

From the car seat to the driver's seat, they never outgrow Safe Kids.



Introduction

When we learned that our primary target audience for the Safe Kids Buckle Up campaign was tweens, we were apprehensive at best. While the closeness in our ages served to bridge a generational divide, it also brought back all-too-recent memories of the horrors of middle school society. We remembered how nothing was “cool” enough to please our friends. Paying attention to, much less agreeing with, adults was out of the question. Middle school is a hard time, for kids and adults, and vehicle safety isn’t exactly a glamorous topic to discuss with tweens.

Nonetheless, we shoved our fear to the side and let our training take over – diving into all things adolescent. We began intensive research, both primary and secondary, to get a feel for which messaging strategies had worked in the past with this age group and attempted to pry into the minds of tweens themselves. During one of our focus groups we began to see how exactly to talk to tweens about vehicle safety: we would remove ourselves from the picture and let them tell each other what was important.

From there, we capitalized on our age and the information we’d gleaned from our research. We realized that what would be relevant to us as college students would probably be cool to tweens too, with a slight adjustment in presentation. The connection was social media and, thankfully, we know a lot about that subject matter – it’s one of our favorites. We love YouTube, and lo and behold, the tweens in our focus groups told us they couldn’t get enough of YouTube. We love Facebook; they love Bebo and MyYearbook. So we latched onto that connection we had with tweens, uniting it with the idea of letting them relay information to each other, and, thus, the first ever Virtual Video Showdown was born. By the end of February, thousands had viewed Coile Middle School’s viral videos, visited the Safe Kids Athens Area Web site, seen the front page story for Athens’ largest newspaper and watched local stories on Athens’ only two news programs. It turns out that when we pushed our fear aside and let our training take over, we created a meaningful message that engaged our audience and started a conversation with more than 170,000 people – and that’s how we define success.

Situation Analysis

As college students at the University of Georgia, we recognize that we live in a bubble of privilege. Looking around the campus, we see luxury cars and designer clothes, but that is not the only Athens. Students make up only 20 percent of Athens-Clarke County’s population, which is estimated to be 150,000 residents. Students and faculty at the university exist solidly in the middle to upper class, but there is a huge gap between the university community and those Athenians who are left behind — that Athens lives in the fifth poorest county in the nation. The majority of the poorest people in the county are African American and Latino.

After living here for four years, we knew that the charge to create a campaign for minorities simply meant looking outside our own social circle and creating a campaign for native Athenians. Our research about the ACC school system confirmed what we already knew. For the 2006-2007 school year, 2,583 students enrolled in public middle schools. Countywide, 55 percent of students are African American, 18 percent are Latino and 3 percent are multiracial. In contrast, private schools had 2,195 middle school age students. Of these, only 9 percent are African American and 2 percent Latino.

When Safe Kids challenged us to reach minority tweens and their parents, we knew Athens is one of the best places to kick off a vehicle safety program. We had the exact desired demographic at our disposal. So we started at the Boys & Girls Club, a popular after school spot for these minority kids, but we soon realized that middle school students usually come infrequently to after school programs. Tweens would be more accessible when they were in school, leading us to partner with W.R. Coile Middle School.

Campaign Summary

Since our research showed that two-way conversations, rather than one-way instruction, were the most effective way to persuade this age group, we created a campaign centered in the social media realm, aiming to empower tweens to make their own healthy decisions and encourage parents to continue to converse with their kids about vehicle safety in more age-appropriate methods. According to Wikipedia, a user-generated online encyclopedia, “Social media use the ‘wisdom of crowds’ to connect information in a collaborative manner.” Social media can take many different forms; examples include Flickr, a photo sharing site, YouTube and TeacherTube, both video sharing sites, Bebo and MyYearbook, both social networking sites, and del.icio.us, a social bookmarking site.



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Virtual Video Showdown

We created an interactive learning program titled the “Virtual Video Showdown” based on the idea that tweens would have more of an impact on each other’s thinking than we as adults would have. We chose to guide the conversation by giving tweens the information and letting them decide the most effective and fun way to convey that message. The content they created was phenomenal, and the response reflected the energy that the students put into making the videos. More than 2,000 online hits in only five days, personal anecdotes, and effusive praise we received from students, teachers and parents, convinced us that the students had truly received and embraced the personal safety message we had set out to communicate.

The Virtual Video Showdown pitted sixth and seventh graders at Coile Middle School against each other to see which grade could get the most people to watch their viral video about buckling up every time on YouTube or TeacherTube within the five day window of competition. We went to Coile Middle School armed with a program designed to establish and reinforce our key messages, but it became clear that the first goal would be to keep the students’ overwhelming excitement under control. Imagine putting 75 tweens in one room, with a brand new Chevrolet; the noise level alone was daunting. Thankfully, our program was fast-moving and kept their attention.

Our program focused on three key messages:

- Role-modeling of safe behaviors in and around a vehicle for peers and younger kids.
- Personal efficacy in decision-making.
- How and why safety in and around vehicles is important.

We broke the students into subgroups that rotated among four different stations that included:

Large Group Discussion

We began by establishing how great cars are and what they imagined about driving one day. From there, we transitioned into a conversation on personal responsibility. We called on volunteers to give personal anecdotes about times they had been in accidents in vehicles and discussed as a group what role modeling was and why it was important. Because our research indicated tweens like to know how and why something like safety is important, and to engage the visual and logical learners, this portion also included a demonstration of how a safety belt works in keeping passengers safe using a rolling chair and volunteer. The first time the volunteer was instructed not to hold on to the chair, and thus went flying through the air. The second time the volunteer held onto the chair, with his or her hands acting as the “safety belt.” The volunteer stayed in the chair when he or she was holding on, thus illustrating the importance of a safety belt in a vehicle accident.

Dancing

We played the Safe Kids anthem “4 Steps” at what was probably the kids’ favorite station because they expended some energy and showed off their dance skills. They seemed skeptical of the unfamiliar song at first, but were busting their best moves in no time.

Video Content Creation

It was clear that the most exciting part about the skit station was the new Chevrolet Equinox. The kids swarmed the car as soon as they got to the station, and they all tried to pile in at once. They raved over the new car smell and shiny paint and even went so far as to ask if they could drive the car. We took that excitement and asked them to create a scenario where they would be talking about the rules of being in and around cars, emphasizing our campaign theme: “You’re too old to be told. Buckle up every time.” They acted out a scenario where one student was a bouncer at the “13 Club” and told everyone that if they were not 13 or older, they had to sit in the backseat. Another scenario involved the students telling each other to buckle up even if they were just in the parking lot or tired after a hypothetical long trip. It was great to see the kids take the message, process it and turn it into something creative.

Small Group Discussion

This station was all about personal conversation, rather than the big group atmosphere. At first the kids were hesitant, but when they realized they were going to be recorded for the video, they began to speak up about safety. Once we were comfortable with each other as a group, we started asking



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more directed questions about vehicle safety that were designed to increase critical analysis of the concepts we had discussed during large group. Some examples of these questions include:

- How do you know when someone is looking up to you?
- Why do we have laws about buckling your safety belt and an age requirement for who can sit in the front seat?
- Why would you wear a safety belt if an adult isn't there to punish you for not wearing the safety belt?
- What are some ways you could make sure your friends wear their safety belts?

These types of questions and the discussions that followed encouraged students to think not only about the rules and what they should do, but also help them think critically about why they should follow these guidelines in situations that might have ambiguous choices. For example, the first question asks students to identify behaviors that indicate someone is looking up to them so that they'll be able to identify that behavior in the future and act accordingly. The third question helps them delve into why a safety belt is important beyond just "because an adult said so."

We gave each participating student "Watch me on YouTube" cards to pass out to their friends and fortune cookies with catchy sayings about wearing safety belts and the Web site address for the videos. If the cards were not enough, we plastered the cafeteria with Virtual Video Showdown posters to remind them of the competition.

Fueled on brownies, Coca-Cola and determination, our team combined video clips from the program to create a two-minute video for each of the sixth and seventh grades. The videos were posted on YouTube and TeacherTube, and the competition ran Feb. 18 through Feb. 22.

"Have you seen me on YouTube? You gotta check it out before Friday! Seventh grade rules!"

The halls of Coile Middle School buzzed with excitement during the third week in February as the students scrambled to get their friends, family and teachers to view their videos.

Seventh grade won with more than 1,100 views, although sixth grade was close behind with 1,000 views for a total of more than 2,000 views in just five days. The winning grade was treated to a party on Monday, Feb. 25 with cupcakes, candy and exclusive winners' tickets with the Safe Kids Buckle Up Athens and Virtual Video Showdown logos. Since UGA student athletes are the main role models for the local kids, wide receiver Kris Durham came to surprise the kids and share his story about why he buckles up every time. The kids were in awe of their role model, and some went so far as to ask for their arms and shoes to be autographed.

Safe Kids Athens Area Online Presence

Reaching our secondary audience, parents of tweens, was achieved through direct and indirect means. Indirectly, we sought to reach parents through an online presence, which we achieved through the creation of a highly successful Web site and a Flickr page. We were shocked that neither Safe Kids USA nor any of our competitors had created a Wikipedia entry for the organization, so we went through the formal process of adding our client to the Wikipedia universe. Additionally, our media coverage was primarily targeted toward parents. With the success of our media coverage, including 20 clips in seven different genres with more than 170,000 impressions, we surpassed this goal. In our direct approach, we designed a presentation and supplemental materials highlighting the importance of discussing vehicle safety with tweens, and made presentations to adults at local Parent Teacher Organizations and English as a Second Language classes to make sure we reached out to all minority audiences. These direct approaches were overwhelmingly successful as well, with close to 92 percent of parents responding in the exit survey that they found the program useful and 88 percent responding that they would talk to their kids about safety as a result of our presentation.

Research

Our secondary research provided keen insight into the motivation behind safety, how to reach out to tweens, what type of community programs exist in Athens-Clarke County and the history of Safe Kids Athens Area. We used the insights gained in our literature review, combined with our primary research, which included surveys and focus groups, to influence the creation of our campaign.



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Secondary

Our secondary research gave us the following insights:

- The two primary motivators for safety belt usage in the Latino community were enforcement of fines and/or laws along with the expected response of child safety.
- For the Latino audience, vehicle safety messages need to explain both how and why vehicle safety measures prevent injury to both kids and adults.
- Based on the Centers for Disease Control's VERB Campaign, any program geared towards tweens should use positive messages encouraging a "good" behavior rather than negative messages deterring certain behavior in order to be successful. It should present the information in an "unusual, unfamiliar or novel" way and will convey a "cool" tone, which tweens will spread to each other.

During a meeting with Evelyn Hanes, the Safe Kids Athens Area coalition coordinator, we learned:

- In the past, the coalition held a few Safe Kids Buckle Up programs, such as car seat and safety belt checks, but it has never targeted the tween age group, nor has it utilized social media as a method of increasing Safe Kids Buckle Up's effectiveness.
- Despite Chevrolet's status as the official sponsor of the Safe Kids Buckle Up program, the local Athens dealership, Athens Chevrolet, had no existing relationship established with SKBU Athens.
- Law enforcement officials would deter our minority adults from participating in our campaign out of fear for legal trouble.
- Hanes has built a strong working relationship with the principals of local schools, a connection that we found useful in carrying out our campaign.
- Hanes wanted a campaign that could be replicated.

Primary

In order to gather first-hand information to assist our campaign efforts, we surveyed and conducted two focus groups with tweens and surveyed parents. We used similar surveys for both tweens and parents of African American, Latino and Caucasian backgrounds. The surveys consisted of questions that focused on how kids and parents perceive vehicle safety, their Internet access and usage and general media consumption, their knowledge of Georgia vehicle safety law (for parents only) and basic demographic information. We recruited kids to complete the survey at the Boys & Girls Club of Athens and during our focus groups. We also recruited parents to complete the survey at the Boys & Girls Club of Athens, the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication and Oasis Católico de Santa Rafaela, a community center at a nearby mobile home neighborhood with Latino residents.

Using theory to guide our research, we applied the constructs of the Health Belief Model, a health behavioral change model developed by M.H. Becker and Irwin Rosenstock, to our survey. HBM has been widely used to guide campaign design and implementation. According to the model, preventative health behavior is influenced by five factors, or constructs:

- 1) Perceived susceptibility to a health threat
- 2) Perceived severity of a health threat
- 3) Perceived barriers to performing the recommended response
- 4) Perceived benefits of performing the recommended response
- 5) Perceived social support for the recommended response

In our case, the health threat is being injured in a vehicle accident as a result of not wearing his/her safety belt. The recommended response is always wearing his/her safety belt.

In addition to our surveys, we conducted a focus group with middle school students who attend ACC public schools, giving us valuable insight into the minds of tweens.



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Kids

Based on our focus group analysis, we felt that incorporating YouTube, rap music and athletes – which became the basis of the Virtual Video Showdown – was the most effective way to share the importance of vehicle safety with tweens and empower them to share the message with others.

- After school, most kids in middle school hang out with their friends or have extracurricular activities, but they don't usually attend the local Boys & Girls Club. They often visit YouTube to watch videos, and some students use social networking sites, such as Bebo and MyYearbook.
- All the kids look up to their parents as role models and understand their siblings look up to them, too. While the African American participants also looked up to rappers, musicians and University of Georgia athletes, Caucasian participants did not.

Based on our survey results, we felt that creating a viral, word-of-mouth campaign centered around the Virtual Video Showdown was also the most effective way to empower tweens to share the vehicle safety messages with their friends and peers and encourage them to become role models for their younger siblings.

Safety Belt Usage	Respondents (%)	Respondents' Friends (%)
All of the time	75.7	27.0
Most of the time	18.9	40.5
Sometimes	00.0	21.6

We also found that incorporating the Internet into our campaign was a viable option because kids had several means to access the Internet including at home, at the public library, at school and at relatives' homes.

In addition, using a sample t-test, we found that there was a nominal, but insignificant, difference between genders based on their responses to the HBM constructs, meaning we did not have to tailor our messages differently for boys and girls.

Parents

Based on our survey results, we found that parents were already very knowledgeable of Georgia's vehicle safety laws, but they needed to be reminded of safety's importance and encouraged to continue vehicle safety conversations with their tweens, who will be driving soon.

Knowledge Score (out of 7)	Respondents (%)
7	42.5
6	42.5
5	7.5
4	7.5

We also believed that creating a Web site for Safe Kids Buckle Up Athens would be the most effective way to share information with parents, who also reported a high rate of Internet access, about the importance of vehicle safety and how to talk with their tweens about this important issue.

Internet Access	Respondents (%)	Internet Usage	Respondents (%)
At home	58.7	For research	89.2
At library	52.2	For e-mail	71.4
At relative's home	59.1	For news	63.9



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Target Audiences

Tweens

- At Coile Middle School, where we held our main event, 62 percent of the student population is African American, 27 percent is Latino and 8 percent is Caucasian. These kids come from families of low socioeconomic status; 88 percent of the students at the school are eligible for free or reduced meals.
- These statistics are representative of the public schools in the county.

Parents of Tweens

- Our research showed that while parents understood Georgia's general vehicle safety laws, it was important to reinforce the message and persuade them to continue to talk about vehicle safety with their kids as they reach the driving age.

Media

- It was necessary to target the media, including both traditional and online outlets, in order to spread our vehicle safety message to the Athens community at large, beyond the groups of kids and parents we targeted directly with our events.
- The media coverage generated was designed to help reinforce our safety message and support our viral campaign.

Key Message Themes

As a result of researching our two target audiences, we identified two central message themes for our campaign. We chose to target the tweens and their parents separately in order to honor tweens' growing independence and responsibility and communicate with each audience most effectively.

"You're too old to be told. Buckle up every time."

For tweens, we tied our vehicle safety message to the newfound independence that characterizes middle school students. Kids at this age do not always like being told what to do, and we wanted to capitalize on their desire for more responsibility and emphasize their own decision-making ability.

"From the car seat to the driver's seat, they never outgrow Safe Kids. Talk to your kids about vehicle safety."

For parents, we highlighted the importance of continuing to share vehicle safety messages with their kids, no matter their kids' ages. Safety is vital to every person's well-being, and parents should always remind their kids of this, especially since tweens will be driving soon.

Campaign Plan

Goal #1: Improve knowledge of vehicle safety for parents and tweens using the Safe Kids Buckle Up brand.

Objective #1: Expose the SKBU brand to at least 150 ACC tweens by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Create an interactive educational program for tweens at Coile Middle School.

Tactic #2: Create SKBU Bebo and MyYearbook profiles to interact with tweens online.

Tactic #3: Design competition posters to display in the middle school prior to event.

Tactic #4: Create a new logo and brand image tailored to tweens for the SKBU program by Feb. 29, 2008.

Outcome: Exceeded. Successfully created and implemented an interactive educational program designed around the Virtual Video Showdown that involved about 150 tweens in sixth and seventh grades at Coile Middle School. Edited video and audio material created by tweens into two competing videos about vehicle safety and posted on YouTube and TeacherTube. Utilized the logo and brand image through promotional materials, including posters, school-wide announcements in schools and Bebo and MyYearbook profiles within the social media realm. Generated more than 2,000 hits in five days between the two videos.



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Objective #2: Generate at least 150 hits to the Safe Kids Athens Area Web site by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Create a Safe Kids Athens Area Web site to inform parents about vehicle safety and relevant Georgia vehicle safety laws.

Tactic #2: Include Web site on all collateral materials.

Tactic #3: Establish links between the Safe Kids Athens Area Web site and relevant organizations in ACC.

Tactic #4: Create a Flickr account with photos from the interactive, educational program.

Outcome: Exceeded. Utilized Safe Kids Worldwide Web site template to create visual unity in branding between the Athens Area coalition and Safe Kids Worldwide, by uniting the Safe Kids Worldwide branding with the newly created SKBU Athens logo targeted toward tweens. Included original content on the Safe Kids Athens Area Web site, which generated more than 200 hits and more than 800 page views by Feb. 29, 2008. Publicized the Web site within all collateral materials and interactions with media contacts. Established reciprocal links between relevant safety-focused organizations in the area, including Athens Chevrolet, Athens Regional Medical Center and the ACC Police Department.

Objective #3: Work with Safe Kids Athens Area to build a lasting SKBU tween outreach program by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Create a Safe Kids Athens Area coalition improvement plan with details about maintenance of online presence and suggestions for future outreach efforts.

Tactic #2: Kickoff the improvement plan with event referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #1, Tactic #1.

Tactic #3: Present the improvement plan to the Safe Kids Athens Area Coalition on Feb. 21.

Outcome: Exceeded. Constructed and executed a successful interactive educational program geared toward tweens which would be easily replicable by the coalition in the future. Presented action plan and results to the Safe Kids Athens Area coalition on Feb. 21 and received highly positive feedback.

Objective #4: Employ social media to share SKBU safety messages with at least 2,000 Internet users by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Host a vehicle safety viral video competition between grades at Coile Middle School to be conducted on YouTube and TeacherTube, as part of interactive educational program referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #1, Tactic #1.

Tactic #2: Create a Flickr account with photos from the interactive, educational program.

Tactic #3: Create a SKBU Bebo and MyYearbook profiles to interact with tweens online.

Tactic #4: Create a Wikipedia entry for Safe Kids Athens Area following the Web site's ethical standards.

Tactic #5: Create a del.icio.us page to bookmark Safe Kids Athens Area traditional and online press coverage.

Outcome: Exceeded. Generated more than 2,000 views in five days between the two viral videos. Created and utilized a Flickr account to publicize and provide content relating to the Virtual Video Showdown, resulting in more than 250 views of the 107 photographs taken during the campaign. Established friend connections with ACC tweens on Bebo and MyYearbook. Wrote a Wikipedia entry for Safe Kids USA, including a local coalition section, after realizing one did not exist and receiving Wikipedian community feedback about proper entry guidelines. Included 18 bookmarks of press coverage on del.icio.us page.



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Goal #2: Empower tweens to always make vehicle safety a priority for themselves, their peers and younger siblings.

Objective #1: Involve at least 100 tweens in the process of creating a viral marketing campaign to spread vehicle safety messages to their peers by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Host a vehicle safety viral video competition between grades at Coile Middle School as a part of the interactive, educational program referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #1, Tactic #1.

Tactic #2: Distribute fun collateral material to encourage tweens to buckle up every time and to watch the videos on YouTube.

Tactic #3: Emphasize "Buckle up every time" message with tweens during presentation, in discussions and in the creation of audio and video content.

Tactic #4: Create a SKBU Athens Bebo and MyYearbook profiles to interact with tweens online.

Tactic #5: Create special "Watch me on YouTube" cards for all tweens who participated in video to pass out to their friends during the week of the competition.

Tactic #6: Design posters to be displayed throughout the school reminding tweens about the competition and to spread the message to family and peers.

Outcome: Exceeded. Emphasized the importance of personal decision-making throughout the Virtual Video Showdown program. Directly involved 150 tweens in sixth and seventh grades at Coile Middle School in the interactive process, and reached 2,000 viewers through YouTube videos during the competition. An additional 857 views occurred after the competition ended. Facilitated conversation during the interactive program group discussion and creation of audio and video material that emphasized the established vehicle safety messages. Publicized videos through Bebo and MyYearbook, in posters and announcements at the school, through the media coverage of the competition, as well the "Watch me on YouTube" cards and fortune cookies passed out the day of the event, which included custom fortunes emphasizing the vehicle safety messages. Disseminated vehicle safety messages of personal decision-making to tweens through the viral effect of the videos and competition.

Objective #2: Introduce at least 100 tweens to the concept of positive role modeling for their younger siblings and other kids by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Incorporate key concepts about role modeling in the interactive, educational program at Coile Middle School referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #1, Tactic #1.

Tactic #2: Encourage tweens to share their grade's vehicle safety viral video and its key messages to their younger siblings and family members.

Tactic #3: Use University of Georgia football student athlete as spokesperson for vehicle safety to participate in party celebration for video competition's winning team.

Outcome: Exceeded. Established safety messages with 150 tweens directly during discussion and during creation of audio and video content. Generated 2,000 hits on the YouTube videos in order to promote the messages of positive role modeling. Utilized Kris Durham as a spokesman for the use of safety belts and vehicle safety during the party for the winning grade, reiterating safety messages again during that time.



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Goal #3: Improve communication between parents and their tweens about vehicle safety.

Objective #1: Reach at least 100,000 people through print, online and television media by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Use traditional public relations methods such as press releases, fact sheets and media alerts to reach out to local print and television media outlets.

Tactic #2: Create a social media press release to reach out to local bloggers, as well as follow up with traditional outlets.

Outcome: Exceeded. Reached more than 170,000 people through 20 media placements spanning seven genres of media including television, online, newspaper and blog articles, many of which included front page placement (*Athens Banner-Herald* and homepage of the University of Georgia's Web site). Garnered support from the public relations education community. Generated more than 4,500 downloads of a podcast interview conducted by an Auburn University public relations professor discussing the campaign on his public relations blog.

Objective #2: Advise at least 100 parents (50 directly) on ways to communicate with their tweens about vehicle safety by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Direct parents, on all collateral materials, to section of the Safe Kids Athens Area Web site about communicating to their tweens.

Tactic #2: Speak to parents at middle schools' Parent Teacher Organization meetings and English as a Second Language classes.

Tactic #3: Advise parents indirectly through brochures sent home with the tweens reached during the program referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #1, Tactic #1.

Outcome: Achieved. Presented SKBU and Chevrolet's key safety messages and held discussion on how to talk to tweens about vehicle safety with more than 50 parents through PTO and ESL classes. Contacted more than 150 parents by sending home parent-oriented brochures, including key safety messages, with students participating in the interactive program at Coile Middle School. Achieved secondary impressions through the Web site, which received more than 200 visits and 800 page views during the month of February.

Objective #3: Educate at least 200 parents about SKBU and Chevrolet's key safety messages by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Incorporate all key messages in all collateral materials and press releases on the Web site and in presentations at PTO meetings and ESL classes.

Tactic #2: Create brochures about SKBU and its partnership with Chevrolet to pass out to parents.

Tactic #3: Establish a link between the Athens Chevrolet Web site and SKBU Athens Web site.

Outcome: Achieved. Educated 60 parents directly about SKBU and Chevrolet's key messages through presentations at PTO and ESL classes. Included key messages about SKBU and Chevrolet on brochures that were distributed to parents. Included key messages in content on the Web site, which received more than 200 visits and 800 page views during the month of February.

Goal #4: Reinforce Chevrolet's position as a responsible corporate citizen in ACC through the SKBU brand.

Objective #1: Educate at least 50 parents about Chevrolet's safety features included on new vehicles by Feb. 29, 2008.



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Tactic #1: Incorporate all key messages in all collateral materials and press releases on the Web site and in presentations at PTO meetings and ESL classes.

Tactic #2: Include information about safety features in brochure referenced in Goal #3, Obj. #3, Tactic #2.

Outcome: Exceeded. Combined direct messages and media coverage from the Virtual Video Showdown to promote Chevrolet's image as a responsible corporate sponsor. Included Chevrolet's logo and Athens Chevrolet's contact information on YouTube videos, which garnered more than 2,000 hits in one week. Promoted Chevrolet's key safety messages and involvement with SKBU Athens throughout collateral materials, on the Web site and in presentations with PTO and ESL classes. Emphasized Chevrolet's involvement with SKBU in all interactions with media, resulting in nine clips mentioning Chevrolet for 116,921 media impressions, which was 68.7 percent of our total media impressions.

Objective #2: Facilitate at least one collaboration between Athens Chevrolet and Safe Kids Athens Area for its SKBU program by Feb. 29, 2008.

Tactic #1: Use Chevrolet vehicle and company logo in viral videos created by middle school students at Coile Middle School.

Tactic #2: Incorporate other collaboration ideas in Safe Kids Athens Area improvement plan referenced in Goal #1, Obj. #3, Tactic #1.

Outcome: Achieved. Established relationship with Athens Chevrolet by securing a Chevrolet Equinox from the dealership that, along with the Chevrolet logo and Athens Chevrolet contact information, was featured in the YouTube videos. Secured reciprocal Web site links between Safe Kids Athens Area and Athens Chevrolet Web sites. Laid groundwork for future interactions with other Chevrolet dealerships in the area by contacting each dealership and communicating Safe Kids Athens Area's mission, as well as sending information detailing future projects on which dealerships could collaborate. Synthesized past work with Athens Chevrolet and future ideas and presented collaboration ideas in the improvement plan presented to the Safe Kids Athens Area coalition.

Conclusion

Our team created a thorough, research-based campaign that not only worked with the exact target audience specified by the Bateman Case Study Competition objectives, but was also founded on the emerging ideas of social media, another objective set forth for this year's teams. By creating an interactive learning environment geared towards tweens' emerging sense of independence, we were able to insure that our clients' messages would not only be received, but welcomed and actively spread by willing participants. Our campaign is designed to work on any level and can easily be translated on a larger scale – local, regional or even national. We also made sure that every aspect of our project, including the Virtual Video Showdown and Safe Kids Athens Area online presence, could be carried out by the small, somewhat inexperienced coalition in our area. In addition, we took the time to put together a thorough and resourceful Web site for parents of tweens so that safety messages can continue to be a two-way conversation.

Overall, the mark of a truly successful social media campaign is one whose buzz translates far beyond the online community. It incites conversation in every realm of life and builds shared meaning among many groups of people. In our campaign, we have achieved and exceeded all of our goals and objectives, impressed our local client, and built the foundation for a stronger relationship between the coalition, Athens Chevrolet and local media in the future. Our campaign incited a buzz around Athens. That buzz rippled over into the public relations education community, with mentions on professors' blogs around the Southeast and a feature podcast that had more than 4,500 downloads. But most importantly, Athens kids learned about Safe Kids Buckle Up and took an active part in spreading their own vehicle safety messages in a fun, relevant way, leaving a lasting impression on both the students directly involved in the program and the community as a whole.



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