

Hands-On Activity: Spread the Word

Instructions

In this two-part activity, you will introduce your child to public service announcements (PSAs) and what they are used for. In the first half, you will talk about what he/she knows about advertising and PSAs and then discuss why PSAs are important. In the second half of the activity, your child will design an anti-smoking public service announcement for friends and family.



Why is advertising important?

Ads are used to sell products (like a new toy), to attract customers (to eat at a restaurant, for example), or to send a message or idea to people (such as "don't leave trash on the road"). Every day there are advertisements on TV and the Internet. We read them in magazines and newspapers, and we see them on billboards on the side of the road.

Background Discussion:

Ask your child what he/she knows about "advertisements" or "commercials." If necessary, explain that advertisements are messages to convince people to act in a particular way, or to buy a particular product. Help your child brainstorm a list of places where you can find advertisements.

Explain to your child that not all advertisements try to sell something, and that sometimes advertising can be a good thing because ads can tell people how to be healthier and safer (Public Service Announcements).

Ask your child if he/she can think of any advertisements that don't try to sell something. Can they find any of these ads in magazines or on TV?

Some well-known PSAs include:

Smokey the Bear® ("Only you can prevent wild fires")
McGruff the Crime Dog®

Finally, look at some PSAs with your child and discuss them.

**SHARE THE THRILL!
RETURN THE BOOKS!**



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Helpful questions include:

- 1) Where have you seen advertisements? Have you seen them on TV? Have you seen them in magazines? Have you heard them on the radio? Have you seen them on the Internet?
- 2) What does this ad want you to do?
- 3) Who created the ad?
- 4) Who is the advertisement for? (boys, girls, adults, etc)
- 5) Does the ad make you want to act a certain way or do a certain thing? What about the ad

Station 5: The Smoke Stacks

makes you want to do that?

7) Are there sound effects or music? What do they sound like? Do the sounds make the ad more effective?

8) What else could an advertisement say/do/show that would make you want to do something?

9) Do you think it is a good idea to make ads that try to convince people to do things that make them

safer or healthier?

Create your own Advertisement:

Tell your child that he or she is going to design an advertisement to convince people to not smoke. Tell your child to use what he or she learned about advertisements, as well as what he/she learned about the dangers of smoking in Station 5: The Smoke Stacks. Your child should choose between two options:

Option 1: Design a print advertisement for a newspaper or a magazine. Your child can use pictures from magazines, drawings, or computer art to create an attractive and convincing ad.

Option 2: Create a "TV commercial" about not smoking. Your child can write a short "script" for the commercial, and then act it out for friends and family members using props and/or costumes. You can also videotape your child's commercial so he or she can watch it when it is finished.

Materials:

magazine advertisement option:

construction paper/poster board
magazines (for cutting out pictures)
scissors
glue or glue stick
Markers/crayons/pens

television advertisement option:

paper
pencil
props for acting out commercial
a video camera (optional)



WHEN YOU HELP THE AMERICAN RED CROSS, YOU HELP AMERICA.
WE ALL HAVE TO LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER. AND WITH SO MANY CHILDREN
DROWNING EACH YEAR, YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO LEARN HOW TO SWIM TODAY.
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER OR VISIT REDCROSS.ORG



Examples of PSAs on the Internet:

Websites for Kids:

The More You Know: <http://themoreyouknow.com/forkids/>

Smokey the Bear: <http://www.smokeybear.com/kids/default.asp>

National Crime Prevention Council: <http://www.ncpc.org/media/friendship.php>

Its My Life, PBS: <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/video/index.html> (PSAs and videos by kids)

Websites for Parents:

The Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org/press/psa/psa.html>

National Crime Prevention Council: <http://www.ncpc.org/media/current.php>

Smokey the Bear: <http://www.smokeybear.com/>

The More You Know: <http://themoreyouknow.com/>