

Cassies 2006 Cases

Brand/Case: Pourquoi Commencer

Winner: Best Insight—Gold

Client Credits: Direction de la santé publique (DSP) de Montréal

Dre Élise Roy, Médecin-conseil

Agency Credits: LXB Communication Marketing

Paul Bergeron, Associé responsable
Marie-Ève Côté-Pallascio, Directrice du compte
André Bouchard, Vice-président stratégie
Pier Lalonde, Directeur principal de la création
Jean Bissonnette, Directeur création
Martin Dessureaux, Directeur artistique
Stéphane Castonguay, Henrick Powers, Infographistes
Yves Michel, Directeur média

Crossover Notes: All winning cases contain lessons that cross over from one case to another. David Rutherford has been identifying these as Crossover Notes since Cassies 1997. The full set for Cassies 2006 can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

Crossover Note 1. What a Brand Stands For.
Crossover Note 2. Brand Truths.
Crossover Note 20. Emotional versus Rational.
Crossover Note 23. Problem versus Solution.
Crossover Note 24. Tough Topics.

To see creative, go to the Case Library Index and click on the additional links beside the case.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Results Period (Consecutive Months): June – August 2005
Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: June 2005
Base Period for Comparison: n/a

During the summer, the street youth population of Montreal spikes. Some will be homeless for the summer, others for a longer period. But all will be at high risk of injection drug use. With a budget under \$100,000, this campaign had to find a way to reduce this risk. This is an audience that is virtually impossible to reach, and if you do manage to reach them, they are hostile. Nevertheless, against considerable odds, the campaign managed to make a difference. A post-campaign study of 186 youth¹ showed very encouraging results in terms of the goals that were reached. [Crossover Note 24.](#)

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Street Youth: An Elusive Target

Describing this population becomes highly complicated as we venture deeper:

- Some have chosen homelessness, while it has been forced on others.
- Some have suffered emotional deprivation, while others are fleeing an overly protective parent.
- Some are insecure in this environment, while others feel completely comfortable.
- Some want to leave the streets, others want to stay.
- Still others don't even ask the question.

They don't fit a category—they are a target that refuses to be targeted. [Crossover Note 2.](#)

Invisible to Mass Media

This audience has no regular contact with television, radio, or the Internet, and print does not attract their attention. Signage media might reach them, but the neighborhoods they frequent do not have any media density.

Rejection of Authority

Group meetings and interviews before the campaign confirmed our assumption regarding the tolerance—or rather intolerance—of this audience to societal messages. The mere presence of a Quebec or Canadian government logo was enough for youth to immediately reject it, as they reject rules by an authority figure, be it parent, teacher, or police officer.

Window of Perception

Drug use can undermine understanding. Of the 146 non-IDU youth in the post-campaign survey, 83% had used cannabis in the previous month, 58% speed, 44% ecstasy, 28% cocaine/crack, 25% PCP, 17% mushrooms, 5% solvents, 4% crystal meth, 2% heroin.

¹ Élise Roy, Natalia Gutierrez, Nancy Haley, Carole Morissette, Véronique Denis, Jean-François Boudreau. *Evaluation of a Media Campaign Aimed at Preventing Initiation into Drug Injection Among Street Youth*. Unpublished data presented at the International Conference on Reducing the Harm Caused by Drug Use, Vancouver, May 2006

Overall Objective: Reducing Harm

Despite these obstacles, we had to try to make a difference. **Crossover Note 1.** This was not a cessation campaign, but one to reduce the harm caused by drugs—a focus in the fight against drug addiction for which cities like Vancouver have gone so far as to set up public injection areas to ensure safety.

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

In reaching this audience, we had to keep a powerful force uppermost in our minds: The buzz, the magical thinking, and the desire to be part of the gang.

- In effect, we would be asking youth to resist something that is highly appealing.
- Even though youth know the reasons not to give in, the magical thinking of adolescence makes them think they are impervious.
- Their judgment may have been weakened by the use of substances.
- For some, injection drugs were a rite of passage, a way to prove something to yourself, or to join a clique or be accepted by others.

This led to the following strategic decisions:

- **Rethink segmentation.** Rather than segment by people, focus on the successive stages of drug use. (This was because the cycle for any given person is unpredictable, but the risk associated with injection drug use remains constant.)
- **Don't put an "authority" name on the campaign.** Use a substitute identity.
- **Use extremely powerful images reflecting different stages of drug use,** but be straightforward and factual. **Crossover Note 20.**
- **Go for intensive and simultaneous exposure of all messages,** forgoing the traditional buildup approach. (This is because we could not predict the stage that any given person would be at.)
- **Invent media,** by creating networks, distributing items, and holding stunts.

EXECUTION

A Substitute Logo

We decided not to put a name on the campaign and opted for a substitute identity to prevent youth's natural rejection of the message.

We used a syringe with a needle like a fishhook, with the words "Why start?" This became a message in itself when used in a series of media pieces. It was also the feature tying the various pieces to the same source.



Several Themes, One Tone

We built our argument using executions in these areas: [Crossover Note 23](#).

- **Loss of freedom:** Inspired by an IDU quote: “It’s not the freedom I imagined.”
- **Physical integrity:** While some youth are fans of piercing and tattoos, purulent blisters and facial emaciation are very disturbing. They turn “cool” into “junkie.”
- **Loss of friends:** Injection drug use gradually isolates youth from their support network.
- **Addiction:** Generally the first reason mentioned by non-IDUs, and rightly so since addiction is no myth.
- **Prostitution:** Many youth do not realize that an addiction to injection drugs can lead to things they would never have imagined.

Invented Media

The only traditional media used were backlit platform displays in three subway stations in the target area, and 25 locations in the ZOOM bar and restaurant network. We invented all other media from scratch:

CUSTOM DISPLAY NETWORK:

- In 7 community organizations and 2 medical clinics.
- In 35 area establishments and businesses including convenience stores, tattoo salons, and service and bus station washrooms.
- 40 recycling bin panels.
- 2,500 fence posters.

GUERRILLA DISPLAY SQUAD

- Visits to parks frequented by youth.
- Posters hung with police permission and retrieved 24 hours later.
- This operation was so disturbing that unhappy drug dealers threatened our squad members.

STUNTS

- We had a chalk outline of a body on the street next to one of a syringe. The scene was cordoned off with yellow tape marked “OVERDOSE.” Addiction workers were on hand to meet with youth as needed.

12,700 TAKEAWAY ITEMS

- Knowing that traditional leaflets would be discarded, we printed our messages on items that youth would keep: calling cards, chocolate bars, water bottles, lighters, packets of gum.

(This campaign won the 2006 Grand Prix Média award for media concept of the year)

RESULTS

The following table shows the campaign reach with 186 street youth (including 146 non IDUs). This reach was outstanding, considering the lack of media in the area. The survey was conducted on the streets in late summer and early September.

	Logo	Freedom	Junkie	Loss of friends	Addict	Prostitution	Generic
Reach	92%	84%	60%	74%	73%	44%	75%
Did it affect you?	--	72%	86%	71%	60%	76%	79%
Did they make you think about injection drugs?	--	86%	91%	89%	92%	58%	87%
Did they make you think you should avoid injection drugs?	--	85%	95%	85%	93%	80%	92%
Can they prevent youth from using injection drugs?	--	87%	92%	85%	93%	84%	92%

(The Prostitution execution had restricted exposure, hence the lower reach number.)

Youth felt affected at varying levels (60% to 86%), which validates our strategic decision to use a number of communication themes. The campaign was understood (88%) and made youth think (84%), which is corroborated by the feedback we gathered.

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

No other anti-drug advertising campaign ran during this period. Therefore, the results must be attributable to the campaign.

[Editor's Note: Normally, in social-change cases, the Cassies judges look for "hard" evidence such as proven changes in behaviour. In this case, however, given the impossible difficulties of gathering such information, they relaxed this requirement.]
