

## Title of Entry: Ready for Summer (Social Media Marketing in a Social Marketing Program)

### PLANNING

As COVID-19 vaccines became more widely available in spring 2021, the team at the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and Agency discovered a problem: young adults weren't getting vaccinated at rates equal to the rest of the population. At the beginning of May 2021, 42% of young adults aged 18-34 had initiated vaccination compared to 58% of all Washington adults (a 16% gap). Of those young adults, 49% didn't intend to get vaccinated at all. The straightforward education approach was not working for this audience. DOH needed a campaign to drive more vaccinations — and quickly. The team used a social marketing planning approach to this challenge and established two goals:

- Increase the total number of young adults initiating vaccination
- Close the gap in the vaccination rate between young adults and the overall population

The team used three types of research to inform the campaign strategy:

- **Gates Foundation Statewide Polling:** Poll of 330 young adults aged 18-34 that looked at vaccine-intent, barriers, benefits and motivators.
- **Young Adult Advisory Board:** A young adult advisory board of 10 individuals was formed to provide input.
- **2021 Market Research Online Community (MROC):** The team created an MROC that included 200 young adults aged 18-34. We used the MROC to inform the young adult campaign message strategy and test creative concepts.

Through this research we discovered this audience had unique barriers and motivators to getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Most young adults weren't necessarily resistant to getting vaccinated, but they lacked urgency — "I'll get around to it, but there's no rush." The research also indicated that the top motivator was the opportunity vaccines created for young adults to get back to doing the things they love to do.

### STRATEGY/EXECUTION

Based on the research insights, we knew that what was needed to promote vaccination behavior to young adults was a strategic approach that focused on joy, not fear. The result? The **Ready for Summer** campaign. With seniors' vaccination rates outpacing rates among young adults, Washington's grandparents were ready for a wild summer in a way Gen Z and Millennials weren't. It was time to show them what they were missing out on. The *Ready for Summer* campaign was built around a set of [four :15 second videos](#) that showed seniors having the summer our priority audience wished they were having. The content evoked joyful summer vibes, showing seniors twerking in night clubs, throwing bonfire keggers, partying on boats and cruising the beach. The campaign exuded celebratory summer energy and created the feeling that you could reach out and touch the scenes yourself...if only you were vaccinated.

The campaign was primarily employed on social media and digital channels including Twitch, Reddit, TikTok (content shot on iPhone), Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. These channels were chosen based on their reach to the young adult audience. The campaign also included a variety of social diffusion tactics in the young adult community. Radio station promotions, paid micro-influencers and vaccine events promoted with SMS texting helped garner momentum for vaccination among the community. All campaign content drove traffic to Washington's Vaccine Locator tool to help people immediately book an appointment at a local vaccination site (convenience). The team monitored and engaged with social media comments throughout the campaign.

### RESULTS

It turns out just about everyone loves a twerking grandma. The campaign was a smash hit with young adults in Washington. We helped **increase young adult vaccinations by 62%** (from 42% pre campaign to 68% post campaign) and **closed the gap in the vaccination rate between young adults and the overall population by 50%**. (Before the campaign the gap between young adults and the overall population was 16% — after the campaign the gap was 8%.) Other campaign metrics:

- 165,150 clicks to DOH vaccine locator website (46,106 from organic social and 119,044 from paid social)
- 378,680 social media engagements earning rave reviews on DOH's social channels, with thousands of shares and supportive comments as viewers tagged each other on new videos and cheered for the stars of the videos
- TikTok ads went viral, earning 4 million+ organic views, 293,000 likes, 3,600 comments and 23,000 shares over 3 days
- 29 million+ completed video views (4.3 million organic views)
- CTR of 2.76% for Snapchat (double industry average of 1.35%) and 2.01% for Facebook (double industry average of .90%)

### Creative Example:

Please see the series of "Ready for Summer" PSAs on the following page.

“Ready for Summer” Creative Example



[VIEW THE SERIES OF "READY FOR SUMMER" PSAS](#)