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NORAL GROUP INTERNATIONAL, INC. DIRECTS SUCCESSFUL MESSAGING STRATEGIES FOR THE PARENTS SPEAK UP NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Washington, D.C. (August 25, 2010) – A [study](#) published in the July 2010 issue of *Reproductive Health* finds public service health messaging effective in helping parents communicate with their children. In the respected health journal, the *Parents Speak Up National Campaign* (PSUNC) is evaluated to determine its drivers of success. PSUNC is an integrated, multi-media social marketing initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that encourages parents to talk with their kids about waiting to have sex. Noral Group International, Inc. (Noral), for Rosenberg Communications, Inc., guides messaging, advertising strategy and community outreach for PSUNC.

The [study](#) published in *Reproductive Health* ties PSUNC's success to the fact that it correctly identified and then directly speaks to two key predictors of parent-child communication: 1) parents' belief it is better for their child to wait until they are older to engage in sex; and, 2) parents' understanding that communicating about sex will positively impact their child's long-term outcomes.

This most recent publication sheds new light on PSUNC efficacy findings from a [study](#) published in the June 2009 issue of the *Journal of Adolescent Health*. The 2009 publication reported PSUNC successfully moved parents to initiate conversations about sex with their children. Both publications' studies are based on findings from an independent evaluation that consisted of a randomized efficacy trial of PSUNC messages under controlled conditions with a sample of 1,969 parents who were surveyed at baseline, 4 weeks, 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months post-baseline.

“Case studies of successful behavior change through public education campaigns are hard to find. Ones that have been proved successful --- even harder. But a campaign that has been proved successful by multiple studies is really the special exception,”



noted Eva Kasten, [President of Noral](#). “We are extremely proud of this distinction for PSUNC.”

To establish PSUNC’s messaging, Noral conducted a numerous in-depth focus group and individual discussions with a variety of parents across the U.S. From this effort, Noral concluded that parents, whether they think themselves a good or bad parent, want a successful and healthy future for their kids. However, few parents linked talking to their kids about delaying sex as an activity that would impact their child’s future success and health. Focusing on this key disconnect, Noral guided PSUNC advertising, targeting parents of children ages 10 – 14, to focus on [helping parents understand this link](#), empowering them to start conversations about sex early and continue them often.

Predicated on social cognition theory and hypothesizing that increased parent-child communication about sex will result from changing parental beliefs (or misconceptions), Noral translated knowledge into advertising strategy for PSUNC. This latest research, conducted by RTI International, stems from a continuous randomized efficacy trial of PSUNC messages developed from Noral’s work on the campaign. As quoted in the abstract, this latest research provides empirical evidence that “the ‘wait until older norm’ and long-term outcome expectations were appropriate cognitions to target and the PSUNC media materials were successful in impacting them.”

“Effective communications help people assess their own behavior in the context of their deeply held values,” said Kasten. “It sounds rather simple. But when this understanding is applied to communication campaigns, it will deliver results, just as has been proven for PSUNC.

About Noral Group International, Inc.

Noral Group International, Inc. is a research-based public service advertising and social marketing firm in Washington, DC. With unique knowledge and a ten year proven track record, Noral delivers results for clients in the government, non-profit and commercial sectors who value change for the public good. Visit www.noralgroup.com.

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