

Department for Education

Reporting Child Abuse campaign

About the campaign

Background and aims

In March 2016, the Department for Education is launching a nation-wide communications campaign to encourage members of the public to report child abuse.

The campaign aims to encourage the public to report their concerns in order to get help to children more quickly. We aim to create a new social norm around reporting and tackle the barriers that stop people taking action.

The campaign will address all forms of abuse and neglect. Many forms of abuse and neglect present alongside one another and the most common reason for a child to be in the child protection system is neglect.

Audience and messaging

Our core audience is parents aged 25-40. Research shows that this group is most likely to feel confident about reporting and can therefore be nudged into action.

But we also realise that the campaign will be seen by professionals such as teachers and healthcare professionals who work with children and are well placed to spot instances of abuse. The campaign will serve to remind them of their responsibilities.

Research for this campaign has shown that if people feel they are part of their community's response to child abuse and neglect, this reduces their fear of reporting and encourages them to report. Our messaging will therefore reassure the public that the information they give is usually part of the bigger picture.

Strategy

Our research shows, when it comes to child welfare, people want and expect to engage with their local authority's children's services. As such, our approach to delivery will be a local authority based model, mostly through regional activity and supported by national activity.

Regional activity

We will be piloting a paid-for campaign in 33 local authorities in the West Midlands and Outer London. In these areas, the DfE will pay for out-of-home (bus stop), digital (Facebook and pay-per-click) and radio advertising. These areas have been chosen to test the activity because of their dense and diverse populations.

In all other areas, we will be providing a toolkit of materials that local authorities can use to support the campaign locally, including:

- content for sharing on social media
- templates for out-of-home (bus stop) advertising
- templates for digital (Facebook and pay-per-click) advertising
- radio adverts
- messaging and creatives for you to tailor for other channels
- guidance on using the materials and adapting them for your needs
- media content, including template press releases

National activity

We will supplement the regional activity with a national PR and digital strategy. PR activity will include a Ministerial event to launch the campaign, partnerships with bloggers and parent websites, as well as stories for national and consumer press. Digital activity will include SEO optimisation for our campaign landing page.

Call to action

We will encourage the public to call their local authority's children's services phone line if they are worried, or concerned that a child has or is likely to suffer harm, neglect or abuse. To do this, we will direct the public to a landing page and text service where they can find the right phone number to call, based on their postcode.

Timing

- **15 February:** LAs receive toolkit
- **3 March:** Campaign launches: Advertising starts in pilot areas; templates and content can be used by all local authorities; PR and digital activity starts
- **June:** End of first phase of advertising
- **September:** End of first phase of PR and digital activity
- **Ongoing:** Low-cost/no-cost activities continue; templates continue to be available to local authorities; evaluation of phase one of campaign

Evaluation

We will measure the impact of campaign activity through a combination of local authority information on child abuse reporting, tracking surveys and metrics applied to each channel. These will help us measure awareness of and engagement with campaign activity, as well as changing attitudes towards reporting. We will use the insight we gather to consider the next phase of the campaign.

Get involved

Here are 3 easy ways that your local authority can be involved:

1. **Share our content on social media:** We'll be producing shareable content for Facebook and Twitter, including infographics, 'mythbusters' and case studies. You'll receive a link to the content as part of the toolkit that we send you, so that you can build it in to your plans. Or feel free to retweet and share what we post on our channels.
2. **Run the campaign in your area:** Our toolkit will include templates for out of home and digital advertising, so that you can run the campaign in your local area. These will carry the campaign creative, messaging and call to actions, and include space for you to add in your logo. You'll also receive a link to a radio advert that you can use.
3. **Provide data to help us measure success:** We need your help to evaluate and improve the campaign, so we're developing a simple excel spreadsheet for you to provide us with feedback and results on the campaign locally. We would like to know how many contacts have originated from members of the public during the campaign. We'll send this to you a few weeks before the campaign launches, as part of the toolkit.

We hope you will support this important campaign. To find out more, please contact our PR agency Munro and Foster on 0207 089 6100 or at dfechildprotectioncampaign@munroforster.com.