



Category: Community Relations Campaign

Company: Newcastle City Council

Entry title: Safer Partying

Brief and objectives:

In 2016 authorities in Newcastle were growing increasingly concerned at the rising number of large student house parties. Advertised through social media, they were attracting up to 300 students to family-sized houses that were being turned into makeshift nightclubs. Professional doormen and DJs were being employed; smoke detectors disconnected, and doorways and windows blocked with mattresses and furniture in a vain attempt at soundproofing. Large quantities of alcohol, drugs and highly flammable nitrous oxide was being consumed.

Public Health Newcastle met partners to discuss the situation. They called for a campaign to dramatically reduce the number of parties on account they posed a risk to students' safety. Objectives were:

- Make students aware of the parties' risks
- Reduce the number of parties quickly
- Save time and resources dealing with them

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Young people are not easily scared into behaviour change. Posters and leaflets highlighting risks had proven ineffective, lacking relevance and reach. The seriousness of the situation and the need to act quickly meant a fresh approach was required. The medium had to be popular among the target audience and easily distributed. The scenario needed to be realistic so it would resonate with the target audience and it needed to lend itself to hard hitting messaging designed to provoke an emotional response to make the viewer stop and think. The message: have fun - but be aware that large scale house parties pose a serious risk to you.

Complaints to the council about large student parties were on the increase:

- 2015-2016 – 96
- 2016-2017 - 138

Newcastle and Northumbria universities supported the campaign. Resources were committed by:

- Newcastle City Council
- Public Health

- Northumbria Police
- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria
- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service
- North East Ambulance Service
- HiWeCanHelp – drug counselling service
- Lifeline Project – drug advisory service

Audience

- Students
- Student Unions
- Partner agencies
- Media
- Residents

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Show the inherent dangers of attending large scale house parties to discourage students from attending thereby reducing their numbers. A combined film, social media and media campaign was created.

Tactics

- Produce a film that replicates a large-scale house party
- Film six bad outcomes that tag onto the end of the film including:
 - A fire breaking out with doors and windows blocked
 - A rape
 - A sexual assault
 - Excessive drinking
 - A drug related arrest
 - A fatality
- Launch film at a stakeholder event to share learning
- Invite media to help spread the message
- Invite stakeholders to speak at the event to show partnership
- In addition to the film, show hard-hitting interviews with front-line responders to reinforce messages
- Facilitate media interviews with all partners
- Give DVDs of the film with its six endings to the media
- Give media access to recorded interviews with the responders on social media
- Distribute all films and interviews on the council's social media channels over a 24-hour period
- Encourage all partners to share videos

Implementation of tactics:

- Dec 2016 Public Health calls a meeting of stakeholders to discuss issue
- Jan 2017 idea for film is conceived
- Jan 2017 Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service offer the services of their Video Unit to make the film
- Jan 2017 film script is devised
- Feb 2017 a cast and crew of 50 assembled including: students; council officers; paramedics; probationary police officers; recovering drug and alcohol addicts

- Feb 23 film is shot at SafetyWorks! – a purpose built facility in Scotswood run by the police and fire services
- April 2017 film signed off by partners
- April 2017 video interviews with stakeholders for social media completed
- April 2017 all press teams meet to agree messages and tactics for launch
- April 24 local radio interviews done in advance to coincide with launch
- April 25 film is launched at Newcastle Civic Centre
- April 25 film is distributed on social media

Demonstrate tangible benefits to the communities where the campaign was targeted, including any sustainability:

Newcastle University:

- Campaign featured in Newcastle University newspaper, The Courier, with potential readership of 22,000 students
- Campaign to be included in induction talks at Freshers Week for all 6,000 first year students
- Shown to selected second year students as part of 'Halls to Homes' campaign

Northumbria University:

- Students Union provided actors for the film
- Video used as the basis of a student intranet article on safety at parties with potential readership of 30,000 per day
- Will be used at Freshers' Week in Halls in September (8,000 students)
- Will be used as part of a wider 'responsible student' campaign in September

Measurement and evaluation:

- Facebook posting of the campaign reached 9,844 people
- It was viewed 2,932 times; liked 35 times; shared 16 times and attracted four comments
- Facebook posting of the seven responder interviews reached 99,136k people and was viewed 32,697 times
- Total likes/reactions: 563. Total comments: 175 and shared 201 times
- 8,931 impressions and 438 engagements registered when tweeted
- Campaign attracted significant regional and national media coverage
- At the launch: BBC Look North (audience 310k); Tyne Tees (audience 240k); Made in Tyne and Wear (audience 46k); Metro Radio (listenership 380k weekly); Radio Newcastle (listenership 312k weekly); Press Association; Daily Mirror; The Times; Chronicle (website views 150k)
- Campaign also appeared in the Guardian; the Telegraph; Daily Mail; The Northern Echo; The Tab Newcastle and on Somersetlive
- Campaign reached 3.7k council staff through an article in e-newsletter
- It also reached 30k readers through online council magazine Citylife

Evaluation

- Since campaign launch there has been an 88.2% reduction in calls outs to large house parties
- The film was shown by TWFRS to the Director of Policing and Fire, Head of Fire Safety and Chief Fire Adviser at the Home Office

- Chair of Safe Newcastle, Cllr Nick Kemp, who launched the film, said: “In these times of austerity it is more important than ever that agencies pool their expertise and resources
- “The Safer Parting campaign was a brilliant example of partnership working and it’s no surprise it has been so effective in reducing the number of large student house parties.”
- Chair of Jesmond Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group said: “These videos promote an important message to our students, particularly through the different scenarios they convey.
- “We are committed to sharing these messages to our students through advice sessions and social media, and in so doing hope that they will help to encourage safer behaviour.”

Budget and cost effectiveness:

- Officers worked on the campaign as part of their day job
- Film funded from TWFRS’ fire safety education budget
- £105 photographer at film launch
- £10 x 5 Eldon Square gift vouchers for the five recovering addicts who took part in the film
- £225 buffet for cast
- Total: £380
- 88% reduction in party call-outs saved the council circa £6k in officer time