

## **Crystal Darkness Media Campaign Lessons Learned from Other Communities & Stakeholders**

### **San Diego – Angela Goldberg**

- While not fully complete, is one of the few communities that have done an evaluation of the Crystal Darkness campaign. They are willing to share their results once completed.
- As result of the effort, organizers believe there's a much stronger link between prevention and treatment.
- Their event is part of a larger meth prevention effort that has been ongoing for 12 years. They use an environmental prevention approach in which they use policy, media advocacy and education to reduce meth related problems. They have been active in changing laws regarding the availability of meth pipes in certain communities in San Diego County.
- Eleven beds were donated by a treatment provider as result of the publicity of the project.
- San Diego had about 400 calls from the event.
- There was an increased engagement on the part of top level leadership in the county as a result of the strategy
- Meth has been fairly well publicized over the past 10 yrs in San Diego, hence, the public awareness value of the project could not be fully realized. They also have a strong collaborative effort in place.
- Although people liked the segment, it did not tell parents what they can specifically do other than call a number.
- Despite the increase in treatment-related calls arising from the event itself, they believe the data will eventually show no significant increase in treatment resources being accessed. This information will be available in a forthcoming evaluation that is currently being developed.
- San Diego employed the use of approximately thirty public “host sites” that included churches, community centers, etc, who watched the program together. The size of the sites ranged from a handful of people to nearly seventy participants. One missed opportunity was seen in the fact that only a few of the sites collected any data from the participants who viewed the piece together.

### **Las Vegas – Pastor Troy Martinez**

- They did not conduct an evaluation.
- The primary contact believes the Crystal Darkness campaign is cost effective: all media is donated (significant savings here); vs. the cost of arresting, prosecuting, incarcerating and putting an inmate through treatment costs about \$100,000 – the same cost roughly as the Crystal Darkness campaign for SB County
- Las Vegas had 300+ calls that night and a few days following. They believe that those

calls did result in people seeking treatment. They also stated that the focus of their campaign was preventative – their goal was to encourage individuals to remain meth free with a secondary emphasis on intervention with those families in need.

- Their Crystal Darkness campaign was not a 1x event but rather an ongoing “system”. Their event was in May, '07. Since then, they have trained 30,000 people thru 450 trainings using the Crystal Darkness booklet. The trained individuals are now resources to the community on getting help and finding support resources. They are continuing/growing their Train the Trainers program.
- Las Vegas says that this effort brought their community together – churches, treatment & prevention agencies, city and county government, non-profits, business and law enforcement are all now working collaboratively. This was a significant change in their community.

### **Oregon - Jim White**

- They did not conduct an evaluation. Given the preventative focus, they felt it would be difficult to measure long term outcomes.
- Oregon’s event was held statewide with 25 television stations participating. They had a major television executive on their planning team that was instrumental.
- According to the television stations, the viewing was greater than that of Super Bowl
- While they don’t have any figures on the number of calls received, they had roughly 100 telephone lines that were lit up for the whole event.
- A suicide was prevented that night - one caller was suicidal and as a result of speaking with one of the recovering addicts from the documentary, he chose not to take his life.
- With the help of the schools, approximately 1,200,000 flyers were printed and distributed to school children throughout the state encouraging their families to watch the documentary together.
- With the help of the DA’s offices and the Judges, all prisoners viewed the documentary in jail.
- They felt it was well worth the cost and also compared it the cost of incarceration (\$25k-\$35k p/person). Their campaign cost approximately \$134,000.
- Oregon hosted a luncheon (as have other communities) on the day of the event for those involved as well as those they wanted to recognize. They also had a dinner with their team and discussed what went well and what didn’t. They felt this was a valuable part of their effort, even given the cost (app \$9,000).
- Although they tried, they were not successful in getting the Spanish-language stations to participate in the event.
- They had a small core committee of roughly 15 people that put on the statewide event – would have liked a few more.

- The government sector – state, the Governor, county & city did not contribute financially towards the event.
- They received poor participation from the newspapers.

**Other Considerations & Advice (from communities interviewed & stakeholder groups):**

- The content component is an important area to address – we need to inform parents of what they can do besides just calling a number.
- The messaging used is important. What we know from other campaigns such as tobacco and seatbelt campaigns, “scare tactics” are not effective at changing behavior as much as problem/solution oriented media. Scary media gets attention but does not result in significant behavior change.
- Involve the media in the planning – they can be instrumental in getting the television stations on board. Recognize that there may be challenges regarding control (of content, scheduling etc) with the stations.
- Get those who are good at asking for money involved early on; otherwise have a Plan B for funding. Not all your fundraising efforts may come thru.
- All of the communities interviewed shared that their target audience was the broad community, particularly families and youth, and that their approach was one of prevention rather than intervention or treatment.
- This event can be a powerful community builder, bringing many different sectors of the community together in a collaborative effort. All of the communities have shared this as a primary result.
- Use this event as a vehicle for launching other initiatives or rally support for something you are attempting to accomplish in your meth prevention work – the visibility of this event is one of the most significant outcomes. Build it into the ongoing efforts of your work rather than have it be a one time event.
- At present, San Diego is working on an evaluation of the event and can forward it on when it is completed. They realistically do not expect any surprises in terms of outcomes beyond what was shared above.
- Treatment providers contracted with the Santa Barbara County Alcohol & Drug Program report that they have the current capacity to respond to an increase in treatment demand, however given the recent fiscal challenges, the future holds much uncertainty in terms of financially supporting the increase in treatment demand.

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