



CHAIR'S CHALLENGE

UNITE TO END THE EPIDEMICS 2017-2018

Start Talking Alabama: Alabama's Stigma Reduction and HIV Awareness Raising Social Media Campaign

TARGET POPULATION: Men who have sex with men (MSM) with emphasis on men of color

LOCATION: Alabama

PROGRAM DESIGN: A stigma reduction and HIV awareness raising social media campaign that utilizes YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook

ESTIMATED COST: \$150,000

FUNDING SOURCE: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

CORE ACTIVITIES

The video series "[Start Talking Alabama](#)" seeks to increase HIV awareness and decrease stigma by sharing prevention, testing, and treatment information, and supporting messages aimed towards young men of color via social media. The "Start Talking Alabama" campaign was developed as an offshoot of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "Start Talking Stop HIV" campaign.

The Division of HIV Prevention and Care at the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) first reached out to the targeted community and asked to partner with them to develop and implement the campaign. HIV-related stigma is often times a major reason that young men of color are reluctant to discuss HIV. Including the targeted audience in campaign planning gave them ownership and a personal interest in the campaign. A recent graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Ty Williams, was selected to be the "face"

of the campaign and host for the series. In his host duties, Williams stresses the messages that the CDC emphasizes—preparation, prevention, testing, and condom distribution.

Video footage for "Start Talking Alabama" has been shot in bars, homes, clinics and the health department studio. Video topics have included:

- Interviews with longtime survivors
- Advocacy
- Race and gender bias
- Dating, stigma, and love

Important discussions also center on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). "Start Talking Alabama" seeks to educate the target audience with the crucial messages related to subjects that young men of color have identified as being important to them, and at the same time encourage viewers to know their health status, manage their health, and live their best life.

EVALUATION

Google Analytics were used to monitor the YouTube channel and app activity, Twitter, and Facebook native analytics were also monitored

OUTCOMES

ADPH's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care anticipates an increase in HIV/AIDS awareness/education, testing and linkage to care and support services, undetectable viral loads, decrease in stigma, and ultimately, a decrease in infection rates in Alabama. However, these outcomes have not yet been documented.

FUNDING & COST

"Start Talking Alabama" has paid part-time contracts with the on-screen talent, two hosts, a director, and social media consultant. ADPH supports the campaign by providing media specialists and camera personnel to assist with producing the videos. Related costs include travel reimbursement for ADPH staff and camera crews; travel reimbursement for guests; and, participation in Alabama Pride activities, as well as other community and college events, which may include various fees. Incentives with "Start Talking Alabama" logo have also been purchased and disseminated.

STRENGTHS

- Using social media to access targeted audience.
- Consultation with the targeted audience to create subject matter of interest.
- Utilizing the targeted audience members as hosts.
- Partnering with invited guests, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center, to discuss LGBTQ issues.
- Partnering with the targeted audience as guests in the video productions.
- Communicating with targeted audience through social media platforms.
- Seeing the pride and smiles of the targeted audience participating in the videos.

LIMITATIONS

- A lack of time to connect with the targeted audience.
- Limited follow-up with clients requiring more support.
- Providing linkage information to clients requiring more support.

DATA

	August – November 2017
Facebook	
Likes	2,025
Reach	6,510
Engagement	1,496
28 Day Total Impressions	5,670*
Male	36%*
Female	62%*
Twitter	
Tweets	2,051
Following	77**
Followers	89**
Tweet Impressions	16,142
Instagram	
Posts	919
Followers	314**
Following	147**
Impressions	2,407
Reach	1460
YouTube	
Subscribers	28**
Watch Time	2:75:00*
Av. Duration	2:58
Views	327
Likes	8
Comments	1

*Monthly average

** As of November 2017

PROGRAM CONTACT

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