

4. Multimedia Health Campaigns

Health campaigns are environmental approaches to target community wellness. They aim to change behavior through education and influencing social norms.⁶² Health campaigns are potentially more cost-effective than traditional service delivery due to low implementation costs and the opportunity to reach a large target audience. We identified several multimedia health campaigns that targeted common risk factors, including oral health.

Program Settings and Scope

The majority of health campaigns identified by this environmental scan are related to sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and beverage choice. One example in this area, the Open Truth Campaign, is described below. A second program described here, Well-Ahead Louisiana, offers an environmental approach targeting common risk factors and chronic diseases, including oral health.

Open Truth Campaign (San Francisco, CA)

The **Open Truth Campaign** is a multimedia campaign to highlight the health impacts of sugary drinks.⁶³ Heart disease is a key focus of this campaign, which targets the young adult population of San Francisco, with an emphasis on the Latino community. Other disease and risk factors addressed by this program include tooth decay, diabetes, cancer, obesity, sexual dysfunction, and premature death.

Project partners include the Shape Up San Francisco Coalition (a project of the Population Health Division of the San Francisco Department of Public Health), Alameda County Department of Public Health, and several other major stakeholders. Open Truth goals are to:

- Increase awareness about health effects of sugary drinks
- Describe marketing tactics of the beverage industry
- Inspire policy change⁶³

Campaign materials are available at the campaign's website (<http://www.opentruthnow.org/>) and include ads, lesson plans, and social media content, with many materials available in Spanish.

Well-Ahead Louisiana

Launched in 2014, Well-Ahead Louisiana is an initiative of the Louisiana Department of Health aimed at improving overall health and wellness of state residents. The program has created over 2,000 WellSpots (i.e., work sites, education centers) statewide to meet wellness benchmarks in five areas:

- Early childhood and pregnancy
- Body weight
- Heart health
- Oral health ("Healthy Smiles")
- Air quality

Well-Ahead targets chronic disease prevention, including dental disease (through the "Healthy Smiles" initiative), with education about links between chronic conditions and oral health.

This campaign also offers educational materials and other social media content on its website (<http://wellaheadla.com/>). WellSpot benchmarks provide guidelines for various types of organizations, ranging from schools to hospitals to restaurants, to create healthier environments.⁶⁴

Conclusions

Limited information is available about health campaigns that target common risk factors and explicitly include oral health considerations besides sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. The two campaigns detailed in this section target large audiences with strong, central messages. Both are also initiatives developed by a broad group of high-level stakeholders, including state and county health departments.

Challenges

Challenges inherent to public health activities are likely to apply here, including sources of funding, sustainability, interagency cooperation, and evidence of effectiveness.

Recommendations

- 1) Evaluate health and cost outcomes associated with existing health campaigns that target common risk factors, chronic disease, and oral health.