Tips for Creating a Successful "Stop Cyberbullying" Campaign

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

Local news media plays a vital role in educating communities about important public safety issues. By holding a "Stop Cyberbullying" editorial contest, Pennsylvania news media organizations can do a great public service and stop cyberbullying.

1. Increase your knowledge of cyberbullying by visiting stopbullying.gov.
2. Create "Stop Cyberbullying" campaign ads by including your news organization's logo, contact information, and details about where to submit editorial contest entries.
3. Determine the number of winning editorial contest entries that will be selected, along with the prize that will be awarded for each.
4. Begin promoting the editorial contest through print and digital ads, and on social media, using #StopCyberBullying throughout your contest period.
5. Encourage local high schools in your area to get involved. Stop by the schools and drop off information about your essay contest.
6. Demonstrate the importance of the "Stop Cyberbullying" challenge by running a series of feature stories on people in your community who have been negatively impacted by someone who was cyberbullied.
7. Hang a "#StopCyberBullying" banner outside your news organization as another way to showcase your campaign.
8. Accept editorial contest entries throughout your contest period.
9. Form a judging committee to review the editorial contest entries. Ask representatives from your local community to help read the essay entries and/or watch the video entries. These could be a teacher, the mayor, a policeman or local librarian, etc. Run a profile of each judge to pique readers' interest before the winner is announced.
10. As another way of drawing attention to your "Stop Cyberbullying" editorial contest, consider posting contest entries on your website, and allow readers to cast their vote for their favorite. Include a link to stopbullying.gov on the webpage so readers can read more about the issue.
11. Judge the editorial contest entries and select a winner(s).
12. Announce the winner(s) of your news organization's "Stop Cyberbullying" editorial contest. Depending on the number of entries received, consider hosting a virtual awards ceremony to announce the winner(s) of your contest, and encourage all of those in attendance to take the pledge, and spread the word to friends and family to do the same. Post a recorded video of the awards event on your website as a reminder of this important commitment.

We are hopeful that the "Stop Cyberbullying" initiative will continue to grow in size and scope; therefore, we suggest that you consider complementing your campaign with some of the following strategies.

- Identify potential corporate sponsors for your "Stop Cyberbullying" campaign. Getting local businesses involved is a win-win for everyone. Sponsor logos are included in all campaign materials highlighting the fact that they are committed to the safety of those in the community. Your news organization wins because it is another way for your advertising staff to build relationships with new and different advertisers.
- Provide window clings to campaign sponsors highlighting their support of, and participation in, the "Stop Cyberbullying" campaign.
- Develop and distribute advertiser-sponsored rewards card to those who take the "Stop Cyberbullying" pledge. The rewards card will give a discount or special offer to those who present the card (10% off at a pizzeria, etc.)
- Develop a school assembly program related to the dangers and effects of cyberbullying. Include people from your community who have been impacted. Ask one of your staff reports or editors to moderate.
- Set-up a table at a school activity to distribute information on the dangers and effects of cyberbullying, and encourage students to take the pledge, on the spot.
- Award an ice cream party (from sponsor donations) to the school that has the largest number of students that take the "Stop Cyberbullying" pledge or enter the essay contest.
- Run an ad after the "Stop Cyberbullying" challenge has ended to thank both sponsors and participants for their commitment and generosity to the community.