DESIGNING A SUCCESSFUL VERB™ SCORECARD CAMPAIGN IN YOUR COMMUNITY

VERB™

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WHAT IS THE VERB CAMPAIGN?

VERB™ It's what you do, is a national, multicultural social marketing campaign coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The VERB campaign encourages tweens (children aged 9–13 years) to be physically active every day through a combination of paid advertising, school and community promotions and the Internet. The campaign uses a social marketing framework that applies sophisticated marketing techniques to address the public health problem of sedentary lifestyles among America's children.

The campaign, planned as a five-year strategic effort, has proven effective. Since its launch in June 2002, the campaign has achieved phenomenal awareness among tweens, positively influenced tween attitudes toward physical activity and increased tweens' self-reported physical activity levels. The VERB campaign directly and effectively reached the national tween audience and created a demand for physical activity. Campaign partners provide the local opportunities for tweens to be active.

Three-quarters of the nation's tweens report awareness and understanding of the VERB brand: they know what VERB is and they know it's all about being physically active. They also report a high affinity toward the VERB brand: they think VERB is fun and cool.

While the national campaign comes to a close in September 2006, campaign partners can continue to capitalize on the pervasive awareness and renowned brand affinity to draw attention to their own physical activity services and programs for tweens.

CDC's audience research with tweens tells us that children this age are not motivated by the abstract concepts of long-term chronic disease prevention…so the VERB campaign takes a different approach.

The campaign inspires tweens to be physically active. It provides ideas and resources to help tweens find ways to get active, and provides opportunities for them to add physical activity into their everyday lives. VERB changes how tweens think about physical activity by emphasizing its fun and exciting aspects.

- **VERB** is all about being a kid. The spirit or personality of VERB is energizing and entertaining. VERB speaks to tweens in "kid language," including only kid-relevant information.
- **VERB** is about having fun and being with friends – two things that are very important to most children at this age.
- **VERB** is about exploring and discovering. It encourages tweens to find new activities. VERB motivates every tween, not just the athletic ones, to find their verb(s).
- **VERB** encourages trial and praise – "Try it to see if you like it." "You had so much fun today." "Dad would be so proud to know that you …"

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WHAT IS A VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN?

Community groups can take advantage of the VERB campaign's popularity among tweens and give the national campaign local roots. By being associated with the national campaign, community-based VERB Scorecard campaigns benefit from instant recognition and credibility among tweens, which increases the likelihood that the community-based campaign will be successful.

A VERB Scorecard campaign makes physical activity accessible, exciting and rewarding for tweens. The VERB Scorecard is the ticket for tweens to great deals on a variety of fun, cool and physically active special events, services and programs. Tweens track their physical activities on the VERB Scorecard, and redeem completed VERB Scorecards for fun and cool stuff.

"I tried things I never tried before. I went bowling and climbed rocks. I went outside and played more than I usually do."
2004 VERB Scorecard tween participant

Community-based VERB Scorecard campaigns also increase parents' awareness of available physical activity opportunities for tweens, and strengthen the commitment among community partners to make opportunities more accessible. Businesses and service agencies benefit from the increased traffic or participation when tweens bring in the VERB Scorecard and do the VERB to get their cards stamped. Parents have a simple reminder to keep their children active, and plenty of events and great deals to make it easier for them to do so. And, your organization leads the way, catalyzing your community to identify local solutions that advance healthy lifestyles.

"I never thought about if my kids exercised or not. The Scorecard made me think about it every day. And now I'm still checking."
Parent of a 2004 VERB Scorecard participant

Lexington, Kentucky launched the first VERB Scorecard community-based campaign in 2004. Since then many more communities (see page 22) have implemented or planned their own campaigns, each one adapting it to their local data, resources and needs. This guidebook identifies the decisions your community group will need to consider, and describes the steps to implement the basic model of a VERB Scorecard community-based campaign. Adjust the model to your local data, resources and needs.

"Coordinating a VERB Scorecard campaign not only got tweens more active in our community, it spurred us to partner with community agencies and businesses we had never worked with before. Partners were more committed to offering physical activity opportunities to youth even after the campaign. The Health Department's standing increased as we involved the mayor, local sports heroes and the media."
Anita Courtney, Lexington Fayette County Health Department

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KEYS TO SUCCESS

Though VERB Scorecard campaigns are as different as the communities in which they are implemented, several factors are key to success in any location.

▶ *Stay true to the "tween-centered" spirit of VERB.*

VERB is something fun and exciting, not educational, preachy or boring. The VERB campaign is about exploring and discovering and is not an "anti" campaign. The *VERB Logo Terms and Conditions for Non-Profits* on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* is a must read for your entire planning group, and is extremely helpful for understanding the essence of the VERB brand.

Parents and other adult influencers are not the focus of the VERB brand; however, their support, buy-in and partnership are important. Keep messages and information directed toward parents and adults separate from your tween communication. Messaging to parents and other adult influencers should show VERB as a resource and/or partner in helping to raise healthier kids.

"I'm proud to be a part of this campaign. I tell everyone who comes in about it. I've worked here for years and I see how much bigger the kids are getting. I'm going to talk to the owner about selling something besides junk food here."

Employee at VERB Scorecard business partner

VERB Brand Essence

Fueling the exploration, discovery and navigation of kids' dreams

VERB Brand Character

- Enabling
- Supportive
- A kid at heart
- There for you 24/7 (always)

▶ *Keep the VERB Scorecard campaign for tweens.*

When younger children are part of events, the events lose appeal to tweens. It is better to let younger children look forward to participating in VERB Scorecard activities when they get older, and catch the physical activity bug by watching older children be enthusiastic about the VERB campaign.

VERB Tween Audience Research

Visit www.cdc.gov/verb to read VERB tween audience research reports. Click Research → Formative Research → Resources and Reports

▶ *Integrate the 4 P's of marketing into the campaign design.*

The VERB campaign uses a social marketing framework that applies sophisticated marketing techniques to address a public health issue. Why would your community group want or need to use this framework as you plan your VERB Scorecard campaign? The effectiveness of your campaign depends on how well you know your audience, and using a social marketing framework to guide your planning group keeps your campaign consumer-focused and consumer-driven.

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PRODUCT

The product is physical activity, and to market the product successfully, it must offer the consumer benefits that they truly want and provide solutions to their important problems.

A community-based VERB Scorecard campaign positions the product, physical activity, as providing the benefits that tweens truly want: having fun, being with friends, being cool and trying new skills. The long-term health benefits of physical activity are not the benefits that tweens want at this stage of their lives, and are not motivating to them.

Community-based Marketing Strategy Formation

The Florida Prevention Research Center's *Promoting Physical Activity in Community Settings* on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* is a workbook that you can use to develop your marketing strategy.

PRICE

More than just dollars and cents, price includes the psychological and social costs that the consumer exchanges for the product benefits. What is it that tweens have to give up in order to be physically active?

Embarrassment and the fear of being teased or ridiculed are major costs of physical activity for some tweens. Successful VERB Scorecard campaigns reduce this barrier by providing a variety of activity opportunities, both non-competitive and those offering friendly competition.

Tweens must be willing to exchange time that could be spent doing something else – playing video games, talking on the cell phone or just chillin' – for time to be physically active. Successful VERB Scorecard campaigns increase the value of physical activity by offering prizes and emphasizing fun, friends and the cool factor.

PLACE

Place refers to the locations where tweens get the product – locations where they can be physically active. And, place refers to everything about the locations: when they are open, when they are not; how tweens get there and whether parking is available; how welcoming, attractive, comfortable – and safe tweens think they are.

Successful VERB Scorecard campaigns offer events, deals and activities in a variety of places. Carefully consider the transportation needs of the tween audience, and/or consider going where the tweens already are.

PROMOTION

Consistent, persistent, targeted communication is key to getting and keeping tweens involved in the VERB Scorecard campaign. Successful campaigns strategically use a variety of channels: advertising, public relations, printed materials, promotional items, signage, special events, video showings, displays and local celebrity involvement. They also clearly define the audience intended to be reached with each promotional message, and place the targeted messages where the intended audience will be exposed to it.

Go where the tweens already are: place your promotional messages and materials in the media that tweens consume, and in the locations where tweens convene. If tweens in your community don't read the local newspaper, your tween-directed advertisement published there won't reach them. You may more effectively and efficiently reach the tween audience by working with the manager of the local tween hang-out to promote the campaign on the premises.

Promotion to reach parents of tweens, potential community partners and other important stakeholders is a necessary part of your campaign. While you may not reach tweens with an advertisement in your local paper, you may reach the adult audience through this medium. Successful campaigns use a variety of promotion channels to strategically reach the adult influencer audience. Remember the first key to success: keep messages and information directed toward parents and adults separate from your tween communication.

▶ *Design the campaign elements and promotion to appeal to tween needs and motivators.*

Impacting tween lives requires that we understand them and the lives they lead everyday. Straddling the fence between childhood and choice, tweens are branching out, looking to activity opportunities, both non-competitive and those offering friendly competition.

Fun opens the tween world, but is defined in many different ways. Highly affected by peers, tweens face pressures and often worry about how they will fit in and interact with others. (Tweens is a marketing term. Children this age do not call themselves tweens, nor respond to communication that calls them tweens.)

ACCEPTANCE

Create opportunities for tweens to be with their friends of all skills and abilities. Reduce the embarrassment factor by offering some non-competitive options. Make up games that put skills in a new context.

BELONGING

Aim for inclusive exclusivity – kids will feel in the know about the special identity and connectedness around their very own tween brand and their exclusive VERB Scorecard prize, promotions and events.

MASTERY OF NEW SKILLS

Provide activities with skill-building opportunities, giving kids confidence and self-satisfaction.

FUN

Let tweens feel like the possibilities to be active are endless in this world.

FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

Feature choice and flexibility in your VERB Scorecard campaign special events, great deals and physical activity opportunities.

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ORGANIZING YOUR PLANNING TEAM AND RECRUITING PARTNERS

Identify a lead agency and the source of funding that will support your campaign. One agency directing the campaign assures that there is specified leadership and that things get done. But in most cases, the lead agency wouldn't want to attempt it alone. It takes a community to build a broad-based, effective VERB Scorecard campaign.

VERB Scorecard campaigns have been implemented on shoe-string budgets, but even the size of the shoe-string has ranged from $100 to $1,200 to $35,000 plus staff time. Line items in the campaign budget include promotional materials, printing, prizes, special events, billboards, advertising and contract labor.

Possible Planning Barriers

Limited Staffing

Keep It Simple, Sweetie. Make all decisions with simplicity in mind when staff time is limited. Share and delegate the workload with your partner organizations.

Limited Budget

Previous VERB Scorecard campaign sites with limited funds relied on donations or dove-tailed with other events. Prioritize the campaign elements, and then similarly prioritize the expenditures. Borrow ideas, graphics and video clips from other VERB Scorecard campaign sites on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM*.

Possible Lead Agencies

- State or local health departments
- City or County parks and recreation departments
- Cooperative Extensions
- YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs or other youth-serving organizations
- Middle schools
- Youth advocacy groups

▶ ***Allow for adequate time to plan, implement and evaluate your campaign.***

Though some communities have organized a VERB Scorecard campaign in three months, it is recommended that groups allow at least six months prior to the kick-off date. Nine to 12 months lead time is even better.

You'll need ample time to pre-test your campaign design and materials, promote the campaign and, if included in your evaluation design, collect baseline survey data. Make sure your timeline incorporates the special events calendar, and delineates deadlines for partner recruitment, prize solicitation and materials design, development, printing and distribution.

▶ ***Develop partnerships to establish your planning team.***

The more partners, the more reach and visibility a campaign has. Your community group will need partners to help plan, implement and evaluate your VERB Scorecard campaign. And, your planning team will need partners as vendors to offer great deals, host special events and contribute prizes.

List the groups in your community that are interested in youth, physical activity and/or health, and that you could recruit to your planning team. Expand your potential partner list by reaching out to groups and individuals with which your organization or agency hasn't worked before. Include a youth board on your planning team to garner input from the kids.

Partners can be invited by highlighting the important role they can play and/or appealing to their self-interest. Consider drawing up Memorandums of Agreement with participating partners so there is no misunderstanding about each group's role in the campaign.

▶ *Manage the campaign workload through subcommittees.*

Conduct the work of the planning team in subcommittees that meet more frequently, and connect all the dots through regular meetings with the entire planning team. Coordinate the campaign elements through one lead staff person. To distribute the workload, assign campaign duties to several staff people as a significant, short-term project. Consider hiring part-time, temporary or contract staff.

Possible Subcommittees

- Steering or leadership group
- Youth or tween board
- Evaluation or research and evaluation
- Partner/vendor (both for-profit and non-profit) recruitment
- VERB Scorecard design and pre-testing
- VERB Scorecard distribution
- Prize solicitation, selection, purchase and distribution
- Marketing and promotion
- Special events, including a kick-off event and/or grand finale event

Recruiting Businesses

Recruiting your VERB Scorecard campaign vendors is labor intensive. Lexington, Kentucky hired a temporary staff person specifically to manage this part of the campaign.

▶ *Develop partnerships to enlist VERB Scorecard campaign vendors.*

Recruit businesses and non-profit agencies as VERB Scorecard campaign vendors that offer great deals on physical activity services, host special events and contribute prizes.

Make the benefits – *the What's In It For Them?* – clear to them. The VERB Scorecard campaign provides additional advertising, is positive for business or enrollment, and promotes a positive image of the business or agency as a leader in making your community healthier and more livable.

Use the personal connections of your planning team members to telephone or visit potential partners/vendors. Keep letters and other information short and easy for them. Showing sample VERB Scorecards, videos, ads and articles from other communities may help vendors quickly see the tremendous potential of this campaign. Get started with ideas, recruitment letters and video clips on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM.*

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VERB SCORECARD PARTNERS AND VENDORS

POSSIBLE PARTNERS IN ALL COMMUNITY SECTORS / POSSIBLE PARTNER ROLES	Planning Team	Evaluation and Research Team	Offer Great Deals on Physical Activity Services, Classes or Programs	Host Clinics, Classes or Special Events	Contribute Prizes	Distribute VERB Scorecards	Promote VERB Scorecard Campaign	Viral Marketing Buzz Agents or Street Teams	Spokespersons and Emcees
Parks and recreation, community centers	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		
Middle schools, after school programs	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔		
YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girls, Inc., Cooperative Extension, 4-H clubs	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		
Physical activity businesses: skating rinks, bowling alleys, climbing walls, swimming pools, boat rental, tennis courts and sports training, dance, gymnastic, yoga and martial arts studios			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		
Camps			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		
Faith-based groups	✔			✔		✔	✔		
PTA	✔					✔	✔		
Youth advocacy groups	✔					✔	✔		
High school and college students	✔	✔				✔	✔	✔	
Local athletes (high school, college, professional)				✔			✔		✔
Local celebrities							✔		✔
TV / Radio stations				✔		✔	✔		✔
Newspapers						✔	✔		
Summer food service programs						✔	✔		
Libraries				✔		✔	✔		
Local and ethnic businesses: sporting goods stores, malls, department stores, movie theaters, fast food and other restaurants					✔	✔	✔		

This list is provided solely as a service to our partners, and does not constitute an endorsement of any organization by CDC or the Federal Government, and none should be inferred.

DESIGNING YOUR VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN MODEL

This guidebook organizes your planning efforts and shares the experiences of previous VERB Scorecard campaign sites. Successfully tailoring the campaign model requires reliable data on which to base decisions. Your planning team should have enough information to reasonably assess and understand your community, even if the most precise or rigorous statistical data is not available to you. The design of your campaign is impacted by your target audience segments, partner/vendor participation, your planning team and other community needs and resources.

▶ *Target audience: How will you segment the tween audience?*

Segmenting your tween audience focuses the design of your campaign model, keeps your planning team on strategy and enables your campaign to have the most direct and measurable impact. Segmentation doesn't exclude participation, rather it keeps the needs and motivations of your target segments firmly in mind as you design your campaign.

Your campaign model may segment the tween audience by current physical activity level: Superstars, Moderately Active, Passive and High Risk for Inactivity. Previous campaign sites have strategically focused on Moderately Active and Passive audience segments, as these tweens are most likely to make measurable changes. Tweens in the Superstar segment are already very active, and those in the High Risk for Inactivity group often have many barriers making it hard for a short-term campaign to reach them.

Segmenting the tween audience by their current involvement in structured after school or recreation programs influences campaign elements like the timing of discounts and special events (during the day or in the evening).

Some previous VERB Scorecard sites promoted their campaign to all tweens community-wide. This is appropriate if you have sufficient staff and resources to comprehensively promote the campaign, and sufficient community partners/vendors providing broad-based VERB Scorecard opportunities. This model may help your planning team reach more tweens while also increasing community awareness about the importance of regular youth physical activity.

Other sites narrowed the audience to tweens with which they had regular access: after school program participants, members of existing groups or clubs, etc. Wolfe County, Kentucky targeted several elementary schools, and 90% of the students turned in completed VERB Scorecards. This design may be appropriate if you have a limited number of community partners/vendors participating. Creative, persistent promotion is still needed to reach tweens, but using fewer channels can be much cheaper. The downside is that the rest of the community may never hear about the campaign.

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Behavioral goal: How many squares will tweens have to complete on the VERB Scorecard?

Tweens track their time spent being physically active on the VERB Scorecards. The number of marked squares that complete the VERB Scorecard depends on the length of the campaign, the current activity level of the target audience segments and the available opportunities in your area.

Children should get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity most days of the week, preferably every day. www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines Less active tweens may need to progressively build up to that level. Ask your target audience through your campaign pre-testing what would be a challenging amount of time.

Twenty-four squares, with each square representing 60 minutes of activity, have worked well for a number of sites targeting Moderately Active and Passive audience segments with two month campaigns. Clay County, Kentucky used 30 minute intervals in their campaign design to reach a sedentary audience segment.

Time frame: When will your campaign begin and end?

VERB Summer Scorecards, VERB Fall Break Scorecards, VERB Holiday Scorecards and VERB Scorecards that coincide with the school year have all been implemented by previous campaign sites.

Though tweens tend to have more free-time in the summer, the inability to promote the campaign through schools creates challenges. Longer campaigns require more work, though they give tweens the opportunities to accumulate more physical activity hours. Be cautious that on-going can quickly become routine and boring to this age group. Shorter time frames may work better when funds are tight and staff time is limited.

Physical activity opportunities: What great deals and special events will you offer in your campaign?

The variety and quantity of physical activity opportunities, great deals and special events depends largely on the availability of businesses, classes, programs and clubs in your community. Ask tweens what activities they want included in the campaign. Stay true to VERB's spirit of discovery and exploration by providing tweens with many opportunities to try new things.

Some previous VERB Scorecard communities created opportunities for tweens to get their VERB Scorecards stamped with energizing special events (see page 19).

Partners/Vendors Offer a Variety of Physical Activities

- Reduced price and free admission for VERB Scorecard holders to pools, gyms, martial arts and dance studios, golf courses and miniature golf, bowling, tennis, skating, classes and camps
- Special classes and skill building clinics
- Events like tween dances or special hours
- Coupons just for kids who complete a VERB Scorecard

▶ *Participation requirements: Will you require tweens to enroll in your campaign?*

Most sites have allowed tweens to download VERB Scorecards from the Internet, or pick them up at schools, after school programs or at participating partner/vendor sites without enrolling. While not requiring enrollment enables wide distribution, the lack of a tracking mechanism can make it difficult to reach VERB Scorecard holders during the campaign for evaluation purposes.

Winchester, Kentucky required parents to enroll their children in the campaign and sign a permission form. Campaign enrollment was held at soccer, baseball and the library reading program registrations. Though the number of cards that were distributed was low relative to the number of tweens in the population, this design assured that parents knew about the program and possibly elicited more parental support.

Collecting contact information (like name, age, email, zip code) on completed and redeemed VERB Scorecards not only offers your evaluation team valuable post-campaign data, it's necessary if you will distribute prizes via U.S. mail. Parent's permission may be needed to collect or analyze personal information.

▶ *Participation requirements: Will you require that activities be done only at official VERB Scorecard sites, or will you allow physical activity at home?*

The audience segments that your campaign targets and the number of available vendors impacts the design of this campaign element. If at-home physical activities are allowed, your campaign design needs to include information to parents and promotions for tweens with ideas for creating active home lives.

In Lexington, Kentucky's first campaign, tweens were required to get at least half of the squares stamped at official VERB Scorecard vendors and partner events, while the other half could be initialed by parents for physical activities performed at home. Adjusting their model to respond to transportation barriers and concerns from over-scheduled families, the second year's campaign design allowed all squares to be initialed by parents for at-home activities. Overall tween participation rates more than doubled the second year, although VERB Scorecard use at business partners and attendance at special events decreased. Suspected cheating may have also increased in the second year. It is not known if the enhanced promotion or the design change increased tween participation.

▶ *Tracking physical activity: How will you track that the physical activity was performed?*

VERB Scorecard partners/vendors and parents initial the VERB Scorecard to verify physical activity was performed for the specified number of minutes. Consider asking your partners/vendors to use a unique identifier, a special hole-punch or sticker to monitor VERB Scorecard use at each partner/vendor location.

Web sites, toll-free telephone number or text messaging systems could also be used to track physical activity.

Cheating?

Some sites had concerns that tweens were turning in completed VERB Scorecards that were not truly reflective of their activity. Limiting to one completed VERB Scorecard per person that can be redeemed for prizes could reduce the impact of cheating. Requiring a parent's signature may also help.

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THE BIG PAY-OFF: REWARDING TWEEN BEHAVIOR WITH PRIZES, PERKS AND REWARDS

Prizes, special benefits and rewards add excitement to your campaign and pay-off the anticipation of your campaign's promise. Research shows that tweens value incentives and public recognition. Build an image of inclusive exclusivity by rewarding the physical activity of all tweens who participate (inclusive) with prizes and rewards that are just for VERB Scorecard participants (exclusivity).

Prizes and rewards also appeal to parents, who revealed in previous VERB Scorecard campaign focus groups that valuable prizes, like YMCA memberships, increased their willingness to support their children's participation in the campaign.

Prizes can be donated or purchased. Persuade partners/vendors that prize contributions are a good advertising opportunity by including their name or logo on VERB Scorecards and other promotional materials.

▶ ***Campaign incentives: What prizes, perks or rewards will you offer?***

Most VERB Scorecard campaigns have offered small prizes for all tween participants as well as significant grand prizes for some participants. Small prizes for each tween who turns in a completed VERB Scorecard makes every child feel included and rewarded. Previous VERB Scorecard campaigns have awarded a limited number of valuable, appealing grand prizes by randomly selecting winners from all completed VERB Scorecards. Friendly competition for the limited number of grand prizes can motivate tweens to be more active.

Small Prize Suggestions

- Nylon sports bags
- Water bottles
- Flying discs
- Awareness wristbands
- Footbags (or HackeySacks®)

Prizes also identify tweens after the campaign is over as a VERB Scorecard participant when they use their incentive prize in public – keeping the campaign buzz buzzing.

Of course, choosing prizes that reinforce physical activity makes sense. Video games and fast food coupons may be offered, but your planning team can decline prizes that don't fit the VERB brand.

Special events (see page 19), classes or clinics just for VERB Scorecard holders are perks that bolster the inclusive exclusivity image for the tweens. Ask your partners/vendors to offer special hours or events just for VERB Scorecard holders. Recruit local high school or college athletes to conduct special classes or skills clinics.

Other Perks

- Meeting local celebs at VERB Scorecard events
- Running the bases on a professional baseball field at grand finale event
- Appearing on TV talk shows
- Attendance at special active events
- Being featured in promotional materials for the next year's VERB Scorecard campaign

The small prize distribution and grand prize drawing can be held at a grand finale event (see page 19) just for VERB Scorecard participants. Distribute small prizes to each tween as the completed VERB Scorecard is turned in. For the grand prize drawing, keep in mind that not every prize is desirable to every tween. It works well to let tweens pick the prize they want in the order in which their cards are drawn. For example, the first name drawn selects a prize from the grand prize list. The selected prize is crossed off the list, and the second name drawn picks from the remaining prizes, and so on.

If a culminating event isn't included in your campaign design, there are several options that previous VERB Scorecard sites have used.

- Hold the grand prize drawing with just representatives from your partner organizations present. Afterward, notify the winners and mail prizes.
- Tweens can turn in their completed VERB Scorecards and receive their small prizes at some of the VERB Scorecard partner/vendor sites (libraries, schools and after school programs). Your planning team needs to stock their supply of small prizes beforehand, and collect the redeemed VERB Scorecards afterward.

Wolfe County, Kentucky distributed their prizes through the school classrooms that they targeted, with a prize awarded to the student in each class who had been the most physically active.

Grand Prize Suggestions

- Autographed basketballs, footballs and baseballs
- YMCA, Children's Museum, fitness center and gym memberships
- Taekwondo, gymnastics, tennis and dance class series
- Private roller skating lessons
- Week long summer camp admissions
- Apple iPod®
- Gift certificates from sporting good stores
- Tennis shoes
- Bike and scooters with helmets
- Tennis rackets
- Birthday party packages at skating rinks and bowling alleys
- Inflatable jump rentals
- Kayak rentals and kayak excursions
- Golf greens fees
- Snorkeling equipment
- Girl Scouts camping kits (sleeping bag, compass, mess kit)
- Boy Scouts camping trips
- Karate uniforms
- Dance pads and Dance Dance Revolution®
- Cases of bottled water
- Caving expeditions

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DESIGNING AND TESTING YOUR VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The design of your VERB Scorecards and promotional materials depends on your budget, the number of great deals and special events offered and, most importantly, the results of your pre-tests with the tween audience.

The overall look and feel of your VERB Scorecards and other materials is bright, edge-y, active and energetic. To aide recognition, the VERB Scorecards and all your promotional materials should have the same look and feel, using the same color schemes, graphical elements, etc.

▶ *VERB Scorecard design: Will you use a VERB Scorecard, a coupon book or another design?*

The graphic challenge of this campaign element is fitting a lot of information in a small space while keeping it readable and appealing to tweens. The VERB Scorecard lists the great deals, cool prizes, the participating partner/vendor locations and a calendar of special events, as well as provides a space for tweens to track their time spent being physically active.

Consider designing and producing your VERB Scorecard to reduce the chance that the card will be lost. Previous VERB Scorecard sites perforated the VERB Scorecard – separating the tracking squares from the other information, and enabling tweens to keep it in their pocket or wallet. Other possibilities include putting it on a lanyard or a ring to hang from a backpack.

Graphic Designs and Ideas

Use the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* for creative graphic ideas and designs for your VERB Scorecard and other materials.

▶ *VERB Scorecard production: How many VERB Scorecards will you need to produce?*

If the budget allows, print twice the number of the target audience (i.e., if there are 5,000 tweens in your community, print 10,000 cards). Tweens are like other consumers who have to see something several times before acting. And, despite how well you designed to prevent it, some VERB Scorecards will get lost.

Testing Your Model and Materials

Though the campaign models and ideas described in this guidebook have been used in previous VERB Scorecard communities, it is important to test your campaign model and materials with your target audience. If you hear consistent concerns from the target audience, be ready to make changes.

- Focus groups – A trained moderator facilitates discussion among 12 or less research participants to explore the feasibility of your campaign model, and the reactions to your materials and concepts.
- Intercept interviews – Survey tweens and their parents where they normally convene and tend to have some time (libraries, after school programs, shopping malls).
- High school students and members of your youth board can be trained as interviewers and moderators. The rapport between older teens and tween research participants may elicit more useful information for your formative research.

LAUNCHING YOUR VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN

You've planned and prepared, designed and pre-tested – now, you're ready to launch your VERB Scorecard campaign.

▶ *Distribute VERB Scorecards.*

If you have designed a community-wide campaign, distribute the VERB Scorecards widely throughout your community: at your partner/vendor locations as well as through schools, after school programs and other youth clubs. You can also distribute the VERB Scorecards at businesses that tweens regularly gather, such as fast food restaurants, movie theaters, etc. Consider putting the VERB Scorecards in upright Plexiglas® containers to be displayed on the countertops of business partners.

If you will implement your campaign through existing groups to which you have regular access, distribution is easy: just pass them out when the tweens are gathered in their group.

If you have a web site, post your VERB Scorecard so that tweens can download it. Get other tween web sites to link to your VERB Scorecard site.

Several VERB Scorecard sites held school-wide assemblies at elementary and middle schools with high school athletes as the hosts to create excitement about the campaign and distribute the VERB Scorecards.

Physical education and health classes in schools are great distribution channels. Including private schools and home-school associations ensures broader participation. Make it easy for the teachers by packing the cards neatly and delivering them in bundles. Giving teachers a small prize or incentive for their help never hurts. Lexington, Kentucky offered a $500 incentive for the school that had the highest percentage of VERB Scorecard participants.

▶ *Promote the VERB Scorecard Campaign.*

Go where tweens go. Be creative. Think outside the box.

If you designed a long campaign, the promotion will need to be refreshed to sustain it over the time frame. If the

Use a Variety of Promotional Channels

- Window clings, banners, flyers and/or posters in schools, youth clubs, businesses and VERB Scorecard partners/vendors
- Kick-off assemblies and intercom announcements at middle and elementary schools
- Video clips played in schools, wherever VERB Scorecards are distributed, in group settings where kids are inclined to view a monitor
- Viral marketing – ask tweens to e-mail and IM their friends
- VERB Scorecard websites – links and ads on partners'/vendors' websites
- Feature VERB Scorecard events in school planners, calendars and marquises
- Planning team partners' and other organizations' print and on-line newsletters
- Parent promotion through pay envelopes, utility bills, company picnics, e-mails and employee wellness programs
- Television station co-sponsorships, PSAs, news stories and calendar announcements
- Coverage on local morning, noon and evening television programming (cable channels and major network affiliates)
- Press releases, newspaper articles, calendar announcements, and community page or front page Post-it note ads
- Radio PSAs, remote broadcasts and talk shows
- Billboards and electronic billboards
- Ads played in the theater before the movie starts

campaign design is community-wide, the promotion will need to be community-wide. In larger communities, there may be so many competing messages and so much information noise that it's hard to break through the clutter to show up on tweens' radar screens. In these instances, creative and comprehensive promotion is a must. Targeting established groups of tweens may help to narrow the promotion channels that you use.

Campaign spokespersons can increase campaign visibility and add excitement. Ask them to make PSAs or emcee special events. Choose people that tweens in your community look up to and think are cool: celebrities, athletes, radio or television personalities. Dignitaries and elected officials add visibility and help you reach parents and adult influencers, but be cautious using these spokespersons to reach tweens.

Recruit energetic, enthusiastic and healthy high school or college students as buzz agents, Street Teams and volunteers for special events. Buzz agents are campaign ambassadors who promote your campaign through their own e-mail contacts, blogs and circle of friends. Street Teams are an organized group of campaign ambassadors. They drop-in at malls, video arcades, school assemblies, after school clubs, etc. to engage tweens in short and fun physical activity and promote the VERB Scorecard campaign at the same time.

Lexington, Kentucky's television partner and co-sponsor produced and regularly aired a PSA to announce special events. The PSA featured a previous VERB Scorecard participant. Sarasota, Florida hired a marketing liaison to keep their campaigns in the news.

▶ *Overcome the transportation barrier for tweens.*

Previous VERB Scorecard sites have creatively addressed transportation concerns and barriers. Offer events and activities at the places tweens naturally convene (after school programs, camps, youth groups, neighborhoods) or that are easily accessible. Recruit community centers and faith-based groups to transport tweens to activities and events. Offer events after parents' work hours. Lexington, Kentucky developed a partnership with their mass transit agency to allow the VERB Scorecard to double as a bus/trolley pass.

▶ *Monitor the campaign.*

Once the campaign starts, it's important to check-in with your VERB Scorecard partners/vendors to ensure that the campaign is running as planned. Giving your partners/vendors a clearly written, one-page how-to may minimize problems. Campaign monitoring forms and partner surveys on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* can be used to systematically check to see where adjustments need to be made.

Previous VERB Scorecard campaign planning teams found a few problems as they monitored campaign implementation:

- Posters taped on a garbage can at a fast food restaurant distribution site
- Classes listed on VERB Scorecard cancelled without notification
- VERB Scorecard countertop display and poster kept under the counter

They also found good things such as:

- Business owners explaining the campaign to tweens
- Tweens finding new VERBs by using their VERB Scorecards
- Parents committed to helping their children complete the VERB Scorecard

Promotional Ideas and Materials

Use the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* for creative promotional ideas, graphics, video clips and other materials.

EVALUATING YOUR VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN

As with all campaigns, the evaluation of your VERB Scorecard campaign should be built in from the beginning. Your planning team will need to demonstrate the value of your campaign and its effectiveness influencing your target audience to interested stakeholders, such as your campaign funders and partners.

Pre- and post-surveys provide your planning and evaluation teams with quantitative data that will help you assess the overall progress toward your campaign objectives. Collect baseline data from tweens (and parents, if a part of your evaluation design) just before the campaign starts, and collect post-campaign data immediately after the campaign concludes. Long delays between the conclusion of your campaign and the collection of post-campaign data will dilute this measurement of the behavioral impact of your campaign.

If a grand finale is held, post-campaign surveys can be administered with tweens and parents on-site in exchange for a small incentive. Follow-up surveys can also be administered with tweens in classrooms, after school programs, etc. and with parents via telephone. Your planning team can gain useful information from partner/vendor surveys.

The demographic information on the back of completed VERB Scorecards can give your evaluation team the information to identify trends in zip codes, ages, genders, the most and least popular physical activities, participation and attendance at partner/vendor facilities and events.

Including a question in your surveys or on the back of the VERB Scorecard about where participants heard about the campaign can suggest which promotional efforts were more effective. In Bowling Green, Kentucky, the public libraries were by far the most popular VERB Scorecard distribution site, followed by the a local skating center and the parks and recreation department.

The combined number of hours on all completed VERB Scorecard can be used to calculate the cost of the campaign per hour of physical activity that resulted. Lexington, Kentucky determined that their campaign cost $3.52 per physical activity hour in 2004, and $0.67 per physical activity hour in 2005 (the total possible hours on a completed VERB Scorecard multiplied by number of completed and redeemed VERB Scorecards divided by the total budget).

Research and Evaluation Tools

Use the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* for logic models, survey instruments and other resources.

The previous campaign sites have been challenged to quantify anecdotal reports from community members that many tweens participated in the campaign, but didn't totally complete the VERB Scorecard or completed it, but didn't redeem it for prizes. A survey of all campaign participants to assess the extent of their participation hasn't yet shown to be practical.

Share your evaluation findings with your entire planning team, your partners/vendors, the media and other interested stakeholders to begin cultivating support for your next campaign.

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Special Event Ideas from Previous Campaign Sites

Sarasota, Florida launched their campaign with a well-attended dance at the public library.

A member of the Bowling Green, Kentucky coalition provided his roller skating rink at no charge to host their campaign kick-off. This same coalition hosted a special event for a group of tweens in their own neighborhood.

Henderson, Kentucky held an *Amazing Race* event in partnership with their State Park Association. Tweens were divided into teams and used clues, canoes and trails to race to the finish line. This campaign site also tied-in their grand finale to an existing annual event in the community.

Winchester, Kentucky implemented a less labor intensive grand finale event. VERB Scorecard holders and their families were treated to a free swimming party after regular pool hours. The prize drawing was held at the end. Tweens gave this grand finale swim high marks for fun.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Keep tweens excited about the VERB Scorecard campaign by offering a variety of special events. Your partners/vendors can host smaller scale special events at their facilities or businesses just for VERB Scorecard holders, such as special hours just for tweens, tween dances and other exclusive perks.

On a grander scale, community-wide special events are great opportunities for tweens, and can increase awareness of the issues among parents and other adult influencers. Design special events to keep tweens and parents thinking about physical activity well after your VERB Scorecard campaign. Rotate tweens through fun and cool activity stations, while parents can sign-up their children for physical activity classes, teams, programs and camps at separate registration tables staffed by your partners/vendors.

However, community-wide special events are labor intensive and should only be undertaken if you have sufficient staff and partner support, and can assure a good crowd by holding the event where tweens naturally convene, having programs that serve youth transport large numbers of tweens to the event or having sufficient promotion to draw large numbers.

Some previous campaign communities have piggy-backed their VERB Scorecard event with an existing community event to simplify the organizing process. Be sure that there is a natural relationship and complementary goals with any event with which you collaborate. With this approach, the workload for your planning team may be lighter: set up a table and/or tent, collect VERB Scorecards, distribute small prizes and hold the grand prize drawing.

More Activity Ideas for Your Promotional Events

- Salsa and hip hop dancing
- Jump rope and hula hoop contests
- Free play
- Whiffle ball
- Fishing derby
- Try-athalon
- Inflatable slides
- Oversized inflatable basketball hoop
- Hip Hop scotch
- Sack races
- 3 legged races
- Aerobics classes
- Water play
- Basketball clinics
- Open gym
- Volleyball
- Frisbee® golf
- Miniature golf
- Football Target Throw
- Softball Throw
- Kickball
- Tag games
- Relay races
- Parachute activities
- Tug-of-War
- 4 squares
- Archery
- Bike rodeo
- Skateboard wizards
- "Test drive" fitness equipment
- Hydration station (free bottled water)

However, your planning team's ability to draw large numbers of tweens relies absolutely on the other event organizers' ability to market the event and draw a crowd. Also, a tie-in with another event could lessen the brand identity of your campaign among your target audience (i.e., your VERB Scorecard campaign could be perceived as The Other Event's Scorecard campaign).

▶ *Kick-Off Events*

A rousing kick-off event is a great way to launch your campaign, distribute VERB Scorecards, create buzz among youth and generate media attention for the campaign. Multiply the effect with several kick-off events held throughout your community.

▶ *Grand Finale*

Motivate and inspire tweens with a spectacular grand finale event designed just for them. Tweens can redeem their completed VERB Scorecards, pick up their small prizes and anticipate winning big in the grand prize drawing.

Make the grand prize drawing the pinnacle of the exhilarating event. Local celebrities, athletes and radio/television personalities that are cool to the tweens add interest to the grand prize drawing. Make sure your emcee is experienced and comfortable on the microphone and keeping the crowd engaged. Radio personalities and sports announcers have worked well for previous campaign sites. Keeping this part of the event short works well for energetic tweens. Finish with active fanfare, like letting tweens run the bases of a baseball diamond, swim a lap, do the wave or high-five the celebrities.

▶ *Promotional Concepts and Ideas*

Borrow promotional concepts and ideas on the *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* to host special events throughout your campaign. Use a promotional concept to coordinate your kick-off or grand finale events, or mix special promotions throughout your campaign schedule. And, participation in these events can count toward VERB Scorecard completion.

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LONGEST DAY OF PLAY

The *Longest Day of Play* (LDOP) celebrates the Summer Solstice (usually around June 21st) as not only the longest day of the year, but the longest day of play. Take advantage of the daylight and have activities for tweens late into the evening, giving the event a special feel.

In one previous campaign community, three different LDOP events were offered: one at a church, one at a community center and another at a YMCA. Each LDOP event was held in a different part of town with a different segment of the population, and was organized by a different partner to distribute the workload.

MAKE IT UP

Make It Up promotions develop a child's imagination as they participate in physical activities. The *VERB Scorecard Campaign CD-ROM* has game ideas to get you started, but don't stop with these games! Challenge your kids to come up with their own games and activities.

ANYTIME/DOUBLETIME

Take 2 VERBs, Make 1 Game and GO! That's the idea behind *Anytime/Doubletime*. Play VolleyHackey: tweens kick a footbag (HackeySack®) over a lowered volleyball net or limbo stick to score points just like a volleyball game. Try BirdieBall: Dial up the fun on the diamond by replacing the baseball with a birdie, and the gloves and bats with badminton rackets.

ANYTOUR

Be active, anywhere, anytime, with anything – that's the message you can convey with your own *Anytour*. Various activity stations, staffed with energetic and enthusiastic high school or college students, give tweens a chance to move in creative ways. Play trashcan ball or use sockballs for footbags (HackeySack®). It's amazing how laundry baskets, brooms and duct tape balls can keep tweens active for an extended time period.

APPENDIX

VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN COMMUNITIES

Ashland, Kentucky
Bowling Green, Kentucky
Clay County, Kentucky
Greeley, Colorado
Hazard, Kentucky
Henderson County, Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky
Nebraska Health and Human Services System
Sarasota, Florida
Sebring, Florida
Somerset, Kentucky
Story County, Iowa
Tampa, Florida
Winchester, Kentucky
Wolfe County, Kentucky

APPENDIX

A FEW LAST WORDS ...

We hope that you find these materials useful as you encourage children to be active throughout their lives and inspire them to find the fun in all types of new activities. Your continued efforts and enthusiasm can help lead today's youth into long, healthy, active lives. Keep the ball rolling – and them chasing it.

Anita H. Courtney
Lexington Fayette County Health Department
Florida Prevention Research Center at the University of South Florida
VERB. Partnership Team
April 2006

VERB SCORECARD CAMPAIGN CD-ROM TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Behavioral Models and Formative Research
   Includes: *Physical Activity in Community Settings: A Strategy Formation Workbook* (Bryant and Morris, 2004), links to VERB Campaign Research and other resources
2. Research and Evaluation Tools
   Includes: campaign logic model, partner surveys, monitoring forms, tween and parent survey instruments and focus group guides from previous campaign communities
3. VERB Logo Terms and Conditions for Non-Profits
   Includes: *Keeping It Fun: Communicating VERB to Tweens* and *VERB Terms and Conditions for Non-Profits*
4. Partner and Vendor Recruitment
   Includes: Recruitment letters and forms from previous campaign communities
5. Graphics, Ideas and Video Clips
   Includes: prize ideas, VERB Scorecard graphics, video clips, advertising and promotion ideas and graphics from previous campaign communities and the national campaign
6. VERB Promotional Concepts and Activity Guides
   Includes: promotional concepts and graphics, and activity/game ideas
7. *Having a Successful Physical Activity Event: Your guide to making physical activity appealing to 9 to 13 year olds*
8. *Event Logistics Guide: Planning a Community-Wide VERB Activity Zone Event*

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