

Ad talk

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the advertising effort for Parents Step Up. The Delray Beach, FL-based firm, which specializes in healthcare, produced a 60-second television ad that shows a woman preaching the dangers of not talking to your children about their eating habits and general health. We then see that she is speaking to herself in the mirror and understand that she also needs support and advice about how to approach the matter. The spot also features alarming statistics about obesity. The message is largely targeted to parents, but this version targets single mothers in particular. The television spot is currently running on NBC in English and Telemundo in Spanish.

Parents Step Up creators conducted

thorough research and found overwhelming national statistics that support the position of the campaign—that parents are the greatest influencers of lifelong habits. Primary research began with focus groups, to learn more about parents' opinions and attitudes regarding obesity. The parents who were screened strongly agreed that they were responsible for their children's overweight issues, even though other influences (e.g., fast food, video games, and television marketing) make it challenging.

"Many experts and medical studies have acknowledged childhood obesity as an imminent threat on the life expectancy of our youth," says Frank V. Sacco, CEO of Memorial Healthcare System. "At Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital and throughout our entire healthcare system, we are committed to

working collaboratively with other organizations toward curbing this trend of childhood obesity and, in turn, positively affecting the health and lives of future generations."

Campaign research indicated that mothers want solutions on how to change their families' nutrition and exercise habits. "This was the catalyst for us [to create] Web sites that could be a valuable resource for parents," says Jorge de Cespedes, president of Pharmed Group. Parents Step Up hired Dewey & Associates, a Tampa, FL-based social marketing group to assist in market research and overall development of the campaign.

The campaign also includes a heavy public relations effort. Headed up by the Controy Martinez Group in Coral Gables, FL, Parents Step Up wanted to

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WHAT IS OBESITY OR OVERWEIGHT | TALK TO YOUR CHILD | UNHEALTHY HABITS | INFLUENCES OF THE BIG FAT INDUSTRIES | CHILDHOOD OBESITY | TELEVISION AD

Childhood Obesity:
More serious than you thought.
[learn more](#)

What is an overweight or obese child?
A child is overweight when the Body Mass Index (BMI) is greater than 25 but less than 30, and a child is obese if the BMI is 30 or more. [more](#)

How to talk to your child about being overweight or obese.
Weight is a very sensitive subject for most of Americans, but especially for children and adolescents. It is important to focus this discussion on the health of your child, NOT on physical appearance. [more](#)

How to change your family's unhealthy habits. —
Small changes in your family's habits and routines will add up to big improvements in your family's health. [more](#)

The influence of "The Big Fat Industries".
Many adults and children know these products are not good for them, but they are not aware of the dangers of repeatedly consuming the Big Fat Industries' products. [more](#)

Do you have a question for our experts?
Many parents have questions specific to their family's health that may be difficult to answer. If you have a question, click here to ask our expert.

PARENTS STEP UP

integrate editorial coverage in the English and Spanish press to further the message of child obesity and address the topic on a more national level. The campaign has been pitched to top-tier publications, such as *USA Today* and *The New York Times*. So far, coverage has appeared in print editions of *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*, as well as online news sites *Fortune Magazine* and *Hispanic Business*.

So far, coverage of the campaign speaks for itself in terms of results, say Parents Step Up collaborators. As of presstime, hundreds of hits on the Web site and many questions to "Ask the Expert" prove that this campaign has been a success thus far. The campaign is slated to run through 2006. ■

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Objective: Create awareness among parents about the serious issue of obesity among children. Hopefully through television ads, we will drive parents to our Web site where they can find out more information regarding this serious problem.

Target: Parents in South Florida

Media: Television, Web site

Web sites: www.parentsstepup.com,
www.familiasenmarcha.com



Seen here are two screen shots from the campaign's Web site. The first features advice on how to talk to your child about obesity, and the second shot explains harsh facts about potential obesity-related health problems. The Web site represents the campaign's effort to speak to a national audience about the issue of child obesity.



Ad talk

30-second television spot

"Parents Step Up"

WOMAN:

How could you let your kid be so overweight? Why aren't you doing something about it? He could get diabetes or cancer or heart disease. And don't blame it on video games or fast food—you're letting him down as a parent. You have to take responsibility now. If you don't, who will?

VOICEOVER:

Only you can stop childhood obesity. Parents, step up.



Obesity shortens your life
by 5-20 years.



**PARENTS
STEP UP**

www.parentsstepup.com

 Florida Department of Health

 Miami-Dade County

 Florida Department of Education



A 30-second television spot was produced and is airing in Miami-Dade county. The commercial features a mother preparing to speak to her child about the dangers of obesity. As you can see, the spot also flashes alarming statistics in an attempt to force parents to take serious action.