

# Five Reasons Why Working With the MEDIA IS IMPORTANT



## 1. Media can reach large audiences and targeted audiences.

Media can be an efficient and effective way to reach a diffuse population. They don't call it mass media for nothing. Remember too that media can also be effective in reaching quite targeted sub-groups. Consider, for example, that there are websites and blogs for almost any area of interest you can imagine.



## 2. Teens R Media.

Teens are consuming media in large gulps. According to data from the Kaiser Family Foundation, young people age 8-18 spend an average of nearly 6.5 hours a day—over 44.5 hours a week—with media. If you seek to reach teens where they are—in front of the TV, listening to music, surfing the internet, texting a friend, using mobile technology—then media is where you need to be.



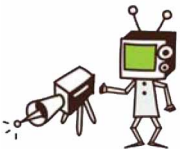
## 3. Media helps set the tone and provide the vocabulary.

Common sense suggests that media helps shape the social script for teens. They help define what's in and what's out, what's cool and what's not, and what appears to be normative behavior.



## 4. Media doesn't necessarily have to cost an arm and a leg.

Having a media campaign doesn't necessarily mean that you have to produce high-cost public service announcements, buy ad space, or deal with talent and royalty fees. Working with the press—your local newspaper and television stations, for instance—doesn't cost a dime, and it can be a particularly effective way to reach opinion leaders.



## 5. Media can change behavior.

Several recent reviews of the effectiveness of media campaigns for a variety of health issues suggest that the media can affect knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. Moreover, several recent studies have specifically noted that media can help change teens' sexual behavior. A review of media campaigns featured in *Managing the Media Monster* suggests that the most successful campaigns tend to promote new, positive behavior rather than trying to prevent or encourage individuals to avoid problem behavior. Although most media campaigns tend to have a modest effect on behavior, it is important to remember that even seemingly modest positive changes in behavior in a large population—those that can be reached through media campaigns—often affect more people than can be reached in smaller groups or through one-on-one discussion/counseling.