

2. Met Life invests in field personnel, according to pa mgr Roy Bertke. Insurance confuses the average person, and sales reps are the ones trying to cut thru that confusion. "Our sales representatives on Main Street USA are the key to our public image. All the image advertising and corporate pr programs will be ineffective in the long run if the industry's people power at the grassroots level does not meet & exceed the buying public's expectations." So massive amounts of resources are poured into training & support. One effective program --

- a) **Excellence thru Quality.** Installed a public image kit in branch offices, helps agents to be more aware of their image and what they can do to improve it. "The kit reinforces all the commonsense things of image building, beginning with the need to be a knowledgeable & professional career agent who is involved as a citizen of the community, not just a salesperson." Idea is generating massive changes in the way Met does business.

NML recently conducted a study on the concept of "Quiet." It surveyed 20 CEOs from largest US organizations for their perceptions. One describes it as "a special way to come to terms with change." Another says it "focuses the mind with laser-like intensity and distills the essence of an issue." NML says it commissioned the study because it found little knowledge or literature exists on the subject. Findings indicate that Quiet is a powerful instrument for productivity & change. (Copy for \$5.95 to NML, 720 E. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, Wisc. 53202.)

3. Progressive Corp (Mayfield Heights, Ohio) issued a riveting annual report which focuses on drunk driving. Reader Jim Lubetkin (Edward Howard & Co) sent us this AR which is anything but dull (pr 4/16). It includes disturbing pieces of artwork, poetry & prose in keeping with the grim theme. "We're focusing on a critically important human issue: the suffering & waste caused by alcohol related auto accidents," says CEO Peter Lewis. "We hope these words & images will challenge us to change the way we think about drinking and driving." A noble undertaking that may also make some headway in terms of public's perception of industry as a whole.
4. Northwestern Mutual Life utilizes the power of "Quiet." Sr corp info spec Mark Lucius says NM's tag as "The Quiet Company" has been successful. "We've never defined what we mean by it, but people read real positive things into it." Lucius said it started in '71 when policy-owners claimed the company wasn't advertising enough, that it's promotional budget was like "spit in Lake Michigan." "So we decided to advertise on tv. How would we tell people we'd been around for over a century? So slogan became, 'People have been talking about the Quiet Company for 120 years.'"

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRED. Phil Toman after 33 years of pr efforts for public schools in Delaware. But will work full-time to start pr sequence at Wilmington College & be vp-pr & student afrs.

HONORS. Bruce Akers, vp-pr & asst to chrmn, Ameritrust, receives Lighthouse Award for career accomplishments & high ethical standards, from Cleveland PRSA.

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HOW DO YOU REVERSE A NEGATIVE SOCIOLOGICAL PHENOMENON THAT SEEMS TO BE GAINING SPEED? TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM IS MODEL FOR CREATING AWARENESS, CHANGING ATTITUDES

During 1987, 20,000 babies were born to Ohio teens, costing the state \$19 million for delivery charges. Today, ongoing medical costs, utilities, food stamps & children's services continue to drain an additional \$220,000 daily. Along with the financial burden, devastating sociological impact includes educational underachievement, welfare dependency & feminization of poverty. Worse still, chances are these babies will follow their parents' example.

Ohio Department of Health and Paul Werth Assocs (Columbus) developed a campaign aimed at changing attitudes and behavior of teens. "Campaign for All Ohio's Children" is a PRSA Silver Anvil Award winner.

RESEARCH 1. Focus Groups comprised of 200 teens statewide helped form message strategy. By pretesting slogan "Teen Parent Trap," logo, & PSAs, they emphasized need for: a) peer-to-peer communication, b) hard-hitting messages. Discussions also yielded insights on important cultural variations which encourage pregnancy in Appalachian & inner-city communities.

2. Benchmark Survey. 2,053 11-14 yr olds were questioned for attitudes on adolescent sexuality. Study showed link among low self-esteem, peer pressure & teen pregnancy, confirming focus group findings. Survey also surfaced widespread ignorance about: a) health risks, b) males' unwillingness to take responsibility and c) economic consequences. "We wanted to get them to understand the consequences because some kids don't," Paul Werth Assocs dpa Brian Usher told prr. "We found that sometimes getting pregnant isn't an accident. They want to have a baby so they can be somebody & have somebody to love. It's a very difficult thing to break thru. We caused some controversy."

Targeted Message Strategy: "Teens told us they wanted it straight, not sugar-coated. They wanted harsher angles. So the signature PSA is a teenage mother 'trapped' in an apartment. As the camera pulls back, there are bars over the windows. It's very dramatic. The teenager looks like she's having a tough time. The voiceover is hers: 'I didn't intend to have a baby. I'd like to get a degree and a good job.' Some of the adults were a little put off by the message, but the kids liked it so we used it."



- TACTICS**
1. Peer-to-Peer Communication: "To make kids aware of the campaign, we did school assemblies -- an Oprah Winfrey type show in which older kids would be the celebrities. Some were teen parents, some were entertainers. Their message was, 'Have goals. There's more to life than having a baby at 14 years old.'" Teen parents visited classrooms and teen celebrities performed. "The theory is that messages are more easily delivered from older teens than from parental or teacher figures." (Follow-up survey indicates this face-to-face with older but wiser teens was most effective communication tactic.)
 2. Personal/Peer Appeal with Media, Materials:
 - a) Two 30-minute educational **tv specials** were distributed thru a 12-station network. Talk show format featured tv celebrities as moderators & teen panelists.
 - b) **Study guide** accompanied videos, was distributed to 500+ health instructors for classroom use.
 - c) **PSAs** were produced & placed on 52 tv stations.
 - d) **Hotline** offered teens support, literature.
 - e) **Teen Parent Trap logo** was featured on all collaterals as well as thousands of posters, pins & t-shirts.
 3. Outside Support:
 - a) **Regional Action Councils** -- network of social service agencies -- were formed. Special meeting to gain support of social service people featured teen pregnancy experts, invited input. Network remains in place, acts as a campaign organization.
 - b) **Fact Book** detailing research findings was distributed to media, Regional Action Councils, state lawmakers, etc.
 - c) **Quarterly newsletter** communicated with adult audiences in both the private & public sectors about campaign progress.
 - d) **Multi-page editorial** & photo displays were made for minority newspapers in Ohio's largest cities.
 4. Program Continuity. A nonprofit corporation which includes a 12-member board was established to continue campaign after state involvement ended. "There's a lull in the organization now but it has been refunded by the legislature and will be back in action in the fall."

EVALUATION "In the schools where program was presented, we saw changes in awareness & attitudes. We did before & after surveys to see if the campaign was working, if awareness was going up, if attitudes were changing toward the issues -- like having less earning power, issues they'd understand." Post-campaign survey shows 20+% increases in awareness of social, medical & economic consequences.

OTHER SIGNS OF SUCCESS:

1. Money. Nonprofit corporation received & administered over \$50,000 in contributions. In total, campaign generated \$125,000.
2. Media Coverage. 2000 column inches of positive coverage appeared in over 60 newspapers across the state; 60 hours of broadcast time aired.
3. Political Support. Governor included \$500,000 in biennial budget for 1990-91 to continue the program; approved by General Assembly.

This is a model every state could emulate. Doing so would also help show the essential social role of public relations techniques. While these basic democratic methods are unfairly attacked because of Hill & Knowlton's planned media blitz on behalf of the Catholic Bishops, here is a sophisticated behavior-change campaign, by a long-respected local firm, that shows what pr really is -- and what it can do for society.

**INSURANCE INDUSTRY'S IMAGE CRISIS PART II;
CAN COMPANIES EFFECTIVELY DISTANCE THEMSELVES?**

If the public perceives the entire industry as

a greedy monolith arbitrarily raising rates way out of sync with the general inflation rate (pr 5/7), can individual companies dissipate the prejudice? Three exemplary efforts:

1. Allstate is doing a lot. "We have a 100-person department that is going crazy," spokesperson Perry Chlan, (Northbrook, Ill) told pr. "Much of it is reactionary -- media relations work, lawsuit activity to strike down Prop 103, etc. -- but a lot of it is proactive."
 - a) city-to-city campaign in which a car is stripped down in a public forum. People get a chance to see the value of each part, and thus understand what auto theft is costing the insurance system.
 - b) speakers' bureaus. State-to-state, employees speak to business & civic groups.
 - c) public action groups. Thru state & regional offices, employees write letters to the editor. In hot states like NJ & California, they hold editorial board meetings with newspapers so that before they criticize the industry, reporters know insurance perspective.
 - d) radio tips on how consumers can lower their insurance costs.
 - e) foundation which gives to groups like MADD.
 - f) Forum on Public Issues which deals with important societal problems. "We invite the Fortune 1000 to attend this major conference. Our first one was on AIDS, speaker was C. Everett Koop. A follow-up conference featured President Bush."