

Department for Education 'Together, we can tackle child abuse' campaign

Background and aims

Last year supported by 112 local authorities, alongside police forces, health trusts and charities, the Government launched the first ever nationwide campaign **Together, we can tackle child abuse** to raise awareness and encourage members of the public to report child abuse and neglect.

The **Together, we can tackle child abuse** campaign is a vital step in the Government's 5-year reform programme for children's social care which is set out in Putting children first: Delivering our vision for excellent children's social care (July 2016).

In February 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) is launching the second phase of the campaign. The aim of the campaign is to help the public recognise signs of abuse and neglect, and encourage the public to report their concerns to their local children's services team in order to get help to children more quickly. We aim to create a new social norm around reporting and tackle the barriers that stop people taking action

Evaluation findings show that phase 1 was a success in helping to create a sense of collective responsibility.

Audience and messaging

Our core audience is parents aged 25-40. Research shows that this group is most likely to feel confident about reporting and can therefore be nudged into action. The campaign will serve as a reminder to professionals such as teachers and healthcare professionals who work with children, of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Research for this campaign has shown that if people feel they are part of their community's response to child abuse and neglect, this reduces their fear of reporting and encourages them to report.

Our messaging will therefore reassure the public that the information they give is usually part of the bigger picture.

Strategy

Our research shows, when it comes to child welfare, people want and expect to engage with their local authority's children's services. As such, our approach to delivery will be a local authority based model, mostly through regional activity and supported by national activity.

Regional activity

We will be delivering a paid-for campaign in 13 local authorities in specific regions - North West, North East and Greater London. In these areas, the DfE will pay for out-of-home (bus stop), digital (online adverts including social media) and radio advertising. These areas have been chosen to deliver this activity based on a model which evaluates the number of children in need as a proportion of the population, the level of referrals, and the proportion of the target audience deemed non-reporters as a proportion of the population.

National activity

In March, we will be launching a national radio partnership. This will deliver the campaign messages far and wide and provide the opportunity to create a real 'national moment' that gets the country talking about the issue.

We will also be developing a range of partnerships and engaging with national charities and corporate organisations to extend the reach of the campaign even further.

Digital activity will also include SEO optimisation for our campaign landing page. The campaign landing page, gov.uk/tacklechildabuse, will include signs to spot, what to do if you suspect child abuse and what happens when you report. In March we will also have an online 'decision tree' available on the campaign website. This digital application will allow the public to interact with a series of questions to address their concerns or worries. By selecting common signs they might have noticed we aim to nudge them into action and when necessary to report.

Call to action

We will encourage the public to visit gov.uk/tacklechildabuse. Here, they will find a range of educational resources to support and reassure them about their concerns. Users will then be signposted to the reporting tool. This is a new intermediary step as research shows directing straight to a reporting page was a bold step.

Timing

- Week commencing 13 February: LAs receive toolkit
- W/c 13 February: Radio advertising starts in 13 LA areas
 - W/c 27 February: Out of home advertising starts in 13 LA areas
- March: National radio partnership launches
- March/April: End of second phase of advertising
- Ongoing: Low-cost/no-cost activities continue; partnerships continue; templates continue to be available to local authorities; evaluation of phase two of campaign

Get involved

We will be providing a toolkit of materials that all local authorities and supporting organisations can use to amplify the campaign, including:

- content for sharing on social media
- templates for out-of-home (bus stop) advertising
- templates for digital (Facebook and pay-per-click) advertising
- messaging and creatives for you to tailor for other channels
- guidance on using the materials and adapting them for your needs

Here are 3 easy ways that you can support the campaign:

1. Share our content on social media: We're producing shareable content for Facebook and Twitter, including graphics, 'mythbusters' and GIFs. You'll a link to the content as part of the toolkit that we send you, so that you can build it in to your plans [w/c 13 Feb]. And feel free to retweet and share what we post on our channels.

2. Run the campaign in your area: Our toolkit will include templates for out of home and digital advertising, so that you can run the campaign in your local area. These will carry the campaign creative, messaging and call to actions, and include space for you to add in your logo.

3. Share the campaign materials with local partner: At a national level we will be engaging with a range of corporate and third sector organisations. Our toolkit provides a wealth of materials that will be useful to an array of your local partners including libraries, GP surgeries, housing associations, police forces and many more. You can share the material with these local groups and encourage them to make use of the materials.

We hope you will support this important campaign. To find out more, please contact our PR agency Munro and Foster on 0207 089 6100 or at dfechildprotectioncampaign@munroforster.com

Evaluation

We will measure the impact of campaign activity through a combination of tracking surveys and metrics applied to each channel. We will also be tracking how many local authorities deliver the campaign. This will help us measure awareness of and engagement with campaign activity, as well as changing attitudes towards reporting. We will use the insight we gather to consider the next phase of the campaign.