

Evaluation Report

Education Pays—Get Yours

A Pilot Project of PolicyBridge

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Education Pays – Get Yours

Evaluation Report

Introduction

Social marketing is defined as “the use of commercial marketing techniques to promote the adoption of a behavior that will improve the health or well-being of the target audience or of society as a whole . . . the benefits accrue to the individual or society. Social marketing is at its best when used to effect and sustain healthful or socially beneficial behavior change.” (Weinrich, 1999)

The “Education Pays—Get Yours” social marketing campaign grew out of a publication produced by PolicyBridge, *The Rap on Culture: How Anti-Education Messages in Media, at Home, and on the Street Hold Back African-American Youth*. *The Rap on Culture* was released in May 2007. Citing low graduation rates and high dropout rates, the report’s authors contended that there is a culture of learned behaviors and negative attitudes in the black community that puts black students at a disadvantage. (McShepard, Goler, & Batson, 2007) PolicyBridge is a non-partisan public policy think tank based in Northeast Ohio that addresses public policy issues of particular relevance to the minority community.

The goal of the Education Pays project was to implement a 10-month pilot campaign utilizing social marketing strategies to counter negative attitudes by conveying positive messages about the benefits of education. Males between ten and thirteen years of age were the target population for this initiative.

By definition, the pilot project was an experiment to test the use of social marketing techniques to communicate a positive message about the benefit of attaining an education. This pilot examined the conveyance and impact of the message, the design and implementation of the project, and the outcomes.

Another aspect of a pilot project is that it serves as an introduction of a concept that targets a limited scope of the intended final or possible solution. This social marketing effort provided an opportunity to explore the potential for wider application of the effort while recognizing that it alone cannot solve the myriad issues that impede the academic achievement of young African-American males.

Overview of the Campaign

The Education Pays—Get Yours campaign progressed in three phases:

1. *Formative phase.* Much of the first stage occurred before the launch of the campaign. During this time, the original partners planned and designed the initial strategy. PolicyBridge founders, Mark Batson and Randell McShepard, collaborated with professionals from Mobius Grey and BrownFlynn to prepare the initial timeline and program activities.

Another key component of this phase was working with community organizations to identify young men from each of the three target neighborhoods to assist in developing the marketing materials. This proved to be a critical step as the young men maintained a sense of ownership and identity with the final visual representations incorporated throughout the project.

2. *Implementation phase.* During the second phase, the partners began to conduct the steps to carry out the project as designed. A critical aspect of this phase was establishing agreements with the community partners to participate in the project. The community partners included two lead agencies and three to four additional agencies in the three neighborhoods. The lead agencies were identified as the main sources of educational and mentoring resources on the Education Pays website although all provide related programming.

Central:

- Lead agencies: Friendly Inn Settlement House; Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc.
- Other agencies: Arbor Park Village, City Mission, Lonnie Burten Recreation Center, Boys and Girls Club

Mt. Pleasant:

- Lead agencies: Mt. Pleasant Community Zone; Boys and Girls Club
- Other agencies: Discovery Center, Murtis Taylor Multi-Service Center, Peace in the Hood, Thea Bowman Center

Slavic Village:

- Lead agencies: University Settlement Neighborhood Center, Boys and Girls Club
- Other agencies: Broadway United Methodist Church, Jones Road Church, Slavic Village Development Corporation, Stella Walsh Center

It was understood that the organizations would be receptive to calls from youth that originated through their contact with Education Pays. In turn, these partner agencies would make their services available to the youth (for example, tutoring and mentoring).

The release of media and activities began in accordance with the schedule developed during the first phase which included:

- Billboards
- Bus signs
- Text messages
- 1-800-edu-pays number
- Radio spots
- TV public service announcements
- Posters distributed to partner agencies as well as other community centers
- Fliers
- Website
- Street teams
- News media coverage

3. *Adjustment phase.* The third phase included expansions and additions to the original plan. These modifications were made for three reasons that are group as follows:
 - a. The desire to directly reach more students (rallies and festivals where guerilla marketing was done)
 - b. In response to unforeseen opportunities (Say It Loud documentary, Cleveland Municipal School District Empowerment Conference and Drop-Out Prevention Summit)
 - c. To provide supplemental education experiences (summer writing and reading workshops)

Modifications made as the program unfolded included holding the school rallies, participating in community events, and expanding the types of giveaways created to publicize Education Pays. A strong partnership was also forged between PolicyBridge and the city of Cleveland. Mayor Frank Jackson's chief of education,

Monyca Price facilitated connections with the Department of Parks and Recreation, which led to successful collaborations with two recreation centers in each of the three targeted communities. This partnership with the mayor's chief of education also led to PolicyBridge's participation in the school district's Youth Empowerment Conference and Drop-Out Prevention Summit in May 2009.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation of the Education Pays social marketing campaign incorporated the development of a logic model to portray the design of the initiative. The logic model helped to conceptualize the relationship between the objectives, activities, and desired outcomes (see Figure 1). The evaluation includes process and summative components. The process evaluation considers the effectiveness of the methods and procedures used to implement the campaign. The summative evaluation considers the outcomes and impact of the project.

Data for the evaluation were drawn from these major sources:

- **Focus groups:** The evaluator held focus groups with two sets of young men representing the target communities at the beginning and end of the campaign. The first set was made up of advisory group members who were engaged in the design and implementation of the project—described as the experimental group. The second set of young men was assembled by the agencies in each community—described as the control group because they had no ongoing association with the project. Five group sessions were held at the beginning of the campaign and three were held as it ended.
- **Ongoing observations:** The evaluator was an observer or participant-observer in the activities conducted during the campaign. The evaluator interacted on an ongoing basis with the facilitators of the campaign and gathered information or used information gathered at events in which Education Pays participated.
- **Key informant survey:** These individuals were asked a common set of interview questions to assess the perceived impact of the project from different perspectives.

LOGIC MODEL

Education Pays—Get Yours

Social Marketing Campaign

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators
<p>Existing conditions</p> <p>Negative images</p> <p>Negative messages</p> <p>PolicyBridge report</p> <p>-- high dropout rates</p> <p>Existing opportunities</p> <p>Social marketing</p> <p>Community support</p>	<p>News media coverage</p> <p>Posters</p> <p>Brochures</p> <p>Mailings to households</p> <p>Bus wraps and signage</p> <p>Billboards</p> <p>Radio spots and PSAs</p> <p>Cable television spots</p> <p>Text messaging blasts</p> <p>Guerilla marketing</p> <p>Community programs</p> <p>Establish website</p> <p>1-800 phone number</p> <p>Blog</p>	<p>Direct outreach to the targeted population (10-13 year old boys)</p> <p>Indirect outreach to the targeted population</p> <p>Impact on non-targeted populations</p> <p>Circulation and distribution of materials; amounts and locations</p> <p>Hits/visits on website</p> <p>Calls to toll free number</p> <p>Numbers of youth touched</p> <p>Awareness of campaign</p>	<p>Changes in attitudes/beliefs</p> <p>Alternative perspectives considered by youth</p> <p>Greater belief in the efficacy of education</p> <p>Mobilization of partners around community-wide education strategy</p>	<p>Pre- and post-assessments</p> <p>Monthly surveys completed by advisory group members</p> <p>Focus groups at sites of community partners</p> <p>Community feedback</p> <p>Continuation/replication/expansion of efforts</p>

Effectiveness of the campaign strategies

Through a combination of observation, obtaining feedback from participants, and input from key informants, the effectiveness of activities undertaken by Education Pays is summarized in the following table. Effectiveness is a combination of the exposure provided by the activity and the reported and/or demonstrable influence of the activity – especially upon the target population.

Descriptions of special events

- “Say it Loud” is a documentary movie written, directed, and produced by 13-year old Jordan Coleman. Coleman provides a speaking voice on a popular animated television series, “The Backyardigans.” He uses the medium to convey the importance of education for African-American males by spotlighting well-known celebrities and public figures. Approximately 525 youth attended the showings in Cleveland including some youths from the Education Pays advisory committee. In interviews, these youth stated that they learned lessons from the movie that could apply to their lives.
- The rally at Mound/Fullerton K-8 School was expected to be the first of three such events at Cleveland schools. It was an energetic outpouring of cheers and motivational speaking featuring PolicyBridge leader, Randy McShepard, City Year participants, and radio personalities from Radio One. Approximately 200 students attended this event which was held at the end of the school year.
- The Cleveland Metropolitan School District held a two-day Youth Empowerment Summit at the close of the school year which featured Bill Cosby as the keynote luncheon speaker on the second day. PolicyBridge and Education Pays distributed hundreds of items during the summit. In addition approximately 15 adults and 25 youth from 12 Cleveland schools discussed the message of the campaign. Some persons in attendance were already aware of Education Pays.
- Through the efforts of the street team and its guerilla marketing outreach, many youths and adults were introduced to Education Pays for the first time. The feedback received by the street team from adults was generally positive with many adults offering suggestions for increasing the awareness among teens. The team disseminated postcards, posters and brochures to

Components of Education Pays Campaign

Activity/Elements	Purpose/Role	Effectiveness Level	Observations/Comments	Modifications*
Media Channels				
Billboards	Message promotion	High	High visibility beyond target area; 7 locations, exceeded original 4-week time frame	
Bus signs	Message promotion	High	High visibility beyond target area; 30 exterior, 60 interior; exceeded original time frame	
Text messages	Retention	Low	Few recipients; 7 enlisted, 23 blasts	Explored incentives in collaboration with local media
1-800 number	Referrals/retention	Low	Follow-up needed; 171 calls; 480 minutes logged	Follow-up needed
Radio spots	Publicity	Moderate	Limited number of spots; 224 spots	Targeted spots for adults considered
TV PSAs	Publicity	Moderate	Limited number of spots	Increase considered
Posters	Promotion/awareness	Moderate/High	Less effective when displayed than hand delivered; 2,500 posters	Street team distribution helped
Fliers	Promotion/awareness	High	Hands-on delivery	
Brochures	Service/contact information	Moderate	Hands-on delivery	Street team distribution helped
Website	Message promotion/retention	Moderate	Did not grasp attention of youth; 3250 visits, 18646 hits	Added wage calculator
Blogs	Message promotion	Low	Introduced late	Blog training added
News media coverage	Program awareness	High	Over-delivered on Cleveland. Com website, 2.2 million ads and 1,418 clicks; Plain Dealer; Radio One	
Direct mail	Program awareness	Low	Impact unknown, many returned; 5,000 mailed	Feedback mechanism desirable

Special Events				
“Say it Loud” film	Message promotion	High	Wide audience; 525 attendees	
Mound/Fullerton rally	Message promotion	Moderate	High energy; end of school year—no continuation; 200 attendees	Planned more rallies
Youth Empowerment Summit	Program awareness, message promotion	High	Wide exposure and feedback	
Guerilla marketing	Program awareness; message promotion	High	Focused exposure and distribution in target areas	
Neighborhood festivals	Program awareness	High	Wide exposure; giveaways added	
Recreation center rallies	Program awareness	High	Wide exposure; giveaways added	
Writing workshops	Skill building	Moderate	Well received by participants	Expand for more impact
Reading workshops	Skill building	Low	One session held; two sessions cancelled	Better coordination with recreation centers

*The category of modifications includes actions that were taken or could be attempted to yield better results.

more than 65 locations in the three target communities including many business establishments, parks, and in the neighborhoods. The project generated questions and interest within the three communities.

- Education Pays circulated materials to youth and adults at neighborhood events held in the target communities during the summer. In Central, the event was the Ward V Festival. Luke Easter Park was the site of the Mt. Pleasant festival. A community festival was held in a church located in Slavic Village.
- An additional program element was added during the summer. Writing workshops entitled “Formula for Success” were held in the three target areas and one reading workshop for parents entitled “Raising Real Readers” was held. Two other reading workshops were cancelled when the recreation centers did not assemble parents as expected. The workshops were conducted by a consultant with expertise in providing supplemental education. Feedback from youth showed affirmative responses to the writing sessions:

“It will make reading easier.”

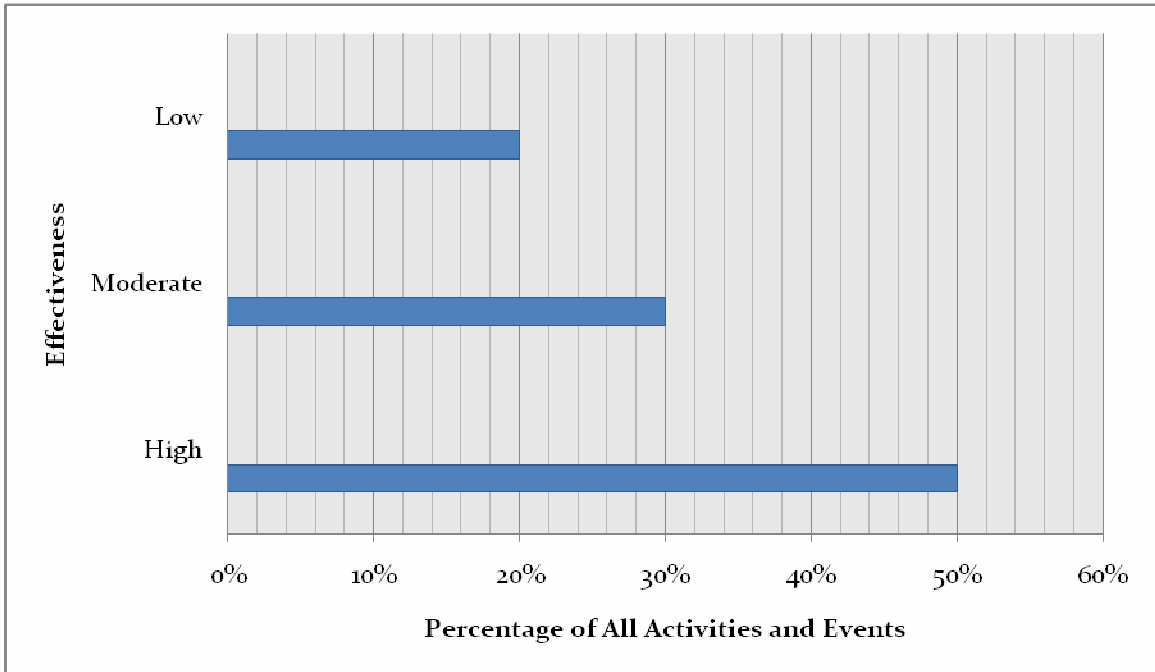
“It will help me in college to remember what I am there for.”

“It’s going to help me while taking the test.”

“It will help me write better.”

A total of 20 activities and events comprised the implementation of Education Pays. Half of these activities were rated as highly effective and another 30 percent were deemed moderately effective in delivering the campaign message and reaching the target audience. The remaining 20 percent had limited impact but some could be improved by pursuing the modifications noted and employing lessons learned from this pilot project. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Effectiveness of Activities and Events



On-line exposure generated through the Cleveland.com website exceeded expectations of the provider. Cleveland.com reported that the number of clicks started to do well as the campaign ended with 2.2 million ads delivered and 1,418 clicks on those ads. The number of ads is important because they represent opportunities for people to view the Education Pays brand and for the brand to make an impression.

The marketing materials distributed directed recipients to the Education Pays website. At the website, visitors were able to access information on the overall project as well as the resources available in each community. Data for the website is available for an 11-month period. It reveals a monthly average of 125 visits made to the main web page and a monthly average of 25 visits to the community web pages. It appears that there was a direct connection between the outreach efforts of the Education Pays team and the guerilla marketing group. There was an increase in website traffic in May when the school rally and school summit were held. Activity began to taper off and pick up again in August and September after the community events were attended.

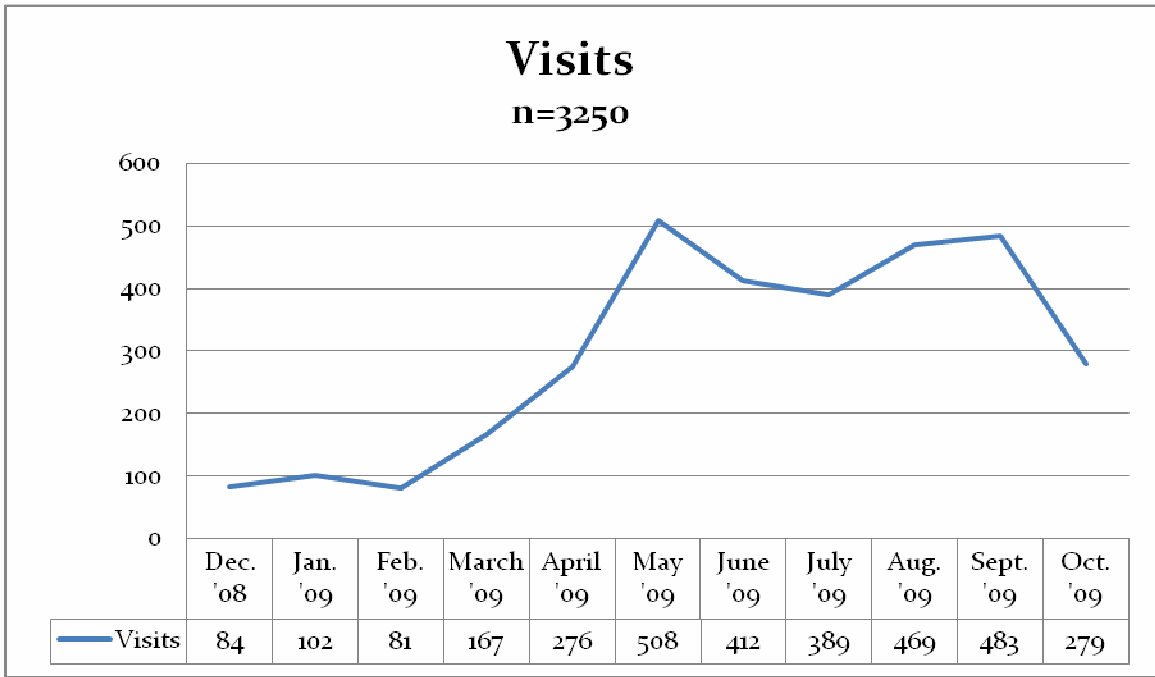


Figure 1: Visits to Educaion Pays Website

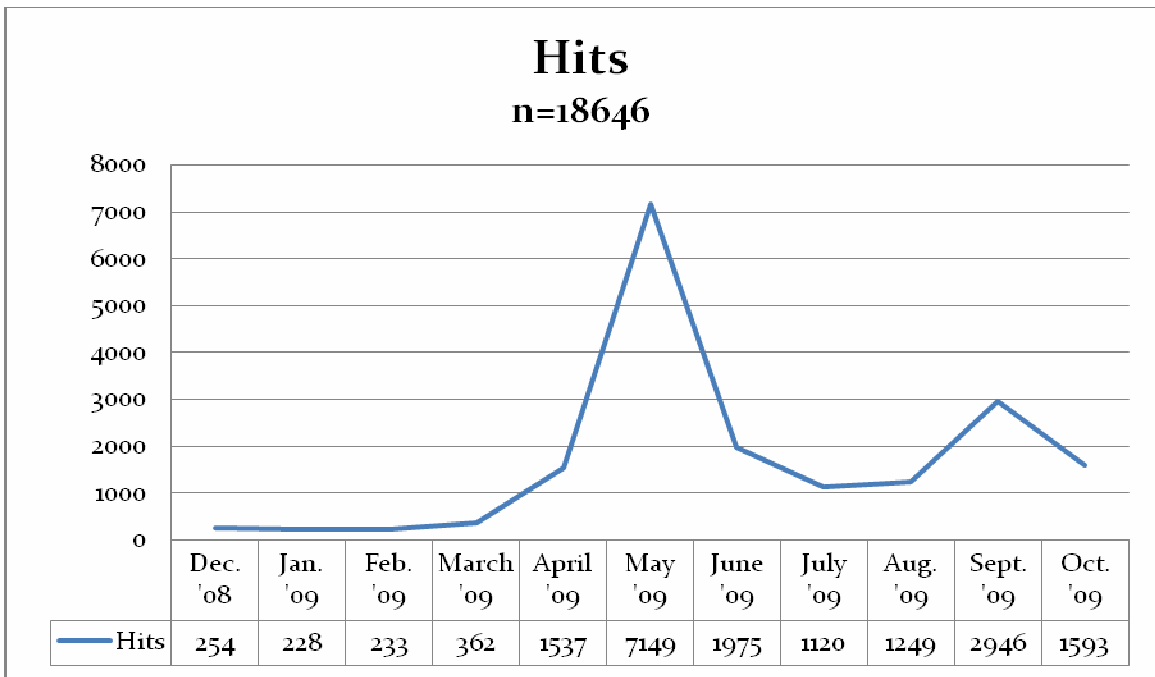


Figure 2: Hits on Education Pays Website

The trend lines for hits and visits are not identical; however, the data for visits is most useful for analyzing usage. Visits refer to the total number of unique visits to the particular web page. For example, if a visitor went to the home page and refreshed it 30 times, it would only be one visit. Hits refer to the total number of times a certain page was loaded including any times it was refreshed by the same user.

Throughout the campaign, the main webpage and the Mt. Pleasant webpage were accessed most consistently. Visits to the community web pages accounted for about 14 percent of all visits while visits to the main web page accounted for about 42 percent of all visits. (See the table below.)

Table 2: Education Pays Website Activity

PAGE		DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
main	HITS	186	171	166	247	316	575	459	613	440	438	136
	VISITS	49	72	50	109	99	221	160	214	182	181	41
day.php	HITS					1015	5965	1323	461	655	2282	1287
	VISITS					104	186	183	157	196	201	174
month.php	HITS					102	493	88		55	104	122
	VISITS					13	47	19		25	28	30
central.html	HITS					28	30	35		26	28	28
	VISITS					13	15	20		15	17	17
slavicvillage.html	HITS					33	28			30	29	20
	VISITS					23	11			23	17	17
mtpleasant.html	HITS	68	57	67	56	43	29	36	46	22	39	
	VISITS	35	30	31	29	24	14	15	18	15	26	
campaign.html	HITS						29	34		21	26	
	VISITS						14	15		13	13	
participate.html	HITS				59							
	VISITS				29							
TOTAL:	HITS	254	228	233	362	1537	7149	1975	1120	1249	2946	1593
	VISITS	84	102	81	167	276	508	412	389	469	483	279

Additional feedback on the campaign

Two questions were presented regarding the campaign at several events where Education Pays was represented:

Is Education Pays the right message?

With few exceptions, youth and adults concurred that the message was appropriate and on-point. One dissenting voice expressed concern that too much emphasis was placed on the monetary aspect of Education Pay\$. Another questioned the impact of marketing campaigns generally. Examples of expressions from youth when asked what Education Pay\$ means to them included:

“ . . . if you get a good education you will get rewarded in later life.”

“ . . . you need to get your education and if you do it will pay off.”

“To get your education and you can be whatever you want to be.”

“ . . . to want to be something in life and want knowledge . . . to strive and be the best they can be.”

“If you get a good education you can get a good job.”

Have you seen the Education Pays billboards, bus signs or other materials?

The responses to this question were mixed as some people recalled seeing the materials and others did not. Most frequently, respondents had seen the billboards and the bus signs. In addition, many persons seeing the signage were outside the target area and the target population.

Additional information on the reach of the campaign was gathered at various events and in focus groups conducted with youth. About 405 persons completed response cards which corresponded to the following breakdown:

Where have you seen or heard about Education Pays?

n=405

Media item or event	Number	Percent
Billboards	70	17.0
Posters	67	16.5
Bus signs	65	16.0
Radio ads	45	11.0
Word of mouth	33	8.0
“Say It Loud”	19	4.7
Boys and Girls Club	55	13.5
Friendly Inn Settlement	16	4.0
Other	35	8.6

Conclusion

The plan for implementation and the strategies were successful overall. Unexpected opportunities to publicize the campaign contributed to the exposure while unanticipated obstacles impeded the smooth flow of planned activities.

A major gap in the implementation was the follow-up or follow-through on contacts made with the community partners as a result of the Education Pays marketing. All of the materials distributed included phone numbers and/or the program website where interested parties could obtain additional information. While the number of calls and website hits are known, the instances in which community resources were accessed are not known.

Impact on Targeted Population

The focus groups provided qualitative data regarding the impact of the Education Pays Campaign. A total of 12 young men constituted the experimental group with whom Education Pays consulted in the development of the media materials. These young men, who also served as the advisory group for Education Pays, were contacted periodically about attending events, to monitor their use of the materials, and to get feedback on program activities. The control group consisted of 32 young men served by agencies in the target communities but who were not part of the Education Pays advisory group. Some of the young men lived outside the target areas as well.

The young men from the experimental group were understandably more familiar with the campaign in the early stages than those in the control group. Beyond that distinction, there was no noticeable difference among the participants as demonstrated by their responses to questions about their ambitions, role models, and visions of success.

The young men had a variety of ambitions including becoming entertainers and athletes but they also included becoming a police officer, a lawyer, a cartoonist, a computer technician, a chef, a stock broker, a pediatrician, and a minister. Interestingly, the young men tended not to know what the educational requirements were for some positions (e.g., lawyer, minister or police officer). Similarly, while they might speak of making large sums of money, they did not know how much people earned including entertainers and athletes.

Included among the role models identified by the youth were some well-known male personalities such as President Barack Obama, Michael Jordan and LeBron

James. Among both sets of youth, other males—teachers, staff at the community agencies, and relatives who had achieved professionally or academically—were identified as role models. In most of the groups, female family members who had achieved academic success were mentioned as role models.

The youth generally perceived success in economic and social terms—making a lot of money, owning homes and cars, having nice clothes, and having a supportive family. However, with the exception of one group, education was included as an element of success.

In focus groups held at the end of the project, the advisory team members generally commented that the project had encouraged them to think more about their futures. This was not true among the control group. Although all of the young men in both groups reported seeing the campaign materials on billboards and buses, the control group members did not have a sense of what the campaign was about. None of the participants reported calling the 1-800 phone number.

The experimental group was exposed to most of the written materials associated with the project because of their participation. Twenty-five percent of them saw the “Say It Loud” movie and 17 percent received text messages. The Education Pays website was visited by one-third of the advisory group/experimental group members. Forty percent of those in the experimental group participated in special events associated with Education Pays including rallies, workshops, viewing the documentary, and participating in the Cleveland school summit.

None of the control group members had accessed the Education Pays website or received text messages. Some reported seeing other media materials, e.g., posters, flyers, and brochures). None of those in the control group participated in special events associated with Education Pays including rallies, workshops, viewing the documentary, and participating in the Cleveland school summit. The control group did not appear to be impacted by the Education Pays message due to limited exposure but some members were interested in finding out more about it.

Conclusion

It appears that the Education Pays campaign made inroads in reaching those in the target population and beyond—demographically and geographically. The greatest impact seems to have occurred when the basic message was reinforced by other means.

Findings

In *Building Social Marketing*, Weinrich presents ten concepts to incorporate into a social marketing campaign. These ten points are used to assess the development of Education Pays.

1. *Talk to your customers.* The first stage of the campaign enlisted the assistance of organizations within the three target neighborhoods to identify youth to serve on an advisory committee. Consisting of four young men from each neighborhood, the twelve-member advisory committee settled upon the images and phrases that were incorporated into the various marketing materials utilized in the campaign.
2. *Segment your audience.* The target audience for the campaign was African-American males between the ages of 10 and 13 who resided in the target neighborhoods of Central, Mt. Pleasant, and Slavic Village.
3. *Position your product.* Social marketing experts acknowledge the difficulty of changing behaviors and attitudes. Weinrich suggests that “to counteract factors working against adoption of the product, we need to acknowledge these potential problems and address them.” In the realm of education, the factors that generate negative attitudes and outcomes are complicated; however, Education Pays sought to intervene with a motivational message while recognizing the need for a community-wide education strategy.
4. *Know your competition.* The major competition to “education pays” and the benefits of getting an education comes from the variety of sources that convey negative images which discourage youth from achieving their maximum potential and having high expectations of themselves. Another source of competition is their dreams of fame and fortune without having alternative plans that an educational foundation can provide.
5. *Go to where your audience is.* From the beginning of the campaign, the strategy was to take the program to the community institutions and the neighborhoods they serve. When the CMSD was brought on board, one school rally was held but plans for two other rallies did not materialize.
6. *Utilize a variety of approaches.* The campaign utilized a number of approaches over the ten-month pilot project period. In some cases, the campaign took advantage of events scheduled in the neighborhoods and in the city; in other instances, the campaign rolled out additional events such as the movie, rallies and workshops which were not part of the original plan.

7. *Use models that work.* This is uncharted territory. Education Pays has provided a model upon which future initiatives can be built.
8. *Test, test, test.* As a pilot project, each element was a trial and changes were made along the way.
9. *Build partnerships with key allies.* A major component of the campaign was to enlist the cooperation of community organizations in providing services to youth, particularly those referred through the toll free number. The schools are another critical ally in this type of initiative. Additional community partners were enlisted throughout the course of the campaign.
10. *See what you can do better next time.* The project team has always acknowledged the need for evaluation during the entire campaign. Evaluation feedback has been used to make adjustments or to recognize outcomes as they occurred. A major goal of this project is to determine how successful strategies can be replicated.

Overall, the Education Pays campaign used sound social marketing strategies. The approach is consistent with that recommended by Weinrich:

The most effective programs use a combination of mass media, community, small group and individual activities. When a simple, clear message is repeated in many places and formats throughout the community, it is more likely to be seen and remembered.

A social marketing program might contain television and radio spots, print ads, a community event, a poster contest, giveaways of your products or coupons for your services, a toll-free hotline for individual counseling or referrals, or classes on your topic offered in the community. The variety of approaches you use will depend on your program's budget and what will be most effective with the target audience. No matter what you do in your campaign, try to stick to one main 'look' and slogan, or people may not realize all the pieces are from your organization. Consistency and continuity are key to a successful campaign. (Weinrich N. K., 1995)

PolicyBridge partnered with other agencies to facilitate implementation of the project. While this approach required additional coordination and administration, it is consistent with social marketing principles. First, working with community-based organizations and schools acknowledges that the problems related to educational attainment are too large for any one organization to tackle. Second,

focusing on behavior—to stay in school—not just communicating information and educating is important. (Andreason, 1995) Producing a discernible impact of Education Pays on the desired behavior requires a long-term observation of the target population and community-wide engagement.

Concluding observations about the Education Pays campaign are organized in three sections. The first section addresses the campaign design and implementation; the second addresses points regarding its impact. The third section includes points about the outcomes of the project.

Campaign design and implementation

- Aspects of the program were restricted by the funds available, so some activities were abbreviated or not undertaken.
- On-line exposure generated through the Cleveland.com website exceeded expectations of the provider. The contact person at Cleveland.com noted that the number of clicks started to do well with 2.2 million ads delivered and 1,418 clicks on those ads. The number of ads is important because they represent opportunities for people to view the brand and for the brand to make an impression.
- The program used expertise and maximized the dollars available; the message struck a responsive chord in the community. For example, Cleveland.com helped PolicyBridge to build brand awareness with zip code targeting in inner-city Cleveland and inclusion on designated pages (such as the home, news, and sports pages). Monthly events were also added to the pages as details became available.
- Billboard displays were the most effective “low touch” way to circulate the Education Pays message.
- The guerilla marketing of the street teams was the most effective “high touch” way to inform the public about Education Pays.
- Summer activities are needed to maintain the momentum around educational aspirations. The writing and reading workshops began to address this.
- Activities involving public schools must allow for sufficient planning time. Some planned events in schools were cancelled due to scheduling problems.

Impact on youth

- There were time lapses between contacts with the student advisory committee; however, persons who worked with youth on the advisory committee commented that they saw evidence of maturation, ownership of the program and popularity.

- The young men in the advisory group were affected positively by the Education Pays message and involvement in the project development.
- Although the project was intended to target young men from 10-13 years old, youth of both genders, all ages, races, and ethnicities were exposed to the message due to the variety of venues where the project was presented.
- The message conveyed was positively received within the larger community and generally understood—particularly by youth.

Outcomes

- Targeting is a reasonable strategy for focusing limited resources and maximizing community assets but the scope of awareness went beyond the targeted neighborhoods.
- PolicyBridge brought many existing resources together to implement the Education Pays social marketing campaign. Much good will and optimism existed among the participants to propel the project forward despite unexpected challenges. Community support for Education Pays resulted in a high level of return for the dollars spent on advertising and marketing.

Lessons Learned

The Education Pays – Get Yours campaign provided an opportunity to garner information that can inform the design and execution of programs in the future. In the form of lessons learned, the following points are offered toward the improvement of collaborative efforts to engage youth around educational attainment.

1. A framework for ongoing cooperation, communication and interaction is needed among the partners.
2. More consideration of the time and capacity required to plan and coordinate activities with outside agencies is necessary.
3. Maintaining contact and providing incentives are key to capturing and retaining the attention of youth.

Recommendations

Based on data from several sources, the consensus is that Education Pays was beneficial to youth, parents, and the communities. Feedback about the project from community stakeholders and partners reveals strong support for the continuation and expansion of Education Pays. Suggestions for enhancing this type of effort in the future focus on structure and approach as summarized below.

Structure

- Retain a project staff person to respond to inquiries, make referrals, and follow-up on them.
- Identify a designated contact person at each agency to receive or track respondents to marketing materials.
- Coordinate the participation of all partners through regular communication such as meetings, e-mail, conference calls, etc.
- Align the program more closely with the appropriate schools from the earliest possible stage.

Approach

- Personalize the messages by using recognizable individuals that kids can relate to from the community.
- Use additional technology in communicating the message, for example having search engine capability for the program website.
- Incorporate ways to reinforce the major message, perhaps in conjunction with community partners.

Inform the public of how the social marketing campaign approach fits into the big picture of improving educational outcomes.

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Education Pays—Get Yours

Executive Summary

Education Pays—Get Yours is a social marketing campaign that endeavored to disseminate affirmative messages about the benefits of acquiring an education to young African-American males. Education Pays evolved from a report produced by PolicyBridge, a public policy think tank. That report, *The Rap on Culture: How Anti-Education Messages in Media, at Home, and on the Street Hold Back African-American Youth*, contended that negative attitudes toward education put black students at a disadvantage.

PolicyBridge undertook this pilot project as a 10-month effort to explore three possibilities: 1) that black youth are receptive to positive images and messages about education; 2) that community agencies could collaborate in providing services to improve educational outcomes, and 3) that Education Pays could uncover effective strategies that could be replicated city-wide, regionally, or nationally.

Overview of the campaign

The campaign progressed in three phases:

1. Formative phase—project planning and recruitment of a youth advisory board occurred.
2. Implementation phase—agreements with community partners were arranged in the three target communities—Central, Mt. Pleasant, and Slavic Village.
3. Adjustment phase—modifications to the original plan were made in response to unanticipated opportunities and unanticipated concerns. The ability to adapt improved the potential for success outcomes.

Evaluation

Evaluation of Education Pays was incorporated from the beginning of the project. The evaluation used quantitative and qualitative data sources to determine the effectiveness of the methods and strategy utilized in the campaign as well as the outcomes and impact of the project.

Effectiveness of the methods and strategy

Education Pays incorporated twenty media components and events to reach the targeted population of ten to thirteen year-old African-American males residing in the target communities. Half of these activities were rated as highly effective and another 30

percent were deemed moderately effective in delivering the campaign message and reaching the target audience. The remaining 20 percent had limited impact but some could be improved by pursuing the modifications noted and employing lessons learned from this pilot project.

Audiences of youth and adults commented that Education Pays is the right message to convey to youth at this time. Responses from youth, in particular, revealed that they understood the reasons and the importance of the concept.

Data indicate that the Education Pays message was expanding beyond the target population and communities, particularly as the campaign was drawing to a close. The billboards, bus signs, and posters were the most visible and recognized. As more outreach efforts occurred during the summer, additional items like pens and hats were distributed which helped to inspire attendees at events as well as neighborhood residents.

Other summative points are:

- PolicyBridge partnered with other agencies to facilitate implementation of the project. While this approach required additional coordination and administration, it is consistent with social marketing principles
- Aspects of the project were abbreviated due to time and fund availability
- The project maximized the expertise and dollars allocated
- Summer activities were added to maintain the momentum around educational aspirations
- A major gap in the implementation was the follow-up or follow-through on contacts made with the community partners as a result of the Education Pays marketing.

Outcomes

Youth who were directly engaged with the Education Pays project were affected more by the campaign than those who were not. PolicyBridge formed an advisory group of youth who informed them about the images and representations ultimately incorporated into the campaign. These young men were more likely than those not involved to utilize the materials and services. Moreover, they reported that the project had encouraged them to think more about their futures. In addition, the following observations about the impact on youth are pertinent:

- It appears that the Education Pays campaign made inroads in reaching those in the target population and beyond—demographically and geographically. The greatest

impact seems to have occurred when the basic message was reinforced by other means.

- Young men in the advisory group were affected positively by the Education Pays message and involvement in the project development.
- Although the project was intended to target young men from 10-13 years old, youth of both genders, all ages, races, and ethnicities were exposed to the message due to the variety of venues where the project was presented.
- The message conveyed was positively received within the larger community and generally understood—particularly by youth.

Overall, PolicyBridge brought many existing resources together to implement the Education Pays social marketing campaign. Much good will and optimism existed among the participants to propel the project forward despite unexpected challenges. Community support for Education Pays resulted in a high level of return for the dollars spent on advertising and marketing.