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Redefine Kids Online Research Process

This project was a group effort on the part of myself as well as three of my classmates: Natalie Dodd, Nathaniel Hammond, and Chris Knight. After we had decided to base our social good campaign on the topic of child safety on the internet, we all took to researching the topic through academic articles as well as statistics websites. This is how we uncovered the statistics which lead to the development of our research statement: “Can a persuasive traditional campaign encourage parents to be more communicative with their children about online safety, especially with regards to interactions with strangers?” In this statement, a “traditional campaign” refers to the use of print advertisements such as in a magazine. This is as opposed to a “guerilla campaign” which takes a much more dynamic or even interactive approach. In addition to researching our chosen topic, we also researched other successful social good campaigns in order to find some inspiration for our own design decisions. We also did this in an effort to ascertain what sort of visuals and style would best suit our target audience: parents aged 30 or older.

Upon establishing our research statement, we also realized our communication objective. Being that the ultimate goal of our campaign is to protect children, we realized that the best people we ought to be attempting to communicate with is parents. The message we wanted to present to them was the importance of communicating with their children about online safety, lest their children possibly suffer from cyberbullying, be preyed upon by a stranger, or access inappropriate content. One other detail we took into account was that of how to go about extending this message to parents. Where would parents be most likely to find our campaign?

We chose to go with something simple and practical: magazine advertisements and social media. Our reasoning was that parents are likely to read or at least flip through magazines that are related to their interests or even their occupation. If one of our ads is present in the magazine they are reading, they will most certainly see it, and the ads could then direct the parents to the related social media.

The most important point that we wanted to get across to parents is that of *danger*. Specifically, for their children. One of our print ads was a simple two-page spread that contains information and statistics about internet safety. Our additional three print ads, however, took a more eye-catching approach. We wanted parents to understand that their child should be protected from certain things on the internet. In order to get this point across, we drew a connection to non-internet hazards that parents may have to protect their child from (i.e. a hot stove, playing with knives, sticking a fork in an electrical outlet, etc.). Having made this connection, we then chose our approach: each of the three remaining print ads features a flap in the middle. Depicted on the flap is a child's hands holding a dangerous object such as a knife or a package of cigarettes. Opening the flap reveals the same hands holding a phone that has a message on it from a stranger. The idea is, if parents would defend their children from dangerous objects, they ought to defend their children from potential dangers over the internet. For the social media, we chose a simpler approach: we designed an Instagram account outfitted with posts that contain statistics about child safety online as well as posts with simple illustrations that attempt to incur the same emotion as that of the print ads.

This final approach was produced through the use of the three core Adobe design applications: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, and Adobe Illustrator. We utilized photography in order to obtain photos of child-like hands holding dangerous objects and cell phones. These

photos were edited using Adobe Photoshop. Much of the other design elements such as the campaign logo, social media posts, and the layouts for the three “flapped” print ads were created using Adobe Illustrator. The two-page print spread was laid out using Adobe InDesign. The mockups were accomplished using photography and Adobe Photoshop. The two-page spread and the social media were put into place using Photoshop, while the three print ads were created by printing them, assembling them, posing them inside of a magazine, and taking photos of them. With all of this done, our final design solutions were complete.