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Case Study Topic

**Just Talk About It: Memes Campaign to Make  
Safe-Sex Education Easy to Talk About**

The Colorado Initiative to Reduce Unintended Pregnancy and Colorado Department of Health and Environment launched an effort to provide 18- to 29-year-olds with tools and information to make safe-sex education easy to understand and talk about.

The Colorado Initiative to Reduce Unintended Pregnancy (CIRUP), located in Denver, Colorado, partnered with Bluetone Marketing & Public Relations (Orange County, California) and Vermilion (Boulder, Colorado) to create the Just Talk About It memes campaign. The campaign would begin in April 2014 and continue until June 2014. The budget was about \$7,000.

#### Background:

Along with its public partner, Colorado Department of Health and Environment, privately funded CIRUP launched a website ([beforeplay.org](http://beforeplay.org)) in February 2012 to provide 18- to 29-year-olds with tools and information to make safe-sex education easy to understand and talk about. This wasn't the first campaign designed to engage people in their [BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org) initiatives. They decided the campaign would be of a light tone and play off of the weather getting better and people getting outside more.

#### Research:

-Several years ago, there was a group of organizations in Colorado that were focused on reducing unintended pregnancy.

-Of all the births in Colorado, about half of them end up being unplanned: meaning, the woman didn't want to be pregnant at all or she got pregnant sooner than she would have liked.

-This was an issue for people in public health because they know those pregnancies and births are associated with negative outcomes:

-Women who experience unintended pregnancies are less likely to finish school (whether that's high school, college, etc.).

-The children born as a result of these pregnancies are more likely to be low birth weight, not have good prenatal care and other associated negative health outcomes along the way.

-The initiative began by funding family-planning clinics across the state to provide contraceptive services. They wanted to make sure people has access to the most effective methods of birth control if they wanted them, without a cost barrier.

-As they made these efforts, something kept coming up: people weren't comfortable talking about these issues, whether it was about sex, birth control or STD prevention.

-They collected data and had focus-group testing, and heard from young people over and over again that they wanted to have conversations with their parents, their partners, with their health-care providers, but they didn't know how to bring these topics up and were embarrassed and uncomfortable.

-So we wanted to create something that encouraged people to have these conversations and give them the tools to make it a little bit easier...[BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org)

-There was a focus on ages between 18 and 29 because that's where they found the most unintended pregnancies.

-The focus groups for this age group wanted:

-A source for information that was reliable and easy to understand

-They didn't want to be told what to do

-Humor around the messages, still maintaining  
reliability

#### Objectives:

-Develop messages that were understandable, conversational, helpful, useful, non-judgmental and incorporated everyone out there.

-Provide tools to make sure they are as healthy as possible and they can make the decisions that are right for them.

Goal: To make sure everybody's choices were validated and that they have the resources to make the choice right for them.

-To create memes focused on the concept of Spring Fling and spread them through media and blogger relations and social media posts.

Goal: To create fun and edgy memes that journalists, bloggers, and their target audience would want to share.

#### Execution:

-Bluetone pitched the memes to local and regional alternative weeklies, outlets focused on young adults, college papers, as well as bloggers covering lifestyle, sexual health, and LGBT topics.

-Greta Klingler, family planning supervisor, Colorado Department of Health and Environment and spokesperson for [BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org). gave interviews and discussed [BeforePlays.org](http://BeforePlays.org)'s mission and resources.

-The memes were shared weekly on [BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org) and its Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest pages.

-Blog posts on the website provided additional context for the memes and why they were circulating.

-The website provides materials for birth control, pregnancy, STD's, sexuality, conversation starters, multiple resources for each of these topics, relevant statistics, health center finder, emergency contraception finder, and many more pertinent resources.

#### Evaluation:

-The campaign helped drive 154,417 total website visits between April and June, up from 117,994 total visits during the same months in 2013

-The Facebook page garnered 3,690 likes between April and June, up 175% compared to likes gained during the same months last year. The overall reach of Facebook-related memes was 419,022.

-Seven earned placements ran in outlets such as *303 Magazine*, Westward blog, Men's Health Network, and Nerve.com.

#### Future:

-The [BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org) initiative is expected to run through 2015. A music gift card giveaway involving posting selfies with the hashtag #safeissexy ran through September.

-[BeforePlay.org](http://BeforePlay.org) information will be disseminated at universities, community colleges, local events, and bars throughout the fall.

## Resources:

<http://www.prweek.com/article/1310890/memes-campaign-makes-safe-sex-education-easy-talk>

[beforeplay.org](http://beforeplay.org)

[http://blogs.westword.com/showandtell/2014/05/safe-sex\\_beforeplayorg.php](http://blogs.westword.com/showandtell/2014/05/safe-sex_beforeplayorg.php)