

# New tool launched to support development of strong road safety mass media campaigns around the world

In January 2014, WHO released an 'Online library of road safety mass media campaigns', a new resource for governments and civil society organisations. The library, which contains powerful road safety video and audio campaigns from around the world, is intended as inspiration for those planning to produce their own campaigns by offering a range of creative ideas and concepts. It is hoped that facilitating access to these

campaigns will save those planning to produce them valuable time and resources (figure 1).

The library, which is searchable by topic, such as drinking and driving, motorcycle helmets and seatbelts, language or WHO region, currently includes around 60 campaigns from Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, India, Kenya, Mexico, Russian Federation, Spain, Turkey, the UK and Vietnam. Each campaign is presented with a one-page description including the campaign's target audience and key messages.

Mass media campaigns are an important component of a government's overall response to the road safety challenge. In isolation, such campaigns do not have a long-lasting impact on changes in behaviour. However, as a complement to comprehensive road safety legislation and stringent enforcement, they can help increase public awareness and persuade the public to abide by road safety laws.

The screenshot shows the WHO online library of road safety mass media campaigns. The page has a blue header with the WHO logo and navigation links: Health topics, Data, Media centre, Publications, Countries, Programmes, and About WHO. A search bar is located on the right. Below the header, the page is titled 'Violence and Injury Prevention'. The main content area is titled 'Online library of road safety mass media campaigns'. It features a video of a car crash, a text description of road safety statistics, and a search filter section with dropdown menus for Topic, Language, and Region. A 'Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020' logo is also visible.

**Figure 1** Screen shot of the WHO online library of road safety mass media campaigns.

Through the Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Programme, WHO has supported a number of countries to produce such campaigns for television and radio, including a number of those contained in the library. In some countries, these were the first hard-hitting and emotional road safety campaigns ever produced, often highlighting what happens when people fail to follow the law and depicting the tragic consequences for victims and their families.

The development of such campaigns is complex, time-consuming and costly, and must be undertaken with the support of experts in the field at every stage. The process starts with extensive formative research aimed at defining what aspect of the road safety problem needs to be addressed in terms of a desired change in behaviour. This initial research leads to the definition of the target audience and a range of messages and creative concepts that are then scientifically tested by focus groups constituted from this target audience. The findings of the focus groups inform the actual production of the campaign.

Once finalised, a detailed dissemination plan is developed for the campaign, ideally aimed at reaching the highest possible number of people from the target audience and exposing them for the longest period of time to the campaign and its messages. In large part, resources will determine a campaign's level of exposure. Following its broadcast, the campaign is evaluated for its reach and recall by the target audience.

The end result of this four-stage process—research/design, production, dissemination and evaluation—is that each campaign serves a precise target audience in a particular country or context. Each campaign also has a clear storyline and a well-defined message or concrete call to action. Given the need for the development of mass media campaigns to be grounded in science, investing the knowledge, skills and resources required to develop them is vital to their success.

While launching this effort, WHO recognises that more rigour is needed to evaluate the impact of such campaigns as part of a broader package of interventions that includes optimal legislation and law enforcement. Changing the behaviour of road users is a long-term prospect, and ultimately the success of mass media campaigns can be evaluated as one component of

the package that together reduces road traffic deaths and injuries.

According to the WHO *Global status report on road safety 2013*, worldwide more than 1.2 million people die as a result of a road traffic crash each year, and as many as 50 million more are injured. The report indicates, however, that only 28 countries, covering 7% of the world's population, have comprehensive road safety laws on all five key risk factors: drinking and driving, speeding, and failing to use motorcycle helmets, seatbelts and child restraints. Hence, much more needs to be done to increase the pace of legislative change and ensure that laws are enforced. Only then will mass media campaigns add their potential value.

## RELATED LINKS

WHO online library of road safety mass media campaigns

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/videos/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/videos/)

Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Programme

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_traffic/countrywork/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/countrywork/en/index.html)

Global status report on road safety 2013

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2013/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2013/)

WHO road traffic injuries

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_traffic/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/)

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## Swaddling deaths and injuries

Between 2004 and 2011, 36 events involving infant swaddling were reported to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Five involved wearable blankets and 18 involved swaddle wraps. Most deaths were due to positional asphyxia. Swaddling is also associated with an increased risk if the infant is placed to sleep in the prone position or rolls into the prone position (Noted by IBP).