people and parents. While examining the medium applied in the campaign, it appeared that young people tended to prefer the television medium. In addition, it seems that drug messages other than media messages also had some effect. For instance, there was a slight increase in the number of conversations between parents and children about drugs, as reported by parents. Interestingly, analyses of young people's responses indicated a decrease in number of conversations between parents and their children.

*Campaign effect on cognition and behaviour:* As different aspects of cognition (for example, beliefs, attitudes and intentions) are the best measures of desirable behavioural change, these would be the most important variables to assess. Hornik, Maklan, Cadell et al. (2003) found evidence for the campaign's effect on parents' attitudes, beliefs and intentions. More specifically, parents had talked more about drug-related issues, and presented with some level of attitudinal change. However, there was no substantial support for the effect of campaign on monitoring behaviour, and this decreases the likelihood that changes in perceptions or attitude were translated into actual effects on

young people. Evidence was not found for favourable changes in children's attitudes, beliefs, intentions and behaviours. For instance, among young people who did not use drugs pre-campaign, 10 per cent of those who indicated "definitely not" for cannabis use during the next 12 months became users by the next evaluation round (Hornik et al. 2003). The fact that there was some use of exaggerated fear appeals through advertisements might bear some relation to this finding. As previous studies have shown, there is the risk that fear appeals increase the undesired behaviour and make it more resistant to change (DeJong & Winsten 1998). In sum, the evaluation found that there were some unfavourable trends in young people's anti-marijuana beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

*Timing of evaluation:* The evaluation includes a longitudinal component in which both parents and children are interviewed on three different occasions. While the current results provide us with the short-term campaign effects on young people and parents, further data collection is planned in the future. This will provide a more accurate representation regarding the long-term effects of the campaign.

### Mass media campaigns targeting sensation seekers

Within the scope of drug prevention media campaigns, there is one group that has attracted particular interest from researchers in the field: sensation seekers. In the following section, studies that have investigated strategies for effective use of mass media campaigns in preventing drug use among this population are presented. Zuckerman (1994) defines sensation seeking (SS) as "the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience" (p. 27). SS includes risk-taking, which typically satisfies the high sensation seeking individual's desire for novel and intense experiences (Arnett 1996; Jessor 1992). For SS, substance use leads to highly sought-after experiences in the form of novel mind states or intense feelings and emotions.

In fact, high SS predicts a variety of drug use (Barnea, Teichman & Rahav 1992), and therefore this group is especially targeted by mass media campaigns. From the media aspect, high sensation seekers prefer television advertisements that are more novel and dramatic in content (Stephenson 2003). A SS-targeting prevention approach has been developed in response to this high risk group. The approach has four key principles: 1) use SS as a targeting variable; 2) conduct ongoing research on this group; 3) design prevention messages that are high in sensation value to reach high sensation seekers; 4) place these messages in high SS value contexts, such as television programs that are more likely to be the focus of attention of high sensation seekers (Palmgreen, Donohew, Lorch, Hoyle and Stephenson 2001). This approach was adopted by the researcher in the following study.

### The 2-cities anti-drug campaign

Palmgreen *et al.*'s (2001) study was a 32-month, controlled interrupted-time series in two cities in the United States, Fayette County (campaign ran during January–April 1997; January–April 1998) and Knox County (beginning 8 months prior to the first Fayette campaign, and finishing 8 months after the 1998 campaign).

*Aims:* Prevention of marijuana use among high sensation seekers

To examine the effect of high sensation value ads on high sensation seekers

*Target group:* High SS adolescents in two comparable cities in the United States

*Key campaign messages:* Key messages emphasised the negative consequences of marijuana use and were designed to attract the attention of high sensation seekers.

*Campaign materials:* 30-second television spots were used in the campaign for both cities. These were placed in specific programs that were found to be watched by the targeted group. Overall, approximately 1900 spots were aired in each city.

*Evaluation:* Pre-campaign data collection was conducted in order to provide the researchers with

information concerning trends of marijuana use in the area prior to the implementation of the campaign. Interviews were conducted with 100 randomly selected school students each month, during and after the campaign. The aims of the interviews were to assess exposure to campaign contents, and changes in attitude and behaviour towards marijuana and other substance use. Responses of high versus low sensation seekers were examined.

### *Did the campaigns achieve its objectives?*

Overall, the campaign appeared to achieve its aims regarding prevention and reduction of marijuana use and the effect of high sensation value messages. As expected, low sensation seekers (non-targeted group) presented with low marijuana use, and, consequently, there were no campaign effects on their attitude or behaviour. By contrast, the campaigns achieved significant reductions in drug use among high sensation seekers. The effects were still evident several months after the cessation of the campaigns. Specifically, the results demonstrated a 34 per cent decrease in monthly marijuana use among high SS adolescents. The effect of high sensation value ads on high sensation seekers was also examined. It appears that high sensation seekers were more likely to be exposed to the campaign ads, as well as to those individuals who generally maintained pro-marijuana attitudes. In sum, the study demonstrated the importance of tailoring the campaign to a specific target group. In addition, it highlights the central role of television in anti-drug mass media campaigns.

## Anti-alcohol mass media campaigns

### *Australian National Alcohol Campaign 2000–2002*

*Objectives:* To contribute to the general effort in reducing alcohol-related harms among teenagers. More specifically, the aims were to increase parents and young people's consideration of the negative consequences associated with alcohol consumption, and to enhance motivation to avoid these potential costs.

*Target audiences:* The primary group consisted of teenagers aged 15–17 years and the secondary group included parents of young people aged 12–17 years.

*Campaign materials:* A variety of media materials were employed during the different phases of the campaign, including television (national and pay TV), cinema, newspapers and magazines, radio, educational materials and websites.

*Evaluation:* Evaluation was conducted by the Research and Marketing Group (Ball, Barbir, Carroll & Lum 2002; Carroll, Lum, Taylor & Travia 2000; King, Barbir, Ball, Carroll & Sutton 2003). Data was collected from randomly selected and representative samples of the targeted groups during three phases: pre-, during and post-campaign. Surveys assessed participants' awareness of the media campaign messages, beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behaviours regarding alcohol-related issues.

### *Did the campaign achieve its objectives?*

Some of the core results are presented in Table 1 on page 14.

As can be seen from Table 1, the campaign achieved high levels of awareness among both targeted groups. Interestingly, during the third phase, increased levels of alcohol consumption among males were identified. Disappointingly, increases were identified in the proportions of both females and males who reported consuming five alcoholic drinks during their last drinking occasion. While among males the change was less concerning, among females there was a significant increase, from 43 per cent pre-campaign to 55 per cent post-campaign. Finally, it appears that alcohol was not perceived as the main social problem facing young people by either parents or young people, and the campaign did not change this perception among either group.

## Drink driving campaigns

Drink driving is a significant problem that has gained much attention over recent years. Approximately 30 per cent of all motorist road fatalities are associated with high blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (Ferguson, Sheehan, Davey & Watson 1999). As a

Table 1: A comparison of results pre-, during and post-national alcohol campaign, Australia 2000–02

Variables	Sample		Pre-campaign	Launch	Booster	Phase - 3
Awareness of advertising about teenagers & drinking	Teenagers		29%	73%	65%	70%
	Parents			68%	64%	70%
Discussion about alcohol with teenagers	Parents			n/a	64%	51%
Perceived seriousness of alcohol as the main social problem facing young people in Australia	Teenagers		11%	13%	12%	14%
	Parents		12%	13%	8%	n/a
Number of individuals who consumed alcohol in the last 7 days	Teenagers	Males	31%	28%	33%	25% (both genders)
		Females	26%	24%	20%	
Alcoholic beverages consumed on last drinking occasion (5 or more standard drinks)	Teenagers	Males	57%	50%	60%	62%
		Females	43%	48%	47%	55%

result, many of the alcohol campaigns have started to specifically target drink driving-related issues, mostly among young motorists. The goals of these campaigns are two-fold

- 1 to persuade drivers to avoid drinking and driving
- 2 to prevent others from engaging in this behaviour (Elder, Shults, Sleet, Nichols, Thompson *et al.* 2004).

One advancement regarding education and awareness campaigns on drink driving was the development and implementation of the “designated driver” (DD) concept, which was first introduced in the mid-1990s. Since then, and with financial support from the European Union, an increasing number of “designated driver campaigns” have been conducted in Europe. Three of these are presented here.

### *“Drive Straight and Designate”, Ireland December 2003 to January 2004*

*Objectives:* The campaign aimed to raise awareness of road safety of both drivers and passengers, as well as the awareness of responsible drinking. A secondary aim was to highlight the responsible service of alcohol on licensed premises. Specific aims were to encourage peer groups to choose a DD when out drinking, as well as to deliver the message to friends to purchase non-alcoholic drinks for their DD.

The last creative aim was to promote licensees to serve free non-alcoholic drinks to DD.

*Target group:* Young motorists

*Campaign materials:* Campaign materials included television and radio advertisements specifically directed toward younger male motorists. In addition, trade competition aimed at encouraging licensees to generate creative means of promoting the campaign was implemented. Licensees with the most creative ideas were provided with free non-alcoholic drinks to serve to designated drivers, free of charge. Finally, a designated driver radio advertisement competition was undertaken by students.

*Evaluation:* A post-campaign evaluation study was conducted among the targeted groups (n = 1100). Findings show that 25 per cent of young people had decided to follow the campaign suggestions by designating a driver when going out. In addition, 45 per cent of participants were found to return home via taxi. Interestingly, nine out of ten participants recognised the concept of designating a driver. The most efficient materials in increasing the awareness, and the actual implementation of the concept of DD, were the free non-alcoholic drinks offered to DD, followed by television advertisements. Although it appears that the campaign was successful in the short term, it would be useful to assess the longevity of the behavioural change with a follow-up study.

### *The "one driver every night program" campaign, Spain 2002–03*

*Objectives:* To increase awareness of the concept of DD and to achieve behavioural change, so that DD would be a common practice among young people.

*Target group:* Young people aged 16–25 years.

*Campaign materials:* Advertisements in car magazines, newspaper ads, posters, radio adverts, television and an information website.

*Evaluation:* Initial evaluation was undertaken during the campaign, and a subsequent study was conducted at the beginning of 2004 following the end of the television campaign. A post-campaign evaluation study was then conducted. Assessment of the effectiveness of the campaign: 80 per cent of the participants recalled that the advertisements were about drink driving-related issues. A 15 per cent increase in the proportion of participants who became familiar with the concept of DD was observed. In addition, 73 per cent of participants responded that the campaign information was clear and understandable. Finally, every second participant claimed not to drink and drive when going out at night. What is unclear is the proportion of DD prior to the commencement of the campaign. A pre-campaign study could have shed some light on this issue. In addition, it is uncertain to what extent the campaign had beneficial long-term effects on the target group.

### *The 2002–03 drink drive festive season and "Don't risk it!" campaign, Scotland*

*Objectives:* To encourage drivers to consider whether it is safe for them to drive the morning after a "big night out", and to increase awareness concerning the negative consequences of drink driving (both financial and health-related).

*Target groups:* The primary target group was young male drivers aged 17–29 years, and the secondary group was the general driving population.

*Campaign material:* television, radio and poster advertisements highlighted the penalties associated with drink driving, and the potential negative consequences associated with drink driving. In addition, intensive breath testing campaigns were

undertaken around Scotland, and these were highlighted in the media.

*Evaluation:* According to the researchers, the campaign communicated effectively with the targeted group, with 98 per cent of participants presenting with responsible attitudes and agreeing that it would be better not to drink at all if driving. However, it is unclear whether this result is campaign-related. The low exposure to campaign materials (54 per cent), suggest that the findings may have been influenced by other sources. Among those who were exposed to the campaign, 81 per cent indicated that it would make people think about the risks associated with drink driving. Additionally, the messages thought most likely to influence behaviour were those where the consequences for drinking and driving would have financial and/or lifestyle implications for the individual.

### *"The Bob campaign", Belgium 2002–03*

The Bob campaign, developed by the Belgian Road Safety Institute (The Amsterdam Group 2003), personalises the DD as "Bob", an average, sympathetic person who does not drink prior to driving and who is responsible for the safety of friends by driving them home after a night out. Campaign objectives were to emphasise that drinking and driving are a poor combination and the importance of choosing a responsible DD who will refrain from drinking while out with friends. Targeted groups were men in the age range of 30–35 years, and 55 years and older.

*Campaign materials:* These included television exposure all over Belgium and billboard posters which emphasised what may happen if a "non-Bob" takes control of the wheel. Audiences were also approached through radio and the Internet. Finally, another element of the Bob campaign was the increased police checks during the campaign period.

*Evaluation:* Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a randomly selected sample of 1074. Results suggest high levels of familiarity and awareness of the campaign, with 97 per cent of participants indicating familiarity with "Bob". The billboards had been especially effective in reaching the older group, while television and radio were most remembered

by people younger than age 55. In comparison to previous years, the number of people driven home by a DD increased. However, the most significant increases were identified among the young targeted group, with approximately 60 per cent of participants indicating that they had employed the DD strategy in their private lives. The same proportions of drivers agreed that the campaign convinced them to adopt the DD safety approach. In sum, it appears that the campaign was especially successful in reaching the younger target group. Thus, future campaigns should consider applying a different approach to the 55 and older age group.

### Conclusion

This report aimed to integrate both theoretical and evidence-based findings drawn from different studies relating to various aspects of mass media campaigns and social marketing. By synthesising the most current evidence available in the field, we hoped to offer both practitioners and researchers appropriate access to this valuable material. In addition, we also compared the opinion of health promotion professionals, considered experts in the field, with the theoretical background and recent findings. This was included in order to inform researchers and practitioners regarding current practice in the field. It is hoped that researchers will be able to use the information contained in this report to examine whether or not "lab" results have ecological validity. Employing strict inclusion criteria, the review also examined the most recent evaluation studies of mass media campaigns. Generally, if we examine the results of these evaluation studies and compare them to the theoretical background and to the experiences and opinions of practitioners, it is evident that most of the theoretical issues were addressed in the reviewed studies.

Conversely, those issues not addressed were typically cited as limitations in these studies. More specifically, by reviewing the results of the evaluation studies, it appears that social marketing campaigns were efficient in terms of reaching public awareness and, to some extent, the level of attitudinal change. However, there is little evidence to suggest that these campaigns actually have an impact on desirable

behavioural change. There is even less supporting evidence for the long-term impact of campaigns on people's behaviour. Therefore, as part of a harm-minimisation approach, there is considerable need for well-designed mass media campaigns that will integrate with other prevention approaches, such as health education programs within schools or community programs. Then, subsequent evaluation studies that implement sophisticated statistical analyses should be undertaken with the aim of providing the researchers with the maximum information regarding the campaign effects.

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