

COVID-19 Communications Campaign – Reaching younger people

The HSE and the Department of Health have led the public health communications response to COVID-19, which includes an extensive public information, advertising and education programme.

We have worked since early in 2020 to provide clear public health advice that has a wide reach, and is easy for people to understand and act on. Our approach has included a focus on including all members of society, creating varied content and using channels and media that reach as many people as possible across social backgrounds, age groups, language and abilities.

Our overall media plan included high reach and frequency across all TV and all radio stations in Ireland, including Spotify and extensive digital, search and social advertising. TV viewership increased during the restrictions and would have delivered high reach and frequency for all audiences.

To directly speak to younger audiences, over the period from Friday 20th March to Thursday 4th June, we have promoted seven different pieces of creative to the 12 to 25 year old audience in Ireland. Each creative reflected the key public health messages being promoted nationally to the target audience in that moment.

Phase 1, March: It's in our hands

In order to engage with the younger people, the HSE partnered with SpunOut to create a social media campaign designed by and for people aged 16-25. SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website and is funded by the HSE.

The campaign was tailored for young people and the creative look and feel adapted the familiar COVID campaign, but took a different approach to other COVID-19 materials to engage the target audience. The campaign reflected the style of material consumed by the younger age group; short, snappy content, using bold colours and bringing some humour to the messages.

The first phase of the campaign launched at the end of March and was shared across social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter. The content had two creative routes:

- 'Too close' focused on social distancing and showing images of what is deemed too close.



- 'Lazy hero' encouraged young people to stay at home – by staying home, you're saving lives. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt8SJtRMIOI>

The content was shared on SpunOut and HSE Sexual Wellbeing social media channels.

We also worked with a supportive agency, Teneo, who worked pro-bono to amplify these posts through well-known people or influencers. This resulted in a reach of over two million, with influencers sharing the content or creating their own parody of the content.

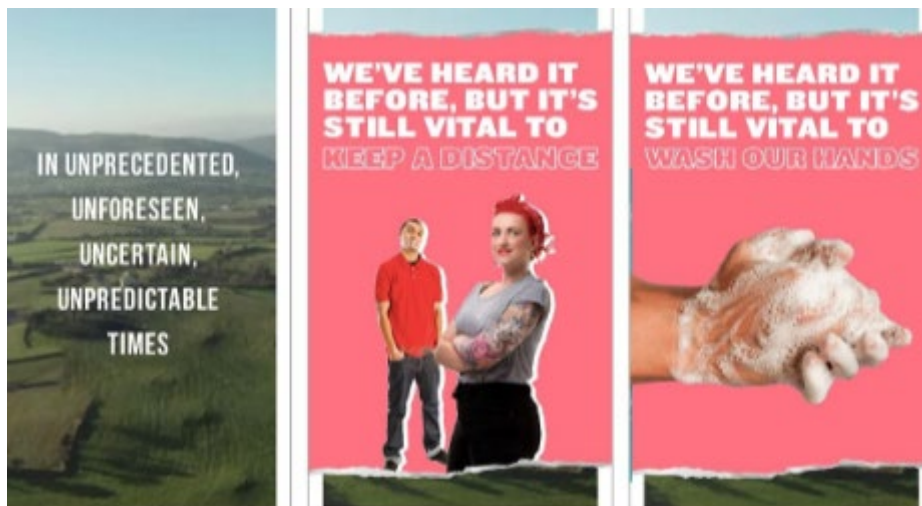
In phase 1, over 675,000 young people in Ireland aged between 12 and 25 were reached by the campaign. The creatives have been seen over 16.8 million times, and have been watched to 75% of completion over 496,000 times.

Phase 2, May – Hold Firm and TikTok Partnership

The second phase launched new creative on 22 May and reinforced the ongoing health advice, while acknowledging the challenge inherent in keeping it up, asking young people to hold firm.

The content had new creative routes:

- Reminding to keep your distance, wash your hands and cover your cough.



- Play on the meme of 'Plans v 2020' and asks what you've been doing in 2020 – hopefully not giving out free hugs in the park, caressing peaches in the supermarket or getting illegal haircuts.
- Sharing the popular Hold Firm TV campaign

The HSE currently has a partnership with TikTok for four weeks from mid-May. There are 1 million active users on TikTok in Ireland. TikTok's users are predominantly female with almost 70% of all users aged between 16 and 24, but since the pandemic this audience has stretched from 13 to 40 year olds. Our partnership involved a TopView ad every Wednesday for the four weeks.

The first week, we ran the HoldFirm campaign which received 1.7 million views of the video and 307,000 clicks to HSE.ie. In weeks 2 and 3, we ran the new creative for the younger demographic, with each week receiving about 1.6 million views of the video and 275,000 clicks to HSE.ie each week.

The new ads are currently live on Snapchat, on the HSE's Facebook and Instagram pages and have seen a reach of over 86,000 on Facebook so far.

Ongoing Supportive Partners

It is also important to note the wide-ranging direct and indirect support that has been provided by all sectors of society to our communications programme. This has come from the wider Government, from fellow public services, from private organisations and businesses, and well-known people from sports, entertainment and other sectors.

Many organisations also ran campaigns in conjunction or supporting the health service that were focused on and encouraging of younger people –including RTE's initial campaign for young people Create, Don't Contaminate, GAA and Rugby players, Dublin City Council working with well know actors Colm Meaney, Brendan O'Carroll and others, and many more TV and radio presenters and media personalities shared and posted supportive videos and messages on an ongoing basis.

Appendix: Detailed results and impacts

#StayHomeStaySafe

The first piece is a creative built by SpunOut.ie encouraging young people to #StaySafeStayHome. This piece ran from the 21st to 23rd March.

#StayHomeStaySafe	Reach	Impressions	Frequency	75% Viewed
Facebook	120,576	198,950	1.65	126,746
Snapchat	290,265	3,651,385	12.58	31,448
Twitter	NA	3,581	NA	89
Instagram	413,567	1,129,038	2.7	17,058

Anxiety around COVID-19

The second piece is a Snapchat story promoting an article on coping with anxiety around COVID-19. This piece ran from the 21st to 24th March.

Anxiety around COVID-19	Reach	Impressions	Frequency	Swipe Ups
Snapchat	608,760	2,002,025	3.3	12,061

'How Close?'

The third piece is a creative by digital agency, Havas, and promoted over SpunOut.ie channels. It asked 'How close is too close?' and ran from the 24th to 31st March.

How close is too close?	Reach	Impressions	Frequency	75% Viewed
Facebook	134,208	253,653	1.89	94,773
Snapchat	646,751	1,959,276	3.03	26,494
Twitter	NA	100,598	NA	6,020
Instagram	317,440	511,078	1.61	28,981
TikTok	3,897	4442	1.14	NA

'Do Nothing Heroes'

The fourth piece is a series of creatives by digital agency, Havas, and promoted over SpunOut.ie

channels. This series revolves around 'Do Nothing Heroes', who can save lives by staying at home. This series ran from the 2nd April to the 5th April.

Do Nothing Heroes	Reach	Impressions	Frequency	75% Viewed
Facebook	318,592	729,939	2.3	7,076
Snapchat	674,849	3,241,221	4.8	47,000
Twitter	NA	599,000	NA	76,672
Instagram	565,631	2,216,991	3.92	30,932
TikTok	NA	19,882	NA	NA