

Using Bus Ads to Promote Text4baby: Washington State

Who: The Washington Department of Health (WA DOH) works closely with WithinReach and its ParentHelp123.org program to promote statewide pregnancy-related resources, including text4baby.

What: A bus advertisement campaign was run throughout the state in two phases to target various demographics and geographical areas. The text4baby design was used but was also co-branded with sponsoring organizations to promote the local resources and community groups involved in the campaign. Four different designs were used and each featured a different race or ethnicity: American Indian, African American, Caucasian and Hispanic.

When: The first phase of the bus advertisement campaign ran from October 2011 through the end of the year. The second phase of the campaign was launched in the rural counties and tribal service areas from May 2012 to October 2012.

Where: The four different designs used in the campaign were placed on the interior of the buses in Phase 1. During Phase 2, the signs were placed on either the exterior of buses on the “tail” of the bus or a larger sign for the “curb side” of the bus. Two rural and two urban counties were chosen to display the text4baby exterior bus signs: Grays Harbor, Yakima, Pierce and Spokane.

Why: Key partners in Washington hoped to spread the message to a broader and more diverse population to increase enrollment in text4baby. The bus advertisements presented a way to get the message out to the general public and increase awareness outside of the traditional healthcare setting.

How: The campaign was funded through the Health-e-Moms Grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Health Resources and Services Administration. To alleviate costs, all of the ad agencies that worked with WA DOH either gave the agency a discount on display costs or included additional signs at no charge.

Results: The advertisements were posted on over 1,000 bus signs inside more than 700 different buses in eighteen counties across the state. The data suggested that Phase 1 of the bus sign campaign greatly contributed to a tripling of enrollees in text4baby in Washington from October 2011 to January 2012.



During Phase 2, there was a switch from interior to exterior bus advertisements. Due to cost, the number of signs printed and displayed was reduced. Total estimated circulation numbers for the four counties were about 12 million daily. Within four counties, 135 bus signs were displayed for three months, beginning in August of 2012.

Text4baby enrollment before and after bus sign campaign

