



J. Addams & Partners Case Files #5: *Jump-Starting the Parent Corps*

The Challenge

- Help National Families in Action, a nonprofit organization, launch the Parent Corps, its unique new drug-prevention initiative that harnesses the power of parents and gives them tools to keep their children healthy and drug-free.
- Launch the initiative with the restricted budget of a nonprofit organization.
- Help earn financial support to expand the Parent Corps.



The Strategy



- Immediately differentiate the Parent Corps from other, established drug-prevention organizations by showing what makes it different. (Key messages: *It's for parents; it's modeled after the Peace Corps; it's based in schools but does not tax the faculty or administration.*)
- Capitalize on the successful 30 year history of National Families in Action in helping parents prevent drug abuse among children.
- Produce high impact but low budget materials to illustrate the power of the organization.

The Program

- JA&P created the position, the language, key messages and tag line *Drug Prevention Starts Here* for the Parent Corps.
- JA&P also developed the written materials and the media kit for the Washington, D.C. news conference that introduced the organization to the public and the news media in Colorado, Connecticut, North Carolina and Wisconsin, where the Parent Corps was initially launched. To illustrate – on a small budget – the concept of parents working together to keep their children drug free, we distributed the kits in old-fashioned, interoffice envelopes with comments from fictitious parents written into the spaces.



continued

Implementation & Results



- For shock value, we paired each press kit with a zipped plastic lunch bag with a graphic of a sandwich, packed with simulated joints and pills, to illustrate to parents what kids can be exposed to every day, without parents' knowledge.
- The kits, sent to local media outlets, introduced the Parent Corps and Parent Leaders in their communities. The Parent Corps also used the kits for introductory meetings with law enforcement officers, elected officials, school administrators and other community leaders.
- JA&P also produced *The Case for the Parent Corps* a compelling multimedia production documenting the outcome of adolescent drug use and how the Parent Corps model is succeeding in helping parents work together to keep their children drug-free. (View video on the Parent Corps Website at www.parentcorps.org).



The Results

- Stories about the Parent Corps launch and Parent Leaders appeared nationally on *FOX News* as well as in daily and weekly newspapers in Boulder and Denver, Colorado; Stamford and Weston, Connecticut; Wilson and Wilmington, North Carolina; and Appleton and Kimberly, Wisconsin. These features helped open the doors to school principals, Parent Corps members and volunteers. In addition, the 20 Parent Corps Parent Leaders working in 19 schools in nine states used the materials to enroll 4,280 parents as members of the Parent Corps and 2,888 young people as members of the Youth Corps and Kid Corps by December 31, 2005.



Comments

"J. Addams and Partners grasped our core values, understood our nonprofit budgetary limitations, and created an outstanding communications toolbox that educates the world about what the Parent Corps is and its significance. Equally important, the package invites administrators to bring the Parent Corps into their schools. JA&P also created our new tagline – Drug Prevention Starts Here – which now is part of our logo. In addition, the team produced a comprehensive media kit that garnered national coverage, including a story on Fox News, as well as generated placements in a number of local markets. JA&P also helped us complete our marketing package, and produced a new multimedia segment that will help us further advance awareness of the Parent Corps."

~ Sue Rusche, President and CEO, National Families in Action

