

Public Health Communications Awards

APPLICATION: MOST INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Jurisdiction size (Please check one):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large (Population exceeds 700,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (Population less than 700,000; more than 200,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Small (Population less than 200,000; more than 50,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Very Small (Population less than 50,000)	

ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

Name Of Communications Campaign	Choose Health LA Moms (CH LA Moms): A Text Message and Online Program to Help New Moms to Lose Weight
Brief Campaign Overview (200 Words Or Less)	<p>CH LA Moms is a free, bilingual text message and online weight loss program for postpartum mothers. Up until now, there are a limited number of weight loss interventions focusing on women immediately postpartum. The program promotes three activities moms are already doing: breastfeeding, walking and drinking water. Recognizing the impact social determinants of health (SDH) play in weight loss, at the onset of the program, CH LA Moms identifies and provides resources for the SDH affecting participants.</p> <p>Participants receive three weekly text messages for six months on the core objectives. The text messages link to more information and resources on the CHLA Moms website.</p>

	<p>Recruitment has been through social media posts by LACDPH, community partners and health organizations.</p> <p>Moms who participated in the program lost over 96% of the weight they gained during pregnancy. Moms cite the text messaging reminders and online program as part of their success. Participants like the fact the program <i>goes to them</i> via their smartphone, no matter where they are. They do not have to worry about transportation or childcare. Many shared the information they received with others. Participants say that the program has not only improved their health but their family's as well.</p>
Campaign Start Date	February 2015
Campaign End Date	Ongoing

CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

What is the purpose of this campaign? Does it address an underlying community need? Please describe why the campaign was developed. You are encouraged to submit evidence of need (e.g., local news stories, internal reports, testimonials, data, community health assessments) as an addendum to this form.

The purpose of CH LA Moms is to assist postpartum women in Los Angeles County (LAC) reach a healthy postpartum weight. In Los Angeles County, overweight and obesity impact 1 in 2 reproductive aged women and disproportionately affect Hispanics (57.4%) and African Americans (56.8%) (Attachment 1). The need to address a program focusing on new moms was identified and supported through a grant from First 5 Los Angeles. First 5 LA understands that mothers are the first teachers and role models for their children. By improving the mother's weight and health the rest of the family's health improves as well.

New moms who retain the pregnancy weight gained beyond 6 months postpartum are at risk for long-term obesity. CH LA Moms is the only evidence-based postpartum weight loss program. The average postpartum visit is scheduled at 6 to 8 weeks postpartum and usually last no more than 10-20 minutes. Many women are advised to get back to a healthy weight, but little or no instructions are given. CH LA Moms fills this gap. Our program starts immediately postpartum, not 6 to 8 weeks postpartum.

CH LA Moms leverages the communication platform moms are using no matter their socio-economic level- text messaging, the internet and social media. The online information provides a tracker to measure outcomes, multi-media resources and awards "virtual badges" for goals achieved- all which resonate with new moms.

Newly postpartum women are often homebound for the first month, so any intervention developed should be accessible from home and communicated using their preferred methods. Participation in CH LA Moms requires a smartphone and web access so it can be directly delivered to moms at home or wherever they are. We encourage activities new moms are already doing- breastfeeding, walking and drinking water. Recognizing the impact social determinants of health (SDH) play in weight loss, at the onset of the program, CH LA Moms identifies and provides resources for the SDH affecting participants.

Does your campaign address an issue related to health equity? How?

Overweight and obesity disproportionately affect Hispanic and African American women as well as lower socio-economic groups. CH LA Moms is available in Spanish as well as English, thereby increasing the availability of the program to all women in Los Angeles County. The program is free and because nearly two-thirds of the population own a smartphone, the program is accessible to all in the palm of their hands. Any health literacy barriers are addressed by the inclusion of videos and images as resources. Recommendations for participating in the walking, breastfeeding and drinking water core initiatives are framed to be done by any women no matter their socio-economic level. For example, the walking recommendations start out by providing women suggestions for walking in their home and address the fact that a gym membership is NOT needed to exercise.

What population was this campaign targeted to reach? How did you plan to reach them?

CH LA Moms is targeted towards newly postpartum women living in LAC. Because 60% of the births in LAC are to Hispanic women, the program is also available in Spanish. Recruitment has been through social media posts on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, by the LAC Department of Public Health, community partners and health organizations as well as paid social media ads on Facebook and Instagram.

Could this campaign be replicated or transferred to other jurisdictions? Please explain.

Yes, CH LA Moms can be easily replicated in other jurisdictions. The interventions set forth in the program - breastfeeding, walking and drinking water - are behaviors new moms are already doing universally. The text messages are broad and applicable to all postpartum mothers. The social media posts are broad enough they can also be easily adopted by other jurisdictions. Resources available for breastfeeding, drinking water and social determinants of health would need to be tailored to include what is available in the jurisdiction.

What partners did you work with in planning and implementing this campaign?

Over 100 partners have contributed to the development and promotion of CH LA Moms. Among them are the CDC, WIC, March of Dimes, Frasier Communications, Ripe Media, Health Net, LA Care, 211 LA County, the LA County Department of Children and Family Services, and local Health Plans.

To what extent does the campaign leverage existing resources without creating new costs?

CH LA Moms leverages the extensive resources and referrals already available through 211 LA County, as well as breastfeeding and healthy living initiatives developed by LAC public health, CDC and health plans. In developing CH LA MOMs, we discovered that many other countywide programs are working toward similar healthy living/healthy weight aims. We endeavored to identify them and leverage all of our efforts to attain a better result. This has been the case in our partnerships with LA County Parks and Recreation, LA Department of Water and Power, LA County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), other interdisciplinary public health programs (DCFS, Mental Health) and various public and private organizations (WIC and the March of Dimes).

OUTCOMES

Did you test or evaluate your campaign? If so, how?

Yes, the staff has evaluated the CH LA Moms campaign. Throughout the development of the program content, website development, text messaging, and social media campaign, focus group testing with over 194 participants in English and Spanish was an integral part of the process. The program was also pilot tested with 50 multiracial moms in both English and Spanish. 46% of participants returned to their pre-pregnancy weight by 12 weeks. By comparison, a survey of LA County moms found that about one-third of respondents returned to their pre-pregnancy weight after two years. Overall, moms who participated in the program lost over 96% of the weight they gained during pregnancy. Text messaging and ease of delivery and access were cited as part of their weight loss success.

What were the outcomes of this campaign? To what extent were your objectives achieved?

The primary outcome of the campaign is postpartum weight loss, by promoting increasing breastfeeding, drinking water and walking. Our results far exceeded our expectations. Not only did 46% of women get back to their pre-pregnancy weight, but many women stated they continued to breastfeed or switched from combination formula and breastfeeding to exclusive breastfeeding because of CH LA MOMs. The unanticipated beneficiaries of the program were also the participants' families. Moms stated their entire family drinks more water, is walking more and eating healthier as a result of their participation. Testimonials of some Choose Health LA Moms participants are given in Attachment 2.

To what extent does the campaign shift thinking about health from individual medical care to community / public health / equity issues?

The CH LA Moms campaign shifts thinking about health from individual medical care by providing concrete guidance and recommendations to implement when they leave their healthcare provider's office. The average appointment is 10-20 minutes and weight loss is usually one of several topics to be discussed in that timeframe. Now providers can refer patients to CH LA Moms and have our program help the mom get to a healthy weight. CH LA Moms is available in English and Spanish, promotes what is already available and accessible in participants' communities, and leverages those resources to help them lose weight. The program is equitable because it is cost-free, available in two languages, and avoids any transportation or access issues. For those moms who cannot access the text message portion of the program, the digital abbreviated e-book summarizing the program is available on the LAC MCAH website.

To what extent were earned media articles, letters to the editor, and op-eds published about this project?

CH LA Moms has been highlighted as an innovative solution to help new moms lose weight in a variety of earned media throughout the development of the program. Online publications include MedPage, First 5 LA Morning Report, Healthy Latinos, KCEN TV, Pharmiweb, PRnewswire, News United, KEYC TV, KUSI, SYS CON Media, Morningstar, Newson6.com, and BabyCenter.com. A sampling of articles is given in Attachment 3.

CH LA Moms has also been awarded the AVA Digital Award. This is an international competition that recognizes excellence by creative professionals responsible for the planning, concept, direction, design and production of digital communication. Work ranges from digital engagement campaigns – to audio and video production – to website development – to social media interaction – to mobile marketing. Winners were selected from over 200 categories in audio, video and web-based production.

To what extent does the campaign inform and lead to personal and collective action to improve population health?

As a program directed towards postpartum moms, CH LA Moms recognizes that a mom’s healthy influence in the home leads to a healthier family overall. The eating and exercise habits a mom models for her child can have lifelong effects on the child’s healthy behaviors. The collective impact of CH LA Moms starts with the mom’s immediate family. Participating moms stated their entire family was now drinking more water, walking more and eating healthier as a result of their participation.

CH LA Moms leverages national initiatives such as First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” campaign to help work towards the goals of the program. It also shares a goal with the “Drink Up” campaign from the Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA), which works with the private sector and PHA Honorary Chair First Lady Michelle Obama to make the healthy choice the easy choice for busy parents and families and stakeholders across the public and private sectors who are dedicated to encouraging people to drink more water. National efforts by the Baby Friendly Campaign to promote breastfeeding also support CH LA Mom’s breastfeeding goal. CH LA Moms is taking an active role to improve the health of Los Angeles County and the state. Other Maternal and Child Health programs throughout California have also promoted CH LA Moms as a solution to help new moms get to a healthy weight.

How have you used what you have learned from this experience? How will use what you have learned to improve your next communications campaign?

The success of CH LA Moms focuses on empowering women through text message reminders and online information. These efforts have now been replicated to focus on preconception health promotion through the FAMILIA campaign. FAMILIA is also a bilingual text messaging program that will focus on preconception health (AKA being healthy including topics of Family Planning, Active Living, Maintaining a Healthy Weight, Improving Nutrition, Less Stress, Include Men and Women, and Addressing Abuse) and will provide additional information online. The CH LA Moms model (text messaging and online resources) is being looked at by other public health divisions including the Division of HIV and STD Programs to address their communication with their constituents.

Lessons learned include the importance of continuing to translate messages in Spanish and English, focus group testing messages and leveraging partner communication platforms to promote our initiative. We have also now learned the county flow process for getting a communication project such as this approved and implemented.

INNOVATION

How were youth, disadvantaged populations, and other groups at high risk included in the development and public voice of the campaign?

Focus groups were conducted to incorporate the voices of disadvantaged youth and high risk postpartum mothers into the development of the campaign. Focus group participants voiced their opinions and attitudes regarding health and weight loss, and reviewed and provided feedback on the curriculum. They shared about their use of social media and text messaging. Twenty-six focus groups with a total of 194 multiracial participants included individuals involved in the LA County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Black Infant Health Program, and teen mothers from LA County high schools. Of the focus group participants, 55% were Hispanic/Latino, 39% were African American,

7% White, and 6% Asian. The majority were of low socioeconomic status. Curriculum was revised based on their feedback.

We then pilot tested the program with 50 women who were recruited through local hospitals, prenatal clinics, community clinics, and non-profit organizations in Los Angeles County. 78% of pilot participants were Hispanic, 14% African American, 6% White and 2% Asian. 66% had annual income of less than \$39,999. 52% had high school education or less. Their program outcomes and feedback were incorporated into the voice and development of the website, final questionnaires, and final curriculum.

Were social media, mobile phones, and other technology utilized in the campaign?

Yes, the use of social media, mobile phones, and other technology are the core of the CH LA Moms program. The decision to use mobile technology for this program was based on Pew Research Center and Text4Baby data, which have shown that mobile-based health education is feasible and effective at delivering health information to postpartum women (Attachment 4). 97% of reproductive aged women own cell phones and 73% send and receive text messages. 93% of pilot participants used a smartphone to receive and review program materials and 94% stated they use text messaging daily.

CH LA Moms uses text messages and the internet to deliver the program's core health messages to postpartum women. Enrolled participants receive three text messages per week on breastfeeding, walking and water, which direct them to additional health information at ChooseHealthLAMoms.com.

A marketing campaign for Choose Health LA Moms utilized technology via an electronic Press Release, ads on social media, and web-based advertising through BabyCenter and other mom-centric websites. CH Moms also contracted with Text4Baby to send out 12 broadcast messages referring newly postpartum women to the website.

Can we share this application with other local health officials who are interested in communications best practices?

Yes, you may share this application with other local health officials who are interested in communications best practices. CH LA Moms has proven the effectiveness of using text messaging and web-based platforms for public health communication. Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health programs in counties across California have expressed interest in replicating the program, and key influencers in Mexico have recognized the utility of text messages and plan to implement a similar program to address postpartum weight in their country.

Please email your completed application by Friday, May 27, 2016 to:

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