There’s something different here.

Engaging Young Audiences in Public Health

Next Generation
Introductions

Discussion (30 mins)
- Defining Our Audience
- Reaching Your Audience: Tools & Best Practices
- What Does Good Look Like?
- Measuring Success

Questions and Answers
Putting a Face to a Generation

Nicholas O'Toole
Demo: 23
Pronouns: he/him
Priors: Community Service Society of NY, NYC Mayor's Office, political campaigns
Fun Fact: Not totally clear on what a VCR is

Emily Dore
Demo: 31
Pronouns: she/her
Priors: New Orleans Health Dept, Community Service Society of NY, digital strategy
Fun Fact: My first boss was an Instagram travel influencer

Brandi Hight Bank
Demo: Elder Millennial
Pronouns: she/her
Priors: HHS, national public health comms campaigns
Fun Fact: Fave vintage social platform is Foursquare - still great for restaurant recs in big cities!
This is a moment for public health

• Public health is still a part of daily discourse
  – Public health schools saw a 40% increase in applicants to graduate-level degree programs during the pandemic (see source)
  – Grew from 17,353 applicants in March 2020 to 24,176 in March 2021
  – Epidemiology reported to be the top area of study for applications

We need responsive communications and fresh talent to chart the future of public health and public trust.
Defining our Audience
How Many Young Adults are There?

42.3% of US population

140 million Gen Z to Millennials

Source: "Now, more than half of Americans are Millennials or younger", Brookings Institution’s The Avenue Blog, July 30, 2020.

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Who is Our Champion?

An individual creating positive behavior change for themselves, influencing their community and/or creating long-standing attitudinal/behavioral change through commitment to public health.
What Young Adults Care About

- Mental, physical health and well-being
- Community
- Learning from others – other people, other societies, other ways of being
- Authenticity and self-awareness from brands
- Doing more to tackle big issues
  - Climate change
  - Racial inequity
  - LGTB+ rights
  - Gender inequity
  - Economic inequity
  - Economic advancement

What Young Adults Worry About

- Community
- Retirement
- Wellbeing
- "Selling out" and authenticity
- Exclusivity of environments
- Social inequalities
- Economic crisis
- Climate crisis
- General turmoil in the world

Why Bother Targeting Young Adults?

Political and purchasing power
- More Gen Z voters than Silent Generation voters
- Equal numbers Millennial and Boomer voters
- Early- to mid-career, strong earnings growth ahead

Online, content-hungry, easy to reach
- Expect strong aesthetics and for-profit branding
- Value authentic voices and diversity

Amid societal woes, they are driven by mission/social impact—a natural fit for public health

Social Media: Where Your Audience Is

11.9M Reddit
16.7M Twitter
20.9M Pinterest
31.8M Facebook
37.3M Instagram
41.4M TikTok
44.5M Snapchat

Source: "US Gen Z social media user stats (2020-2025)"*, Insider Intelligence, April 4, 2022

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Social Media: Baby Boomers

- TikTok: 1.4M
- Snapchat: 3.6M
- Reddit: 5.8M
- Twitter: 18.7M
- Instagram: 23M
- Pinterest: 28.7M
- Facebook: 56M

Source: "US Boomer social media user stats (2020)". Statista, April 4, 2022

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Keys to a Successful Digital Campaign

01 Sharable/snackable content
02 Make content visual/aesthetic
03 Mobile first
04 Video
05 Capitalize on relevant trends
06 Create authentic conversations driven by your mission
07 Outsource content creatively through partnerships and Calls to Action via User-Generated Content
TIKTOK AND THE FALL OF THE SOCIAL-MEDIA GIANTS

Facebook is trying to copy TikTok, but this strategy may well signal the end of these legacy platforms.

FORTNITE STREAMER, NINJA, RAISES $2.7 MILLION FOR ST. JUDE CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

BEREAL AND BRANDS—HOW MARKETERS ARE USING THE ANTI-INSTAGRAM

Live Streaming for Social Good: How Twitch is Transforming the Charity Fundraiser

Nearly half of Gen Z is using TikTok and Instagram for search instead of Google, according to Google’s own data

Twitter’s Slow and Painful End
Best Practices: TikTok

- High-quality video
- Utilizing niche hashtags
- Use trends wisely
- Use Call To Actions that promote engagement
- Cross promote across platforms
- Duet/Stitch

Average monthly US users: 138M
Average monthly use in focus demographic: 73%
Best Practices: Instagram

- Post often
- Use Instagram Reels
- Interactive
- Time sensitivity
- Tagging

Average monthly US users: 160M
Average monthly use in focus demographic: 68%
Best Practices: Twitter

Concerns about Twitter's future are real. Important platform for rapid communications. Twitter alternatives TBD.

For now:

Write original content.

Know how Twitter's audience is different:
Younger / More online / Less relational.

Don't be afraid to be bold.

No edit button; Link out:
Other tweets / Outside links / Other campaigns.

Average monthly US users: 41.5M.
Average monthly use in focus demographic: 33%.
Consider Emerging Social Media Platforms

BeReal.

73 Million monthly avg users

Every day at a different time, users are notified simultaneously to capture and share a photo in 2 Minutes. A new and unique way to discover who your friends really are in their daily life.

**Opportunities:** "Having a moment", no ads, authentic, anti-Instagram, cross promotion to Twitter

**Challenges:** Very new, short captions, no video, hard to gain large following

Twitch

120 Million monthly avg users

Twitch is an interactive livestreaming service for content spanning gaming, entertainment, sports, music, and more.

**Opportunities:** Highly interactive, long form, entertainment, Twitch Charity, partner with gamers

**Challenges:** Gaming centric, male dominated, need to produce a high amount of video content, competing against Twitch Affiliates

Reddit

206 Million US monthly avg users

Reddit is a social news aggregation, content rating, and discussion website.

**Opportunities:** Great place to gather insights from discussion and AMAs, resource for social listening data.

**Challenges:** Made for individuals not brands, male dominated, and not great for information dissemination or conversation except informally. While a very honest platform, misinformation is prevalent due to lax moderation.
No Budget, No Problem!

- **High-Value Content**
  - Authentic
  - Community voices
  - Culturally relevant

- **Organic Growth**
  - Engagement!
  - Impt Tools: Sprout Social, Hootsuite, etc.

- **Partnerships**
  - Community and commercial partnerships
  - Tagging
  - SM Toolkits
  - Tweetstorms

- **Platform Grants and Donated Space**
  - Google Grants for Non-profits
  - Twitch Charity
  - Facebook Social Impact Partnerships
**Staying on Trend**

**Automate:** Set Google alerts, subscribe to Substack newsletters, and use social listening tools to get updates on the issues you care about.

**Know Your Meme:** Pay attention to graphic design trends and meme culture.

**Be an Omnivore:** Get outside of your filter bubble – try new platforms, be ideologically agnostic, especially to monitor posts and trends in your area.

**Go Private:** Gen Z are digitally savvy (to say the least) – they may be in closed communities, like Facebook groups – a great source for more open conversations.
What Does Good Look Like?
Creating a Youth Centered Approach: truth’s Ditch Vape/This is Quitting campaign

Impact:
• 500k+ young people started the free, anonymous text program This is Quitting
• Tailored for young people ages 13 to 24
• Increased quit rates by 40%+ compared with control group
• 13.3B TikTok views of This is Quitting content and challenges

 Teens and young adults can join for free by texting DITCHVAPE to 88709

Source: truth initiative, "This is Quitting." Accessed Dec. 1, 2022.
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Share the Love Through Tagging

@ihartericka
she/they
Black queer
femme activist,
writer, highly
acclaimed
speaker and
award-winning
sexuality
educator

9 queer sex educators to follow and learn from
@justsaysk

There's something different here.

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Unique Voices are Amplified

New Jersey @NJGov · Jun 19

happy father’s day

US Consumer Product Safety Commission @USCPSC · Jul 23

Stay safe while staying cool this weekend.

You can’t summon the Grand Raccoon to end the heatwave. You can keep your family safe by opening windows from the top or installing window guards, making sure you watch your kids at the pool, and keeping your portable generator at least 20 feet away from your home if you lose power.
Creating a Public Health Champion
Nick’s Story

There’s something different here.

- Get young people involved!
- Let us lead: We know what our priority issues are, you can help us format, order it
- Seeing young people— and their strengths and weaknesses— hones your messages to them
- Find people who care, even if public health isn’t already their specialty
- The "disengaged young person" stereotype is a myth
- Embrace shared decision-making and youth power
- Shared responsibility for data and experiences can create more relatable, more impactful programs

Don’t be afraid to make a bet

Match your message to your constituency

Nick and a friend with Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine
Measuring Success
What Else is Success?

Defining "success" is a continued challenge in health communications initiatives with behavioral outcomes, but other metrics can count as wins:

- Media wins
- Increased grant funding
- New partnerships
- Renewed, inspired public health workforce
- Builds trust
Questions & Answers
Thank You

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