Author: Huffman, Erica N.

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STUDENT:

NAME: Erica Huffman **DATE: 5/10/23**

ADVISOR: (Committee Chair if MS Plan A or EdS Thesis or Field Project/Problem):

NAME: Dr. Emi Stuemke **DATE: 5/10/23**

This section for MS Plan A Thesis or EdS Thesis/Field Project papers only
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Huffman, Erica N. ***Effective Messaging in Child Abuse Prevention Public Awareness Campaigns***

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine what communication strategies increase the likelihood that a child abuse prevention public awareness campaign will meet the campaign's stated objectives. The study analyzes the communication and messaging techniques that enhance a campaign's effectiveness. Artifacts from four different child abuse prevention campaigns are analyzed against elements identified in the literature as being either effective or ineffective. Effective elements include messaging that suggests that the problem is systemic versus related only to individual shortcomings, that it is socially desirable to help, and that involves a clear call to action. Messaging that conveys a lack of similarity to the audience, focuses on crime and immorality, and that doesn't communicate the possibility of prevention are described in the literature as being less effective. Analysis explores why specific elements are rhetorically effective and conclusions are drawn to inform the work of communicators developing public awareness campaigns. Artifact analysis indicated that those campaigns that employed more effective messaging techniques and fewer ineffective messaging techniques were the Florida Winds of Change and Stop It Now!. Darkness to Light and Zero Tolerance included fewer effective elements and a greater number of ineffective ones. These findings are connected to the outcomes of each campaign in available literature.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Child maltreatment, also known as child abuse and neglect, is both prevalent and damaging making efforts to prevent it, and to intervene effectively when it occurs, well placed. Maltreatment can result in significant emotional, behavioral, and social problems that extend beyond childhood (Love et al., 2013). The 2019 report from the United States Department of Children and Families indicates that there were 3,534,000 investigations into child maltreatment in the United States in 2019 with 656,000 children reported to be the substantiated victim of child abuse or neglect (Administration for Children and Families, 2021). For decades, public awareness campaigns have aimed to prevent and address child maltreatment but their effectiveness at meeting those aims is mixed.

Statement of the Problem

The general aim of child abuse prevention public awareness campaigns is to increase the public's knowledge and awareness about child maltreatment but also, through such awareness, to reduce the prevalence of child maltreatment (Steen & Burg, 2019). Through increasing public awareness, a campaign has the potential to change attitudes about the problem of child abuse leading to behavior change resulting in reduced child maltreatment. Despite both the prevalence and the significant consequences of child maltreatment, there is limited information about the development of effective prevention strategies. Those who design and disseminate awareness campaigns would benefit from better understanding how to craft an effective message that increases the likelihood of meeting their stated aim.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the communication strategies used by child abuse public awareness campaigns, identify elements reflected in relevant literature that appear

effective or ineffective in crafting a campaign message, and to conduct a rhetorical analysis of four campaigns for use of these elements.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions exist:

1. It is assumed that messaging strategies found to be effective in other types of public awareness campaigns can be applied to the specific issue of child maltreatment.
2. While child abuse prevention campaigns may focus on specific audiences, the campaigns referenced in this study are assumed to be targeting the general public versus specific audiences unless otherwise stated.
3. The messaging techniques discussed in this study are assumed to apply to use in social media though this is not specifically explored in this project.

Definition of Terms

There are some terms used throughout this study that require definition to ensure understanding by a lay audience. While definition of these terms may vary slightly by source, there is consensus about the meaning of each.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

Child Maltreatment

Child maltreatment includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure of a parent or other person with responsibility for the child to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision to the degree that the child's health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any nonaccidental physical injury to the child, which can include striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child, or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child.

Public Awareness Campaign

A public awareness campaign is an effort that "uses media, messaging, and an organized set of communication activities to generate specific outcomes in a large number of individuals and in a specific period of time" (Kemshell & Moulden, 2017, p. 127).

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child by an adult, adolescent or older child.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations to be considered when considering the impact and relevance of the conclusions drawn. Limitations include:

- This study does not specifically explore the use of social media in child maltreatment public awareness campaigns.
- Because literature on effective messaging techniques in child abuse awareness campaigns is limited, information is gathered about public awareness campaigns aimed at addressing a variety of issues, not only child abuse awareness.

- This study does not intend to state definitively that each campaign was or was not effective based on the messaging techniques used. Instead, artifact analysis is meant to enable communicators to better evaluate and explore potential approaches to incorporating more effective messaging strategies as defined through available literature.

Methodology

Artifact analysis was used to evaluate materials from each campaign against criteria reflecting best practices in communication in public awareness campaigns. Elements that enhance and detract from campaign effectiveness were identified through literature review.

One or more artifact was selected from each public awareness campaign. Criteria for artifact selection included:

- The artifact was available through internet search.
- Original distribution was intended for a general audience that consisted of parents and/or community members.
- Artifacts include graphics and text.
- Materials were intended to be distributed via print or online but not specifically designed for social media use.

I reviewed each artifact seperately and coded each using the effective and ineffective elements coding sheets in Appendices A and B. Two additional coders, individuals without specific knowledge related to public awareness campaigns or child maltreatment, reviewed and coded each document after receiving instructions. Coders were also supplied brief descriptions of each element. After campaign artifacts were analyzed against effective and ineffective elements,

these results were evaluated through comparison with the parameters for effective messaging supported by well-established research findings in current literature.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Through review of available literature, I discovered research trends related to communication strategies for public awareness campaigns. The literature defines public awareness campaigns, describes how audiences understand and interpret information, and identifies effective and ineffective elements in public awareness campaigns. Relevant literature additionally summarizes the effectiveness of several specific campaigns including Stop it Now!, Zero Tolerance, Florida Winds of Change, and Darkness to Light.

Defining and describing public awareness campaigns

The definition of public awareness campaign is relatively consistent throughout the literature and is helpful in establishing a clear foundation for the types of communication that fall into this category. Kemshall and Moulden (2017) reviewed public awareness campaigns on child sexual abuse to determine their impact on audience attitude and behavior. They define a public awareness campaign as an effort that uses “media, messaging, and an organized set of communication activities to generate specific outcomes in a large number of individuals and in a specific period of time” (2017, p. 127). Public awareness campaigns meeting this definition are used to raise awareness of a variety of issues, including child maltreatment.

The presumption of such campaigns to address child abuse and neglect is that if the public is more aware of the problem they are more likely to take action to stop or prevent it (Bowers Andrews et al., 1995). In their study of a multimedia child sexual abuse prevention campaign, Self-Brown et al.(2008) indicate that media campaigns have been used to address a wide variety of issues due largely to the ability to reach broad audiences in a cost-effective manner. They assert that public awareness and knowledge of child sexual abuse increased as a result of a mass media campaign (Self-Brown et al., 2008, p. 729).

Evans et al. (2012) look specifically at the efficacy of one child abuse and neglect campaign, Florida Winds of Change. They discovered that most campaign outcomes were met and summarize why this campaign was largely effective: "over several decades, public awareness campaigns to prevent child abuse and neglect have been used in universal and targeted programmatic efforts within communities" (Evans et al., 2012, p. 413). Awareness campaigns are necessary because most people "do not learn about child sexual abuse firsthand but rely on media information about the problem" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 125). Focusing on how a message is crafted is important in campaigns as "shaping the message. . . public awareness campaigns can have greater influence on public knowledge and action than empirical evidence" (Kemshell & Moulden, 2017, p. 125). The audience is moved to change attitudes and behavior not through use of statistics and data but through the use of other messaging techniques that come together to form a narrative.

Campaign aims vary but often include increasing awareness of a problem, countering common myths, enhancing knowledge, as well as modifying audience attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Rheingold et al. (2007) stated that mass media messaging has been effective in causing behavioral change in public health. They evaluated whether such behavior change occurred as a result of a child sexual abuse media campaign and ultimately discovered increased knowledge and slight behavioral gains but explains that there is not enough research on the true impact of campaigns on child abuse prevention (Rheingold et al., 2007, p. 353). Rheingold et al. (2007, p. 353) explain that, even though they question the ultimate impact on child maltreatment, "there are a multitude of examples in which media campaigns have been shown to affect individual's knowledge and awareness regarding health issues" and, a step further, to change audience behavior. Weatherred (2015) agrees that media campaigns can change audience

behavior and evaluated media coverage of child sexual abuse over five decades. Through this evaluation, she concludes that the media do play a significant role in the perception of child sexual abuse. Campaigns regarding other social issues have had clearer and sweeping impact suggesting both that social issues campaigns can be effective but also that more work needs to be done in the specific area of child maltreatment. Some notable examples of successful public awareness campaigns include the use of seat belts, smoking reduction, and banning the use of trans fats in restaurants (Weatherred, 2015, p. 29). Other research has concluded that "media campaigns alone may not significantly affect primary prevention of child sexual abuse" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 128). It is necessary for campaigns to provide universal messaging along with "targeted, specific instruction and training to different groups (Kemshell & Moulden, 2017, p. 134). Poole et al. (2014) evaluates the impact of campaigns aimed at preventing child physical abuse. She discovered inconclusive evidence for effectiveness of prevention campaigns but suggests that there may be a potential for impact if campaigns identify how to shift population norms.

Audience awareness, interpretation and understanding

It is widely believed that child maltreatment is a societal issue and that the most effective means of addressing it is through appealing to the community to prevent child abuse and intervene when it occurs. Public awareness campaigns must reach and appeal to their audience, the larger community, in order to prevent and respond to child maltreatment. LeCroy and Milligan-LeCroy (2020, p. 2) state that "intervention and advocacy for child abuse prevention depend on how the public views this issue." Understanding how people respond to cases of child abuse and neglect is important in identifying social solutions to this social issue (LeCroy & Milligan-LeCroy, 2020). If the public feels some ownership for this problem, they are more

likely to become part of the solution by doing things such as reporting abuse, volunteering, donating money, or supporting prevention efforts. At present, despite its prevalence and sweeping consequences, community awareness and understanding of child maltreatment is low but efforts including public awareness campaigns have "been slowly gaining more visibility in the public eye" (LeCroy & Milligan-LeCroy, 2020, p. 2). Understanding audience perceptions of this complicated social issue and crafting messages that effectively alter perceptions is critical. Child abuse prevention public awareness campaigns must additionally overcome specific barriers to appeal to their audience. The public is likely to be hesitant to either intervene in cases of child maltreatment or take action to prevent maltreatment due to "fear of retaliation" by abusers and concern about making "things worse for the child" (LeCroy & Milligan-LeCroy, 2020, p. 5). One possible strategy for addressing this is to better train the public on child maltreatment reporting processes.

The literature suggests that American audiences view issues through broad lenses that O'Neil and Morgan (2010) refer to as the "mentalist model" and the "family bubble". They researched effective ways of communicating with general audiences about sexual violence and make recommendations for more effectively messaging, or framing, communication about this topic. According to the mentalist model, "Americans tend to view outcomes and social problems as a result of individual concerns that reflect character, motivation and personal discipline" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 4). In the case of sexual violence, audiences see the problem as "solely and fundamentally created by individual moral failings" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 4). The public sees child abuse as attributable to such individual characteristics as mental illness, substance use, and lack of education (LeCroy & Milligan-LeCroy, 2020). Solutions through this lens tend to include only things that target individuals such as punitive measures or education

about how individuals can protect themselves from becoming victims. Weatherred (2015, p. 29) concurs by stating that "since most people seek to identify the causes of social problems and assign blame, Americans. . .prefer to attribute problems to corrupt, inept, or irresponsible individuals." If audiences see issues like child abuse through this lens of individual responsibility, however, they are likely to "feel absolved of responsibility for social problems" because they assign responsibility to individuals (Weatherred, 2015, p. 29). When individuals are wholly responsible, audiences additionally don't look to society and institutions to solve the problem. This view limits the potential for addressing, resolving and preventing the issue.

In the family bubble mental model, audiences believe that "the family is the only context of importance in child-rearing" and violence occurs because of offender's "poor upbringing" and "poor parenting" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 5). Daro and Dodge (2009, p. 68), in their review of child abuse prevention efforts, explain that it is not enough to focus only on parents but that strategies are most effective when they work to change social norms that engender "personal and collective responsibility." Focusing on parenting and parent-child relationships only results in an inability of an audience to see violence within a cultural and social context that is also a community-level concern.

It is important to understand how audiences rely on these models to interpret messages so that communication can be framed in a manner that supports the campaigns aims. The concept of framing is seen throughout literature on this topic. Framing is defined by the Frameworks Institute as "how messages are encoded with meaning so that they can be efficiently interpreted in relationship to existing beliefs or ideas" (Evans et al., 2012, p. 415). Frames can be defined as "principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (Weatherred, 2015, p. 17). Weatherred (2015, p. 17) asserts

that framing, “plays a key role in the process of defining social problems by selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution.” Framing a message in a way that compels the audience to recognize, understand, care, and act in response is especially important when discussing child maltreatment, a sensitive and commonly misunderstood social problem.

In addition to the mentalist and family bubble mental models audiences employ, there are other frames through which people view and interpret messages. In their work, McCartan et al. (2015) explored societal framings of child sexual abuse and discovered that a public health approach is an effective way to engage communities in meaningful discourse about this issue. McCartan et al. (2015, p. 101) explain that it is important to be aware of the “common sense understandings that people have of the world based upon their everyday experiences of child sexual abuse” in order to “more effectively communicate research-based knowledge.” They call these commonsense understandings “implicit theories” and says that everyone holds implicit theories unconsciously as formed through our own experiences and that these influence how we make judgements about our world (McCartan et al., 2015, p. 101). They suggest that implicit theories are influenced by all the things we see around us, including media messages. LeCroy and Milligan-LeCroy (2020) additionally suggests that messages that support the belief that parenting is challenging and everyone needs support and assistance could reduce stigma around asking for help and, as a result, reduce incidents of child maltreatment.

In addition to implicit theories that influence how a message will be received, the health belief model is also at work. This model, as discussed by McCartan et al. (2015) outlines factors that act as a barrier to translating people’s perceptions into action. These factors include things such as “the cognitive schema against which information is perceived and processed, whether the

message can alter the individual's cost-benefit analysis, whether an individual believes they are at risk', the cost to the individual of modifying (or not) their behavior, and the individual's ability and self-efficacy to take actions" (McCartan et al., 2015, p. 104). While public awareness campaigns are often successful in increasing audience knowledge of a social issue, this knowledge does not always result in meaningful action. Overcoming these barriers through use of messaging that leaves the audience with the belief that they are capable of taking meaningful action is, therefore, crucial in public awareness campaigns.

Ineffective elements

Though the presumption is that public awareness would result in decreased child maltreatment, available literature does not clearly make this connection. Despite increased public awareness, maltreatment rates stay high. Discussed in the literature are multiple elements that, when used, reduce the likelihood of a message achieving desired results. Studies of campaigns found that even when campaigns were successful in increasing awareness about child abuse and shifting audience beliefs and attitudes, this did not necessarily translate into action.

The literature on public perceptions of social issues suggests that campaigns that reinforce unhelpful mental models, are not seen as relevant by the audience, and don't provide clear instruction on what to do about a problem are less effective in meeting stated objectives. Any messages that reinforce the mentalist and family bubble models even subtly, are likely to be less effective. Messages that support the audience in assuming the individual responsibility lens or reducing the problem to moral deficits of individuals are not effective because "it is possible for disengagement to occur if the situation does not resonate personally" (McCartan et al., 2015, p. 11). Campaigns that included "perceptions of stigma, lack of perceived relevance to consumers of the message, lack of engagement with the message and the medium by which it is

conveyed, and reluctance coupled with uncertainly about what to do" were cited as factors for limited effectiveness (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 128.) It is not enough to tell people that a problem exists, but people must be led to believe that the problem can be resolved or prevented in some way (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 130). The literature is additionally clear that messages that are "negative" and "shaming" are not recommended or effective (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017).

Effective elements

There are ways that communicators can deliver a more effective message and better achieve stated campaign outcomes. A more effective message focuses on shaping audience's thinking about an issue, providing clarity around helpful action, and demonstrating relevance and relatability to the audience. These elements must, additionally, be delivered by a source the audience sees as credible (Bowers Andrews et al., 1995).

Communication that results in system-thinking, thinking about an issue in a more holistic way through understanding how things are connected and influence one another, is more effective because a solution that rests in policy and prevention is then conceivable. Effective communication about topics such as child maltreatment must "address deeper patterns of thinking" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 5). Communicators can do this by "telling stories of early child development in which social context – and importantly inequality – are made visible to the public" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 6). Information about child development must be broad so as not to reinforce the audience's employment of the family bubble model of parents being the cause of violence either because of poor parenting delivered to an offender or lack of education to their children about how to be self-protective. It is important to communicate the ways in which environments shape behavior and the impact of culture on the problematic behavior.

Encouraging audiences to look at this as a systems issue combats the personal responsibility model that results in victim blaming (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 5). It is important to provide an audience with "alternative ways of thinking about the causes, outcomes and appropriate interventions" (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010, p. 29). The issue of child maltreatment should be framed as a systems issue versus one for which blame can be placed on individuals. The message is more effective if it leads the audience to believe that "families. . .are worthy of help" (Bowers Andrews et al., 1995, p. 925). Presenting messages in ways that make this shift allows the audience to imagine other ways of addressing the problem.

It is also important to engender in the audience a sense that they have some stake in the problem and ability to act. An effective campaign would create a social norm around expectations for the general public to act to prevent child maltreatment or intervene when it occurs. Messages would ideally lead the audience to believe that "people who offer help are doing something socially desirable" (Bowers Andrews et al., 1995, p. 925). In a review of a child sexual abuse (CSA) public awareness campaign, Rheingold et al. (2007, p. 361) suggest that findings support "the notion that inclusion of specific behaviors and examples of what to do if a situation related to CSA arose may be a critical element of a prevention campaign." Bowers Andrews et al.(1995), in their discussion on the impact of a campaign on public action to help abused children, explain that messages must clearly communicate what action the audience should take and that individuals have the ability to affect change. A clear call to action that outlines what the audience can do to help is more likely to have an impact on child maltreatment.

Because of the pervasive impact of implicit theories and the health belief model, public awareness campaigns must accomplish several things in order to be successful. The message must be relevant to the audience, include clear benefits to the audience and make the audience

see themselves as susceptible to risk (McCartan et al., 2015, p. 105). Ostfeld and Mutz (2014) conducted research on the impact of specific case reports and stories about individual people on an audience's perception of an issue. They discovered that a news stories featuring people who are similar to the audience had a more significant impact than when the audience saw the individual as dissimilar. Study participants in Self-Brown et al.'s review of a CSA prevention campaign indicated that diversity in gender, age, and race of the children and adults shown in campaign materials was most appealing (2008, p. 736). Focus groups in another study indicated that messages about parenting that were relevant, realistic, and relatable were more appealing (Love et al., 2013). More effective in engaging an audience is to present an "identifiable" victim versus just presenting statistics (Ostfeld & Mutz, 2014, p. 56). Presenting an identified individual victim, or victims, is more successful in creating "a desire on the part of the audience to help those in need" (Ostfeld & Mutz, 2014, p. 56). Overall, taking a "human interest angle can have powerful effects on how an issue is perceived and understood" (Ostfeld & Mutz, 2014, p. 68). Emotional and attention-grabbing elements were found by Self-Brown et.al. focus groups to be most effective (2008, p. 736).

Effectiveness of specific campaigns –Stop it Now!, Zero Tolerance, Florida Winds of Change and Darkness to Light

Literature regarding specific public awareness campaigns on the topic of child maltreatment show mixed results. Through a brief review of specific campaign effectiveness, we can work in future research to uncover the messaging strategies utilized and to what degree they were successful in meeting stated aims.

Stop It Now! Campaign

The Stop It Now! Campaign began in America in 1992 and aims to prevent CSA through using a public health approach. The campaign worked to address societal attitudes on child sexual abuse through educating the public and policymakers on the "nature and extent of CSA" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 128). Knowledge and awareness of the issue increased significantly but "did not necessarily result in action" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 128). In addition to increase in awareness, the Stop It Now! Campaign also changed beliefs by increasing the percentage of those who believe a perpetrator of CSA can live within their community.

Zero Tolerance Campaign

Launched in Edinburgh Scotland in 1992, the Zero Tolerance campaign aimed to challenge attitudes towards violence against women and girls including child sexual abuse CSA. This campaign used posters and messages that "attempted to highlight the social issues underlaying CSA and dispel myths about CSA happening to 'other people' by juxtaposing sexual abuse with affluence and as perpetrated within the home" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 127). This approach was contrary to the stranger danger communication popular at the time. The campaign attempted to impact more global attitudes towards violence. Evaluation indicated that the campaign "effectively increased awareness and communication about CSA, empowered potential victims, and increased disclosure" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 127). There was not movement, however, "in terms of policy or law, or . . . with respect to public action" (Kemshall & Moulden, 2017, p. 127). Kemshell and Moulden suggest that Zero Tolerance, and other campaigns like it, would benefit by better outlining what the public can do about a problem and offer compelling reasons for them to act. Education and training about how to act is also described as necessary to enhance effectiveness. Further, a campaign that clearly identifies

behavior change as an outcome and frames the issue as a broad social problem is likely to have more significant impact.

The Florida Winds of Change Campaign

The Florida Winds of Change campaign, started in and for the state of Florida in 2002 as a partnership between Prevent Child Abuse Florida and the Florida Department of Children and Families, "focused on increasing knowledge of child development and community supports as the call to action" (Evans et al., 2012, p. 416). The goal of the campaign was to "prevent child abuse and neglect by promoting a better understanding of child development, positive parenting practices and community action" (The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, 2009, p.4). This campaign's theoretical approach was called "Strategic Frame Analysis" which "identifies frames as key in how issues are communicated to and interpreted by audiences" (The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, 2009, p.3). Florida Winds of Change demonstrated effectiveness in increasing parents' knowledge of community resources, changing attitudes around the prevention of child maltreatment, motivating the audience to prevent child maltreatment, and action or behavior to prevent child abuse. It was not effective, however, in meeting one of the campaign's stated aims of increasing knowledge of non-violent disciplinary techniques and did not result is specific audience behavior change.

Darkness to Light Campaign

Darkness to Light (DTL) is an American-based non-profit founded in 2000 "whose primary goal is to educate communities about CSA, its consequences, and preventative measures so as to reduce the prevalence of CSA" (Rheingold et al., 2007, p. 354). While there has not been a controlled study to evaluate its effectiveness, "preliminary data suggest that DTL's media campaign may prove effective in increasing awareness and knowledge among community

members about CSA" (Rheingold et al., 2007, p. 354). Self-Brown et. al (2008, p. 736). developed focus groups to review Darkness to Light materials and groups "overwhelmingly agreed that the DTL media materials could help raise society's awareness and increase people's knowledge of child sexual abuse." These focus groups additionally indicated that they were more knowledgeable about child sexual abuse, had new skills to protect children and felt invested in helping to utilize these skills. The campaign fell short in this study by not providing information on identifying potential offenders and offering ways to talk with children of all ages and stages about child sexual abuse. Other findings indicate that there was significant impact on short-term knowledge and primary prevention responses to hypothetical vignettes but no significant change on attitudes (Rheingold et al., 2007, p. 360).

Literature Review Summary

Published literature reviewing the effectiveness of public awareness campaigns, including campaigns specific to child maltreatment, is valuable in identifying the ways in which audiences perceive information and the elements of effective, or conversely ineffective, campaigns. While there have been successful campaigns that changed attitudes and behaviors around things such as tobacco cessation or seat belt use, campaigns aimed at preventing child maltreatment have fallen short of this type of significant behavioral change. Exploring communication strategies related to campaign effectiveness has the potential to guide communicators in enhancing the success of their message.

Chapter III: Methodology

Artifact analysis was used to analyze materials from each campaign against criteria reflecting best practices in communication in public awareness campaigns. Effective and ineffective elements were identified through literature review and synthesized from sources. Coders reviewed these elements and ranked the degree to which each was reflected in artifacts from four child abuse prevention campaigns.

Elements that enhance and detract from campaign effectiveness were identified through literature review and are synthesized here. Effective elements include:

Message is Clear. The message conveyed in the artifact regarding what issue is being addressed, why it is important, and what can be done to make it better is easy to understand.

Give the Impression That Families are Worthy of Help. In order to heed the call to action included in an effective campaign, the audience must feel that help is worth giving. Messages of blame and shame towards the child or the perpetrator of maltreatment do not result in an audience fully understanding the problem and doing their part to prevent it or intervene. If an audience feels that families are "other" or deficient in some way, there is less impetus to build understanding, compassion, and capacity to help. The people in need of help are seen by the audience as "people like us" (Bowers Andrews et al., 1995, p. 925).

There Is A Clear Call to Easy Action. The audience is able to identify actions they can take to address the public issue and are left with the belief that action they take will make a difference. The message conveys the sense that action could be taken by any citizen to address or respond to the problem or concern.

Gives The Impression That It Is Socially Desirable to Help. Audiences are led to believe that it is not just socially acceptable to help but socially desirable to help.

Source Of The Message Is Seen As Credible. The audience must view the source of the campaign as credible and knowledgeable.

Focus On Systemic vs. Individual Problem. Campaigns that signal systemic issues such as a cultural perspective, gender role stereotypes, institutional racism, classism, etc. have been more effective. Campaigns have demonstrated increased effectiveness when they communicate that factors in the environment influence behavior of the victim and perpetrator. A campaign would try to demonstrate that there are factors at work beyond individual characteristics. Taking a public health stance, which relies on a systemic perspective, has proven to be more effective in public awareness campaigns. Public health is the science of improving the health and safety of communities through research, policy and education, and campaigns seen through this lens may be more effective.

Similarity Of Subject to Audience. Audiences are more likely to engage and respond in the desired manner to materials that reflect a subject they perceive as similar to themselves. This could be similarity in terms of race, gender, socioeconomic status, geographic location, and other demographic factors. Evaluating this element involves understanding the demographics of the target audience. In child maltreatment campaigns, the target audience is generally assumed to be people who care about children.

Stories Of Child Development. Campaigns that include or reference a longitudinal view of how children grow and develop in healthy ways have better achieved stated outcomes. An emphasis on what all children need to grow and develop is considered an effective element.

Ineffective elements include:

Lack Of Similarity To Audience And Lack Of Diversity. Research demonstrates that audiences are less likely to engage and respond in the desired manner to materials that reflect a subject they perceive as different from themselves. This could be difference in terms of race, gender, socio-economic status and other demographic factors. Evaluating this element involves understanding the demographics of the target audience.

Emphasis On Individual Responsibility (Induces Blame And Shame). Campaigns that demonstrate than individuals, not the environment, culture or system, are responsible for the problem are less effective.

Emphasis On Parenting. Campaigns that communicate that parents and parenting are both the cause and the only solution to a social problem are less effective.

Emphasis On Personal Character. Emphasizing that an individual's character, including one's motivation and self-discipline, is the cause of a problem results in poorer outcomes.

Focus On Crime. Campaigns that highlight the criminal nature of this issue and communicate themes around crime and punishment may be less effective.

Focus On Immorality. It may be less effective to send the message that the issue is the result of a moral failing on the part of individuals.

No Notion Of Prevention. Messages that don't indicate that prevention of the issue is possible and worth discussing are less successful.

Instrumentation

Coding sheets, found in Appendices A and B, were developed based on the effective and ineffective elements of public awareness campaigns that were identified in the literature.

Elements included are those that emerged as most significant based on my review and synthesis of sources. It should be noted that effective and ineffective elements aren't simply mirrors of one another but are compiled from the literature in the way they are discussed. Campaign artifacts were reviewed by coders who recorded their impressions of each campaign's integration of effective and ineffective elements.

Data Collection Procedures

Each coder was presented a set of artifacts from each public awareness campaign. Images of these artifacts and a brief description of them can be found in Appendices C, D, E and F. Coders were asked to code a group of artifacts per campaign using Likert scales for each effective and ineffective element. This was done, versus coding one artifact at a time per campaign, to provide additional context and to demonstrate a broader campaign scope. Coders were provided coding sheets, given the instruction on the top of the coding sheets, and provided a description of the effective and ineffective elements. Coders then reviewed artifacts from each campaign and coded them together based on their overall impression of that group of artifacts. Coders ranked effective elements on a scale of one through five with one representing no evidence of the effective element in campaign artifacts and five being great evidence that the element was incorporated into artifacts. Ineffective elements were ranked on scale of one through five with one meaning the ineffective element was present to a significant degree and five being no evidence of the presence of the ineffective element. High scores, therefore, reflect greater inclusion of effective elements and less inclusion of ineffective elements.

Data Analysis

Coding sheets were analyzed through compiling scores for each element. The frequency each score was selected by coders for each campaign along with the percentage of each ranking

given is reported. These scores, which reflect to what degree effective and ineffective elements were included in each campaign, are rhetorically analyzed and then compared to known outcomes of each campaign.

Limitations

The artifact analysis completed in this project furthers discussion around incorporating more effective messaging strategies in public awareness campaigns as defined through available literature. This project is not able to definitively say that the messages utilized in each campaign were connected to the campaigns' overall effectiveness or lack thereof.

Additionally, this study does not look specifically at the use and effectiveness of social media as a means to deliver public awareness messages. Social media, defined by Saha et al. (2019, p. 1197) as 'internet-based applications which allow people to share opinions," has the power to influence people's perceptions of an issue and form opinions. Literature suggests that the power of social media is significant and growing with the ability to reach hundreds of millions of people without the challenges faced by the print or video campaigns referenced here (Xu et al., 2016). There is evidence that points to "the efficacy of using social networking strategies to engage and sustain vulnerable populations" (Love et. al, 2013). Information about parenting specifically is disseminated effectively via social media. In their review of mothers' perceptions on social media as sources of parenting information, Moon et al. (2019) explain that "the majority of US parents who use social media state that it provides useful parenting information and almost half have received support on social media regarding a parenting issue in the past month". Social media has the potential to disseminate public awareness messages effectively.

The benefits of social media relevant to child abuse prevention campaigns include fostering a sense of community that may lower risk of child maltreatment, reducing stigma as a barrier to accessing education, information and support, reaching large numbers of people, increased convenience of receiving information, and consistency with audience preference. Exploring the use of social media in public awareness campaigns may provide additional insight into reaching a diverse audience. Even further, exploring how best to reach younger parents and parents of ethnic minority groups specifically through use of social media would be valuable.

Chapter IV: Results

Artifacts from each campaign were analyzed as a means of exploring the communication strategies used by child abuse public awareness campaigns. Coders were asked to provide their impressions of to what degree effective and ineffective elements were included in each child abuse prevention public awareness campaign.

Coders reviewed an artifact group from each public awareness campaign and ranked effective elements, those messaging techniques described by the literature as being most effective in public awareness campaigns, as one through five with one being least consistent with the effective element and five being most consistent with the effective element. They ranked ineffective elements, those messaging techniques described by the literature as being least effective in public awareness campaigns, as one through five with one being the most consistent with the ineffective element and five being least consistent with the ineffective element. A higher score on ineffective elements, then, means that these ineffective elements were less prominent in the campaign.

It was expected that coder perceptions would vary given the subjective nature of this content. Results, however subjective, are valuable in analyzing the strategies utilized in each campaign as campaigns rely heavily on audience perception. Two campaigns, Stop it Now! and Florida Winds of Change were perceived by coders as having more frequent effective elements and less frequent ineffective elements. By comparison, Zero Tolerance and Darkness to Light were seen by coders as incorporating fewer effective elements and a greater number of ineffective elements. Coding results are detailed below.

Table 1

Stop It Now! Coding

Strength of evidence		Frequency	Percentage %
Effective Element Score	1	1	4.2
	2	0	0
	3	2	8.3
	4	6	25
	5	15	62.5
Ineffective Element Score	1	0	0
	2	2	9.5
	3	5	23.8
	4	6	28.6
	5	8	38.1

Note. This table shows the scores given for effective and ineffective elements. There are eight effective elements scored by three coders making 24 total score possibilities in the effective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 24 (the total number of scores given). There were seven ineffective elements scored by three coders so 21 total score possibilities in the ineffective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 21 (the total number of scores given). For example, the highest effectiveness score of five was selected 15 times by coders.

Table 2

Zero Tolerance Coding

Strength of evidence		Frequency	Percentage %
Effective element score	1	10	41.7
	2	3	12.5
	3	5	20.8
	4	2	8.3
	5	4	16.7
Ineffective element score	1	8	38.1
	2	2	9.5
	3	6	28.6
	4	1	4.8
	5	4	19.1

Note. This table shows the scores given for effective and ineffective elements. There are eight effective elements scored by three coders making 24 total score possibilities in the effective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 24 (the total number of scores given). There were seven ineffective elements scored by three coders so 21 total score possibilities in the ineffective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 21 (the total number of scores given). For example, the highest effectiveness score of five was selected four times by coders.

Table 3

Florida Winds of Change Coding

Strength of evidence		Frequency	Percentage %
Effective element score	1	0	0
	2	1	4.2
	3	3	12.5
	4	5	20.8
	5	15	62.5
Ineffective element score	1	0	0
	2	3	14.3
	3	5	23.8
	4	3	14.3
	5	10	47.6

Note. This table shows the scores given for effective and ineffective elements. There are eight effective elements scored by three coders making 24 total score possibilities in the effective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 24 (the total number of scores given). There were seven ineffective elements scored by three coders so 21 total score possibilities in the ineffective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 21 (the total number of scores given). For example, the highest effectiveness score of five was selected 15 times by coders.

Table 4

Darkness to Light Coding

Strength of evidence		Frequency	Percentage %
Effective element score	1	2	8.3
	2	4	16.7
	3	8	33.3
	4	2	8.3
	5	8	33.3
Ineffective element score	1	3	14.3
	2	4	19.1
	3	3	14.3
	4	1	4.8
	5	10	47.6

Note. This table shows the scores given for effective and ineffective elements. There are eight effective elements scored by three coders making 24 total score possibilities in the effective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 24 (the total number of scores given). There were 7 ineffective elements scored by three coders so 21 total score possibilities in the ineffective elements section. Frequency is the number of times an effective element was given that score. Percentage is the frequency over 21 (the total number of scores given). For example, the highest effectiveness score of five was selected eight times by coders.

Table 5

Effective Elements Coding

Effective elements	Score	FW WOC	Stop it now	DTL	Zero Tol
Similarity of subject to audience	1				
	2				
	3	1		1	1
	4	1	1		
	5	1	2	1	2
Message is clear	1				
	2				1
	3			2	1
	4	1			
	5	2	3	1	1
Gives the impression families are worthy of help	1				1
	2				1
	3		1		
	4	1		2	
	5	2	2		1
There is a clear call to easy action	1				3
	2			2	
	3			1	
	4	1	1		
	5	2	2		
Gives the impression that it is socially desirable to help	1			1	1
	2				
	3	1			1
	4				1
	5	2	3	2	
Source of the message is seen as credible	1				2
	2				1
	3	1		2	
	4		2		
	5	2	1	1	
Focus on systemic vs. individual	1				1
	2	1		1	
	3		1	2	1
	4	1	2		1
	5	1			
Stories of child development	1		1		2
	2			1	
	3				1
	4				
	5	3	2	2	

Note. This table details the number of times a score for each effective element was selected by a coder.

Table 6

Ineffective Elements Coding

Ineffective elements	Score	FW WOC	Stop it now	DTL	Zero Tol
Lack of similarity of subject to audience or lack of diversity	1				
	2				
	3	1			2
	4		1		1
	5	2	2	2	
Emphasis on individual responsibility (or induces blame and shame)	1			1	1
	2	1		1	
	3	1	2		1
	4				
	5	1	1	1	1
Emphasis on parenting	1				
	2	1	1		
	3	2	1	1	1
	4				
	5		1	2	2
Emphasis on personal character	1				1
	2				
	3	1	1	1	1
	4	2	2		
	5			2	1
Focus on crime	1				2
	2			1	1
	3		2		
	4	2			
	5	1	1	2	
Focus on immorality	1				1
	2	1	2		1
	3			1	1
	4				
	5	2	1	2	
No notion of prevention	1			1	3
	2			2	
	3		2		
	4				
	5	3	1		

Note. This table details the number of times a score for each ineffective element was selected by a coder.

Research Questions

Public awareness campaigns aim to inform the public about a particular issue and influence behavior as a result of that awareness. In recent decades, campaigns have attempted to raise awareness of child abuse and, in doing so, prevent child abuse from occurring. Effectiveness of such campaigns, however, is not conclusive. To begin to determine whether these campaigns meet stated, aims, the following questions are pursued in this study:

1. What communication and messaging techniques contribute to an effective public awareness campaign?
2. What was each campaign's effectiveness as described in available literature?
3. How does campaign effectiveness relate to the document analysis based on best practice guidelines?
4. Are there ways this effectiveness can be connected to specific messaging techniques?

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored communication strategies used by child abuse public awareness campaigns, identified elements reflected in relevant literature that appear effective or ineffective in crafting a campaign message, and analyzed the rhetorical effectiveness of four campaigns. Artifacts from these four-child abuse prevention public awareness campaigns were selected and reviewed by coders. These coders ranked their perceptions of each campaign's inclusion of effective and ineffective elements. Two campaigns, Stop it Now! and Florida Winds of Change were perceived by coders as having more frequent effective elements and less frequent ineffective elements. Zero Tolerance and Darkness to Light were seen by coders as incorporating fewer effective elements and more ineffective elements than the other two campaigns.

Discussion

Analyzing the rhetorical effectiveness of each campaign is best accomplished through applying a Burkean analysis. Alongside a review of results, a rhetorical analysis of terministic screens is useful for understanding the impact of messaging in public awareness campaigns.

In reviewing artifacts from the Florida Winds of Change campaign, coder scores indicate strong evidence of effective elements including "clear message," "gives the impression families are worthy of help," "clear call to easy action," and "stories of child development." The "social desirability of offering help," "similarity of subject to audience," "focus on systemic issue," and "credible source" were mixed. Coders perceived use of some ineffective elements including "emphasis on individual responsibility," "emphasis on parenting," and "focus on immorality." Overall, 83.3% of rankings of effective elements were in the top box, scored a 4 or 5 meaning there was strong evidence of the presence of these effective elements, while only 4.2% were scored in the bottom box, a 1 or 2. 62.9% of ineffective elements coding was positive, meaning

not demonstrated to a strong degree, while 14.3% was negative, or demonstrated to a strong degree. Outcome evaluation of Florida Winds of Change showed that the campaign increased parents' knowledge of resources, changed attitudes about child abuse, motivated the audience to work towards prevention of abuse, and influenced audience behavior (Evans et.al, 2012).

This campaign reflects, selects, deflects, and identifies certain messages through rhetorical choices made (Burke,1966). Reflected, or explicitly presented, in the message of this campaign is the sense that people who are connected to child maltreatment, as the victim, offender or bystander, are just like the audience. One way this campaign reflects the notion that those who experience child abuse are like the audience rather than a mysterious other, is through use of pictures throughout materials of people of a variety of ages and ethnic backgrounds participating in daily activities that are familiar to the public.

The campaign selects, or emphasizes, the fact that families are worthy of help and that there is action the audience can take to help. Families appear worthy of help due to rhetorical choices made in the campaign. Statements such as "each child deserve to be cherished" and "all children are special" are meant to communicate that children are worthy of help. Another artifact, the *Family Advocacy Guide (2020)*, expresses that at one time or another all families need a helping hand. One campaign artifact, titled "How you can help prevent child abuse and neglect," (2020) identifies 15 action steps, presented in a manner that makes them appear simple and feasible. This tells people explicitly that there are actions they can take and rhetorical choices such as the use of a playful font, color, and cartoon graphics helps the audience believe these actions are accessible.

Florida Winds of Change does deflect, or hide, something through its rhetorical choices. Through its repeated use of images depicting smiling, playing, and laughing parents and

children, this campaign deflects the serious nature, and serious consequences, of child maltreatment. While not ignored completely, especially in sections devoted to recognizing signs of abuse and neglect, it appears that great effort is made to present the topic in a manner that is palatable to the audience. If an artifact depicted a bruised and battered child, one can suppose, the audience may be less likely to engage with the unpleasant topic.

The Florida Winds of Change campaign encourages identifications that are effective, powerful, and persuasive. Rhetorical identification encourages the audience to identify with the widely held belief that children are innocent and entitled to protection. Specifically, child abuse is presented as an important issue because all children deserve to grow and develop in healthy and typical ways and child maltreatment interrupts this much to the detriment of children, families, and communities. Artifacts include many references to child development and discuss at length what children need to thrive. Another identification within this campaign is that people who abuse children, or the children who are abused, are just like us and our own families. We, as the audience, have the capacity to take action to help people just like us.

Coders indicated that the Stop It Now! artifacts showed strong evidence of the following effective elements: “similarity of subject to audience,” “clear message,” “clear call to easy action,” “social desirability of help,” and “credible source.” Mixed results emerged for the elements related to “families being worthy of help” and “focus on the issue as systemic” versus individual. Ineffective elements found to be evident included “emphasis on parenting” and “focus on immorality”. 87.5% of rankings for effective elements Stop It Now! were positive with only 9.2% being negative. Similarly, coders found that ineffective elements were demonstrated 9.5% of the time while there was little evidence of their use 66.7% of the time. Stop It Now! did

significantly increase public knowledge and awareness and changed beliefs about child sexual abuse. This campaign did not, however, result in specific audience action.

This campaign also reflects, selects, deflects, and identifies certain messages through rhetorical choices made. Reflected in the message of this campaign, like Florida Winds of Change, is the sense that the audience is not different from those who experience child maltreatment or are abusers of children. Artifacts include quotes from people who have sexually abused children that shows them to be our neighbors, friends, and community members. One man, for example, is quoted saying “I was a respected member of my community, publisher of our local paper, and a sexual abuser” (2020). Pictures used throughout campaign materials show people of all ages and ethnicities doing typical activities such as eating dinner or gathered in peer groups.

The campaign selects, or emphasizes, that there are actions the audience can take to help and that it is socially desirable to do so. Campaign artifacts talk at length about how the audience could intervene to prevent child sexual abuse. A section in another campaign artifact titled “A Call to Action” (2020) provides several clear prompts to action. The *Let’s Talk* (2020) guide states what someone can do to help and clearly outlines the positive impact of taking action in the ways the campaign suggests. Intervening when there are concerns about child sexual abuse is presented as an act of caring. The introduction of the *Let’s Talk* guide states: “if you are reading this guidebook, you care” and taking action can “make a huge difference in the life of the adult, teen and/or child who needs your help.” While the campaign acknowledges that taking action is difficult, framing this as the kind choice of a caring friend, neighbor, or family member leads the audience to think of action as socially desirable.

Stop It Now! does deflect to some degree the systemic nature of child maltreatment and messaging more strongly focuses on intervening at the level of the abuser. The *Let's Talk* guide walks the audience through initiating a conversation with someone who is engaging in concerning behavior with a child. There is focus on the abuser with headings such as "Can people who sexually abuse people stop it?." In the context of this campaign, which asks the audience to identify signs of sexual abuse and intervene through several means including conversation with the person suspected of sexual abuse, focusing on the individual person who abuse is an intentional emphasis. This emphasis does lead the audience to considering more heavily the individual. This de-emphasizes the problem of child maltreatment as a public health issue and focuses instead on immorality and individual responsibility.

Zero Tolerance was coded as having the lowest percentage of effective elements of the four campaigns at 25% of effective elements scores being a 4 or 5. 54.2% of rankings for effective elements were negative, a 1 or 2. This campaign also incorporated the strongest use of ineffective elements with coders giving 47.6% of ineffective elements scores a 1 or a 2. Coders perceived the following effective elements as not being included to a strong degree in this campaign: "clear call to action" and "credible message." Coder perceptions were mixed on the rest of the effective elements. Ineffective elements found to a high degree included "no notion of prevention," "focus on crime," and "focus on immorality." Zero Tolerance was found to effectively increase awareness and communication about child sexual abuse. The campaign was additionally connected to increased disclosure of child sexual abuse. It too was found to be ineffective in moving the public to other action that would prevent or address child maltreatment.

Through rhetorical choices made, Zero Tolerance reflects, selects, deflects, and identifies certain messages. Reflected in the message of this campaign is a world in which sexual abuse of

women and girls of all ages, races, and classes in various forms is common. Messages include statements regarding victims of abuse being “whoever, wherever, whenever” (1992).

The campaign selects, or emphasizes, sexual abuse as a crime perpetrated only by men on women and girls. Campaign artifacts state: “male abuse of power is a crime” and “some men don’t listen” and references abuse perpetrated by “husband, father, stranger.” The focus is thus on crime and immorality.

While the campaign makes choices that show that victims of sexual abuse are of all ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds, the Zero Tolerance campaign deflects the reality that males can also be sexually abused and that females can perpetrate abuse. A male audience may not see themselves in this campaign as men are assigned the role of abuser and not as victim or helper. The campaign also deflects any notion of prevention and does not illustrate the ways in which sexual abuse can be prevented and whether there is action the audience can take to assist. The campaign encourages the identification of males as abusers and females as victims.

Darkness to Light had mixed results for all effective elements. Coders indicated that there was weak presence of a clear call to action and focus on the problem being systemic versus individual. Additionally coded was the absence of a notion of prevention presented by the campaign and all other ineffective elements were mixed. Effective elements were ranked in the top box 41.6% of the time and seen as not used, scored a 1 or 2, 25% of the time. There was strong evidence of inclusion of ineffective elements, according to coders, 33.4% of the time. Darkness to Light may have increased awareness and knowledge but was found to be unsuccessful in changing audience attitudes or actions.

Reflected in the message of this campaign is the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Through use of simple graphics and statistics, Darkness to Light selects, or emphasizes, the

scope of the problem to the audience. Statistics such as “1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before the age of 18” and “1 in 5 victims of child sexual abuse will be abused before their 8th birthday” are displayed in eye catching color with widely recognized images like cupcakes and a cell phone (2020).

With this simple presentation communicating the prevalence of child sexual abuse, this campaign deflects the impression that there is action the audience can take to address the problem. In a fact sheet about Darkness to Light, the header “Get Involved” only states “join us in the movement of prevention at D2L.org.” This does not hint to the audience what involvement might entail or how the investment of their time might be worth the effort. Identifications encouraged include the prevalence of child sexual abuse and that abuse is most often perpetrated by someone the child and family knows and trusts.

Conclusions

There are a variety of communication and messaging techniques that have been found to contribute to an effective public awareness campaign. This project suggests that including those communication tactics found to be more effective in public awareness campaigns could help campaigns achieve desired outcomes. Artifact analysis is meant to enable communicators to better evaluate and explore potential approaches to incorporating more effective messaging strategies as defined through available literature. Analysis of campaign artifacts demonstrates that existing campaigns have incorporated these techniques to varying degrees.

While there is not a large volume of information about the effectiveness of child abuse prevention public awareness campaigns as specifically connected to the communication strategies employed, there is outcome evaluation information available for several campaigns including Stop it Now!, Florida Winds of Change, Zero Tolerance and Darkness to Light. Public

awareness campaigns have varied outcomes but, generally, desired results including increasing public awareness, changing audience attitudes, motivating the public to act, and changing audience behavior in a way that helps to address the social problem. All four of these campaigns were found to increase awareness and enhance public knowledge of the issue of child maltreatment. Two campaigns, Florida Winds of Change and Stop It Now! were found to additionally change audience attitudes. Only one, Florida Winds of Change, resulted in motivating the audience to work towards prevention and influencing audience behavior to prevent child abuse.

Exploring the rhetorical choices made through artifact analysis provides insight regarding the ways in which these choices may impact campaign outcomes. Florida Winds of Change and Stop It Now! incorporated a greater number of effective elements and fewer ineffective elements and achieved the outcomes that went beyond simply raising awareness and changed audience attitudes. Florida Winds of Change resulted in additional outcomes, motivating the audience to work towards prevention and influencing behavior. The effective messages included to a greater degree, per coder perception, were stories of child development and families are worthy of help. Ineffective elements avoided in Florida Winds of Change compared to Stop It Now! were conveying a notion of prevention and focusing on crime. This suggests that this campaign may have successfully conveyed to the audience that this sweeping social issue, that is not just an issue of crime and punishment, can be prevented. This analysis demonstrates that through making rhetorical choices, communicators select and deflect certain perceptions. These perceptions influence audience awareness, attitudes, and behavior related to child maltreatment.

Recommendations

Due to the significant consequences of child maltreatment to individuals and society, study of prevention efforts is worthwhile. Of particular value to communicators, are the ways in which messaging through public awareness campaigns supports child prevention efforts. Additional research on effective messaging techniques specifically related child abuse prevention campaigns is needed. In addition, study of the objectives of current campaigns and whether stated objectives are both clear and ultimately achieved would be valuable. Further, studying the effectiveness of campaigns in achieving outcomes as connected to rhetorical choices made in the campaign is recommended.

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Appendix A

Effective Elements Coding Worksheet

Instructions: Review campaign artifact and indicate the presence or absence of the stated element using the identified Likert scale. The campaign name and specific artifact label will be provided. Each element should be scored with a number 1-5 and brief notes provided to explain your rating. If you are unable to rate any element, indicate why in the notes section. Ratings are based on your perception of the artifact and there is no established right or wrong answer. Please review descriptions of these elements (Appendix C and D) before coding.

Campaign:	
Artifacts:	
Effective Elements	**Rate 1-2-3-4-5**
Similarity of subject to audience – consider yourself the intended audience	1 - No similarity to majority audience demographic 2- 3 – Mixed similarity to majority audience 4- 5 – Similar to target audience
Notes:	
Message is clear	1 – Message is unclear 2- 3 – Message is somewhat clear 4- 5 – Message is clear
Notes:	
Give the impression that families are worthy of help	1 – Families appear unworthy of help 2- 3 – Families appear somewhat worthy of help 4- 5 – Families appear worthy of help
Notes:	

There is a clear call to easy action	1 – There is no call to easy action 2- 3 – There is a subtle call to easy action 4- 5 – There is a clear call to easy action
Notes:	
Gives the impression that it is socially desirable to help	1 – Appears not socially desirable to help 2- 3 – Social desirability to help appears neutral 4- 5 – It appears socially desirable to help
Notes:	
Source of the message is seen as credible	1 – No credibility 2- 3 – Somewhat credible 4- 5 – Credible source
Notes:	
Focus on systemic (or public health issue) vs. individual problem	1 – Identified individual causes 2- 3 – Mixed individual and system 4- 5 – Identifies systemic factors
Notes:	
Stories of child development	1 – No reference to child growth and development 2- 3 – Some reference to child growth and development 4- 5 – References child growth and development
Notes:	

Appendix B

Ineffective Elements Coding Worksheet

Instructions: Review campaign artifact and indicate the presence or absence of the stated element using the identified Likert scale. Each element should be scored with a number 1-5 and include brief notes provided to explain your rating. If you are unable to rate any element, indicate why in the notes section. Ratings are based on your perception of the artifact and there is no established right or wrong answer. Please review descriptions of these elements (Appendix C and D) before coding.

Campaign:	
Artifacts:	
Ineffective Elements	**Rate 1-2-3-4-5**
Lack of similarity to audience or lack of diversity	1 - No similarity to majority audience demographic or no diversity 2- 3 – Mixed similarity to majority audience or some diversity 4- 5 – Similar to target audience or diverse groups represented
Notes:	
Emphasis on individual responsibility (or induces blame and shame)	1 – Emphasizes individual responsibility 2- 3 – Mix of individual and system/environment 4- 5 – Does not emphasize individual responsibility
Notes:	
Emphasis on parenting	1 – Emphasis on parenting 2- 3 – Some emphasis on parenting 4- 5 – No emphasis on parenting
Notes:	

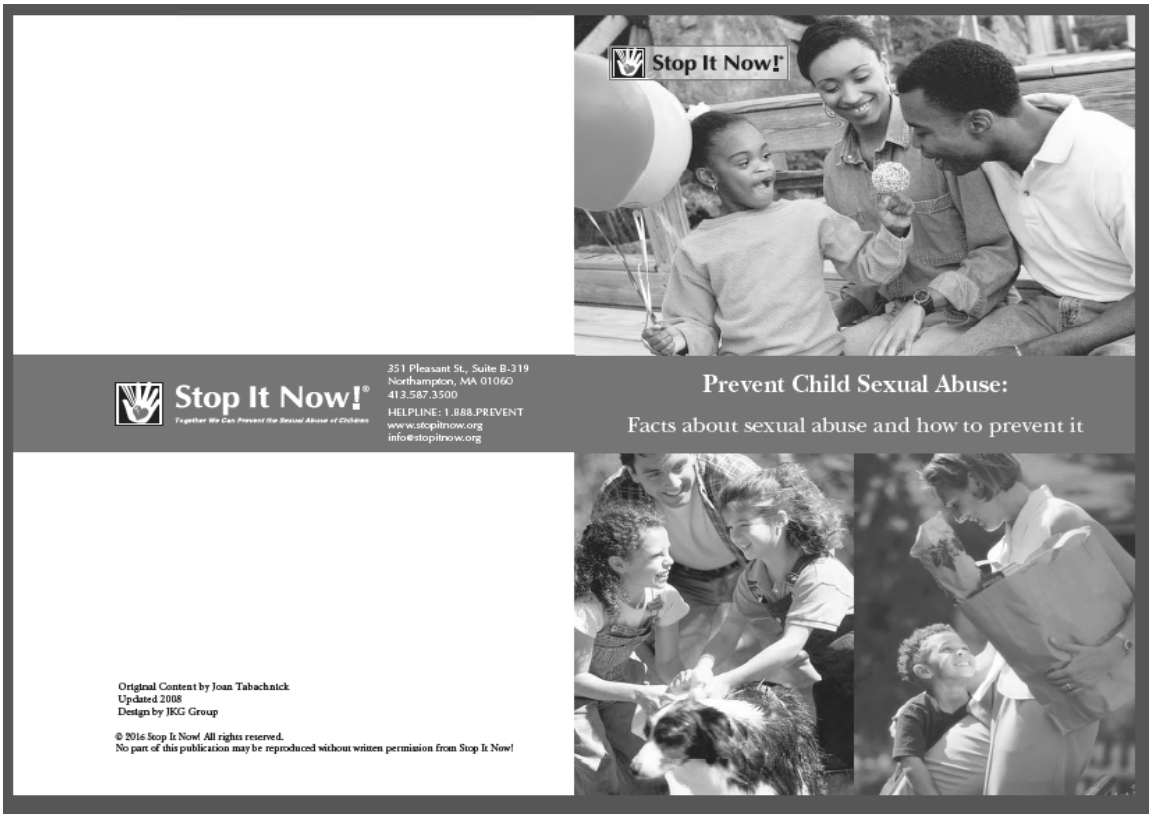
Emphasis on personal character	1 – Emphasis on personal character 2- 3 – Some emphasis on personal character 4- 5 – No emphasis on personal character
Notes:	
Focus on crime	1 -Focuses on crime 2 - 3- Some focus on crime 4- 5- No focus on crime
Notes:	
Focus on immorality	1 – Focuses on immorality 2 - 3- Some focus on immorality 4 - 5- No focus on immorality
Notes:	
No notion of prevention	1 - No notion of prevention 2 - 3 – Some notion of prevention 4 - 5 – Includes notion of prevention
Notes:	

Appendix C

Stop It Now! Artifact Description

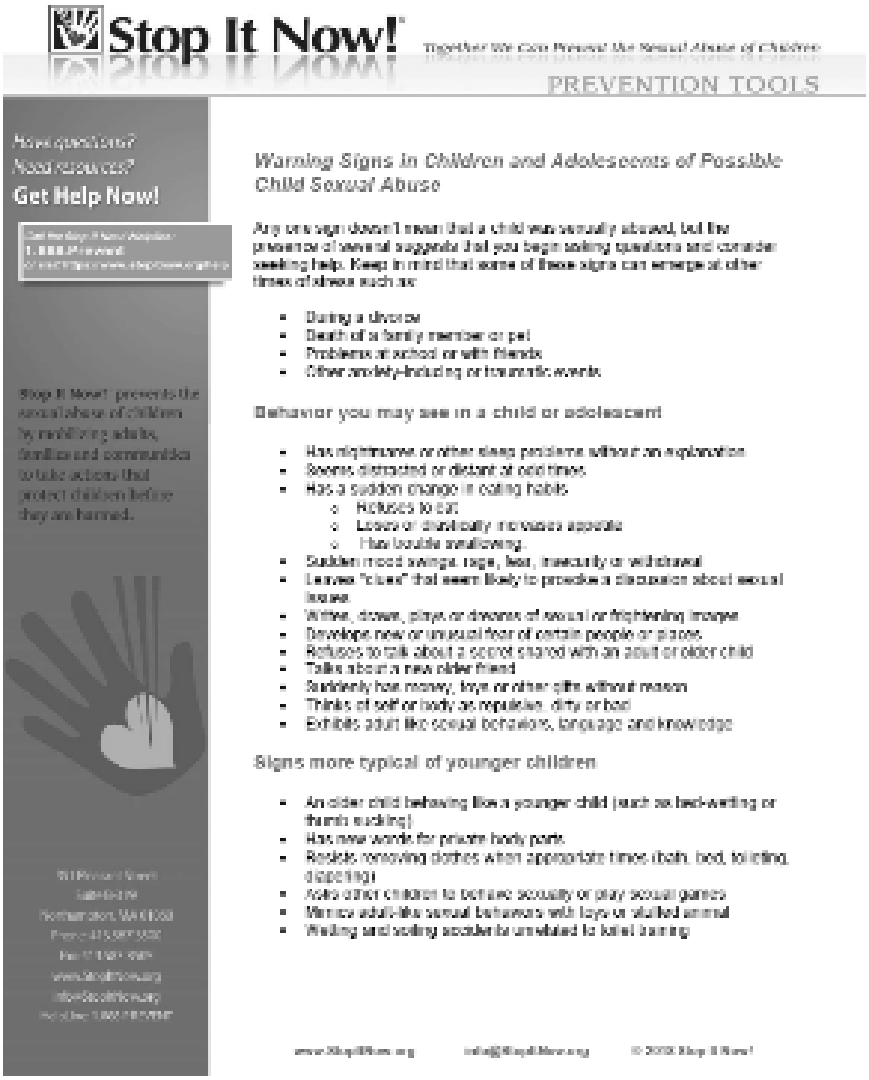
Prevent Child Sexual Abuse: Facts About Sexual Abuse And How To Prevent It

This 12-page guide provides information about child sexual abuse including indicators of abuse, children's sexual behavior, information about abusers, safety planning recommendations for families, and information about what the reader can do to stop sexual abuse.



Warning Signs in Children and Adolescents of Possible Child Sexual Abuse

This two-page fact sheet describes indicators exhibited by children and adolescents who have been sexually abused and what to do about it.



Stop It Now!

Together We Can Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children

PREVENTION TOOLS

Have questions?
Need resources?
Get Help Now!

Stop It Now! prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.

Warning Signs in Children and Adolescents of Possible Child Sexual Abuse

Any one sign doesn't mean that a child was sexually abused, but the presence of several suggests that you begin asking questions and consider seeking help. Keep in mind that some of these signs can emerge at other times of stress such as:

- During a divorce
- Death of a family member or pet
- Problems at school or with friends
- Other anxiety-inducing or traumatic events

Behavior you may see in a child or adolescent

- Has nightmares or other sleep problems without an explanation
- Seems distracted or distant at odd times
- Has a sudden change in eating habits
  - Refuses to eat
  - Loses or drastically increases appetite
  - Has trouble swallowing
- Sudden mood swings, rage, fear, insecurity or withdrawal
- Leaves "clues" that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues
- Writes, draws, plays or dreams of sexual or frightening images
- Develops new or unusual fear of certain people or places
- Refuses to talk about a secret shared with an adult or older child
- Talks about a new older friend
- Suddenly has money, toys or other gifts without reason
- Thinks of self or body as repulsive, dirty or bad
- Exhibits adult like sexual behaviors, language and knowledge

Signs more typical of younger children

- An older child behaving like a younger child (such as bed-wetting or thumb sucking)
- Has new words for private body parts
- Resists removing clothes when appropriate times (bath, bed, toileting, diapering)
- Asks other children to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Mimics adult-like sexual behaviors with toys or stuffed animal
- Wetting and soiling accidents unrelated to toilet training

www.StopItNow.org info@StopItNow.org © 2010 Stop It Now!

Let's Talk. A Guide to Speaking Up to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

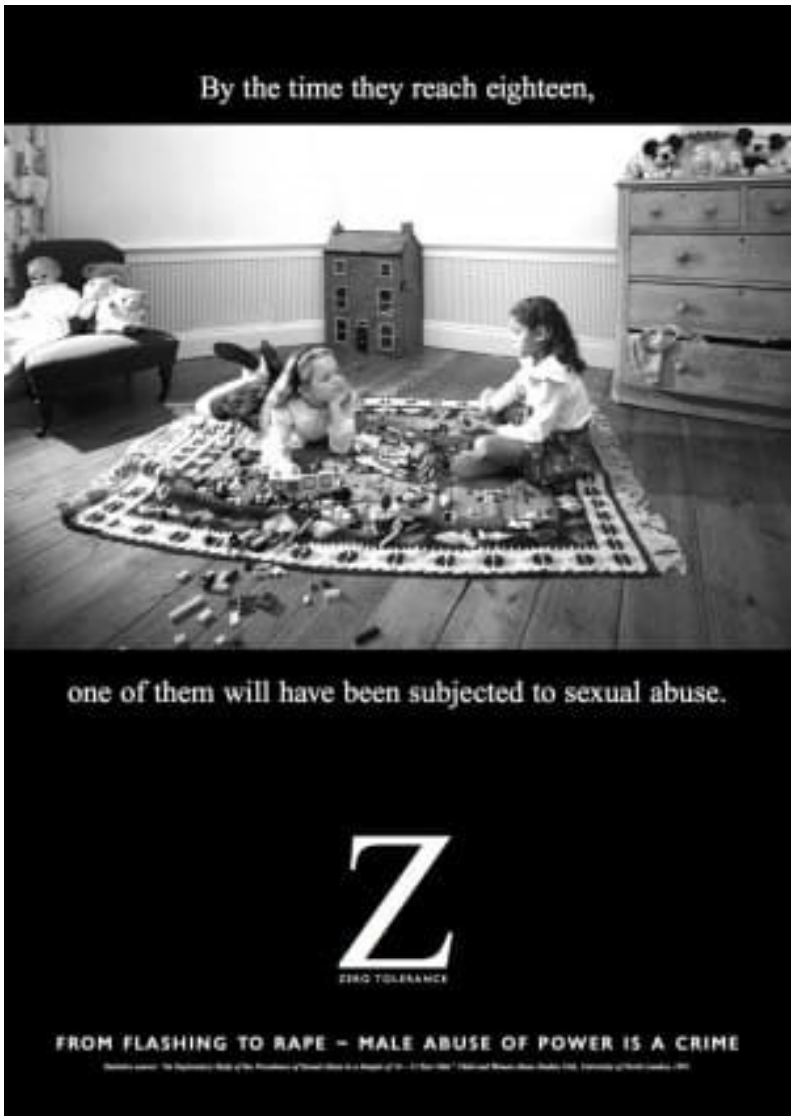
This 36-page guide discusses how to talk to adults and youth about child sexual abuse.

Appendix D

Zero Tolerance Artifacts Description

By the Time They Reach 18

This print ad depicts two girls playing with a message that one of them will have been subjected to sexual abuse by the time they reach age 18.



From Three to Ninety-Three, Women are Raped

This print ad depicts an elderly woman and a young girl and states that women are raped from age three to ninety-three.

When They Say No, They Mean No–Some Men Don't Listen

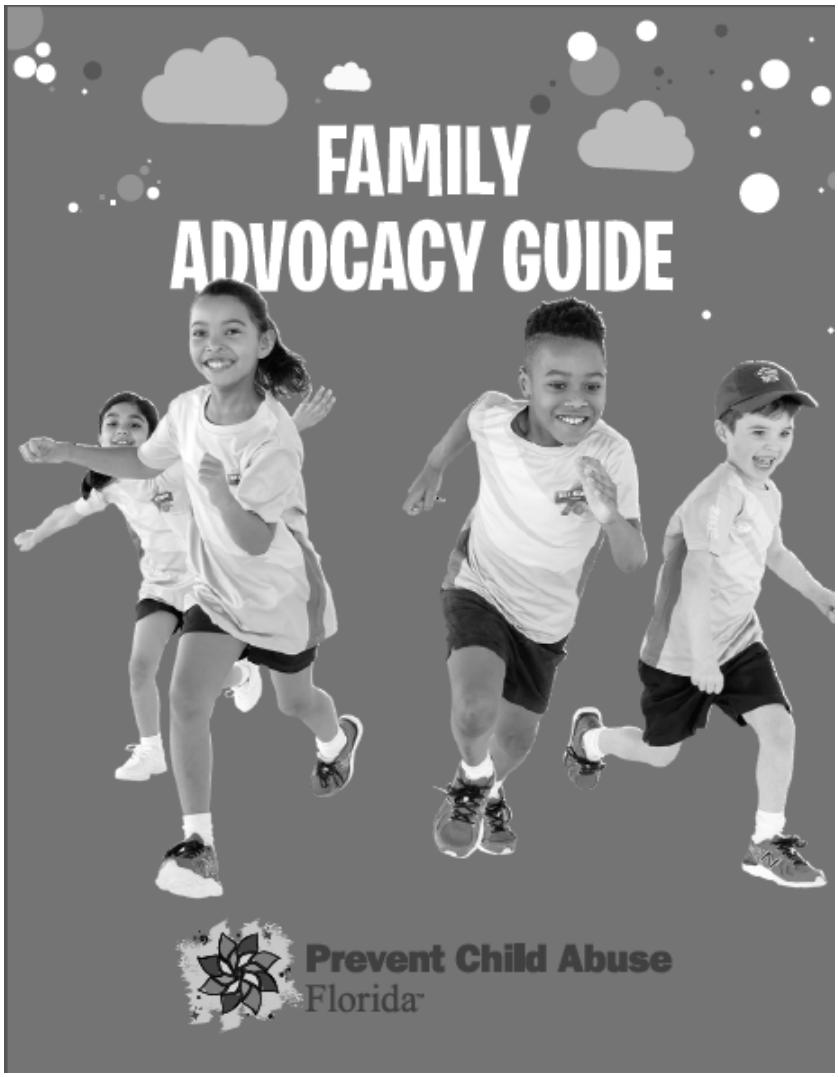
This print ad depicts two adolescent females and states that when they so no, they mean no, but some men don't listen.

Appendix E

Florida Winds of Change Artifact List

Family Advocacy Guide

This 32-page guide reviews information about protective factors, adverse childhood experiences, signs of abuse and neglect, advocating for children and families, and ways to help prevent abuse.



Understanding Child Development: Parenting Tips Appropriate for Your Child's Age

This 11-page guide reviews developmental milestones and provides tips for caring for young children.

Understanding Child Development: Parenting Tips Appropriate for Your Child's Age

CHILD *development*

Parenting is hard work. Knowing what to expect of your child at each stage of development can help you meet your child's changing needs and reduce stress on the entire family. Although every child and situation is different, the tips provided here have helped many families. If you have any concerns about your child's development, discuss your concerns with your family doctor or pediatrician.

INFANTS (BIRTH–2 YEARS OLD)

Infants depend upon adults for their basic needs. Comforting babies when they cry helps them to learn trust and may reduce crying in the long run. When you feed your baby, change your baby's diaper and hold your baby close, you are building a trusting relationship.

Patience is important. It will take some time before your infant or toddler knows exactly what you expect, and gains the self-control to meet your expectations.

Cognitive Development (learning)

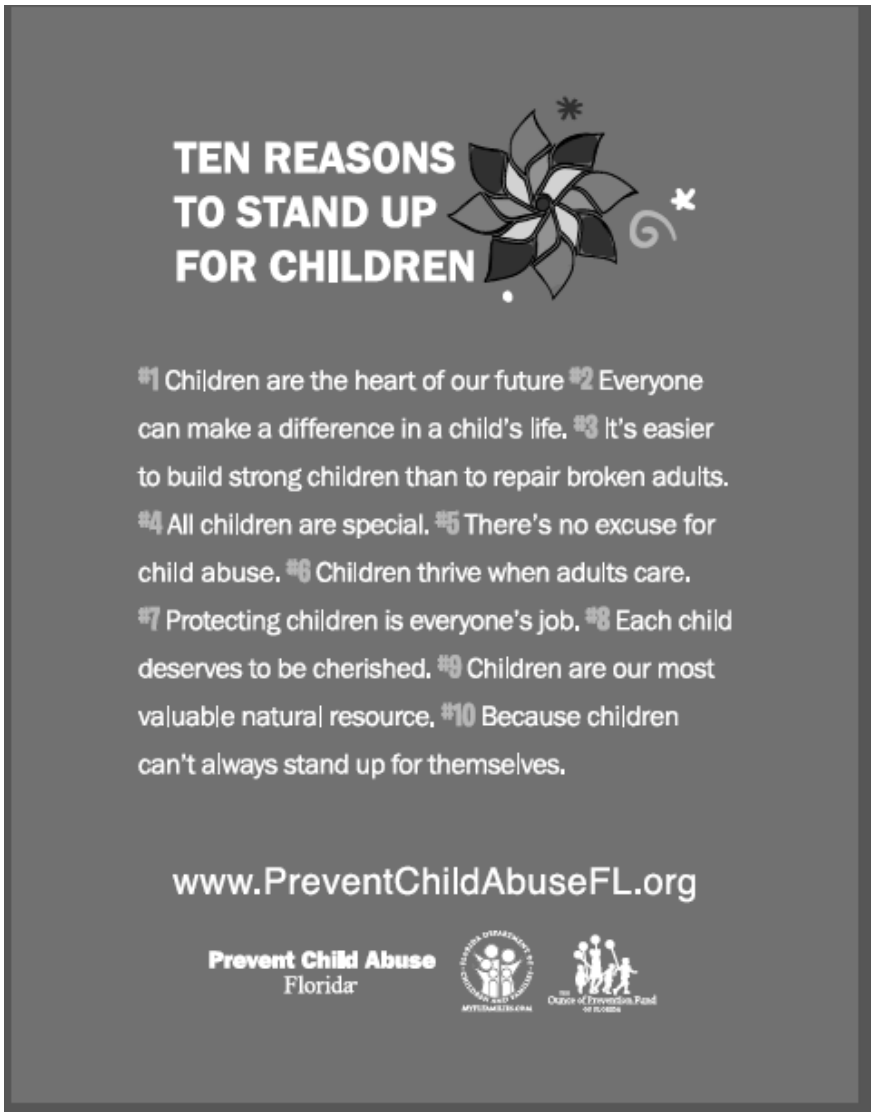
- Uses taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound to learn about the environment
- Recognizes different sounds, especially voices
- Responds to name
- Attempts to imitate caregiver's expressions, sounds or movements
- Recognizes mother or primary caregiver
- Reaches for brightly-colored objects
- Begins to say short words such as "bye-bye" and then eventually will be able to put together words to express needs or wants
- Enjoys hearing rhymes and songs
- Cries when hungry, needs to be changed, or wants attention

Physical Development (this occurs over the first two years)

- Gains control over body
- Grabs toys with one hand
- Sits without support
- Creeps on hands and knees
- Pulls upright and stands firmly while holding on
- Begins to walk
- Dances to music
- Stacks blocks to build a tower
- Helps while getting dressed
- Uses a spoon to eat

Ten Reasons to Stand Up for Children

This one-page advertisement provides 10 reasons to stand up for children such as “children thrive when adults care.”



How You Can Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

This one-page infographic lists action items people can take to prevent child abuse.

Appendix F

Darkness to Light Artifacts Description

About Darkness to Light

This one pager provides a description of Darkness to light, highlights the issue, and how the reader can get involved.

ABOUT
DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Darkness to Light is a leader in child sexual abuse prevention education, research, and advocacy. We empower adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse through awareness, education, and stigma reduction. Our vision is a world free of child sexual abuse - a world in which adults form prevention-oriented communities that protect the child's right to a healthy childhood.

THE ISSUE

One in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. While many of us grew up with warnings of "stranger danger", the truth is most children who experience sexual abuse are victimized by someone they and their family know and trust. Sexual abuse is the biggest public health crisis facing children today, and research shows that people who experience sexual abuse as children are more likely to suffer from life-long psychological and health consequences, including post-traumatic stress syndrome, substance abuse, depression, and early death.

The good news is child sexual abuse can be stopped. Through education and training, adults can be empowered to recognize the signs of child sexual abuse, respond responsibly, and create organizations and communities that are safe for kids.

WHAT WE DO

Guided by the belief that all children have rights, we offer programmatic expertise in grassroots community mobilization, innovative program design, capacity building, strategic communication, pioneering partnerships, and evidence-informed training. Behavior change is at the core of all we do.

Darkness to Light's prevention education works and has been supported by external research, proven processes, and rigorous evaluations, making *Stewards of Children*® the only evidence-informed, adult-focused training in the United States.

GET INVOLVED

Join us in the movement of prevention at D2L.org.

Find a facilitator in your area at www.D2L.org/nearyou or take the course online at www.D2L.org/training.

DARKNESS TO LIGHT®
END CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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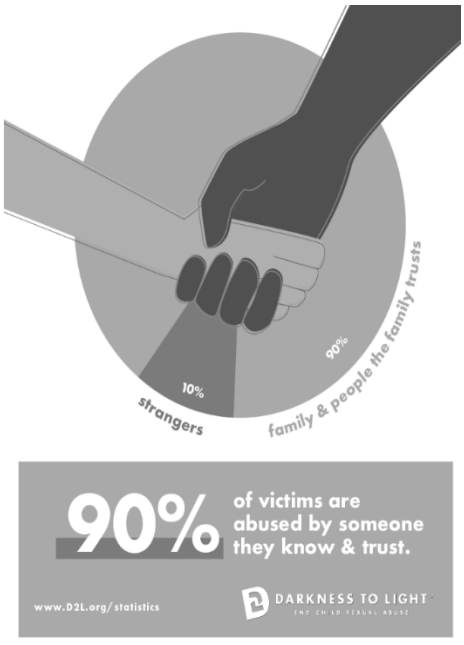
Fact Sheets

These fact sheets offer statistics about child sexual abuse.