

BACKGROUND PAPER
CATEGORY U013: COMMAND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN (Unit Award)
BATH SALTS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

CAMPAIGN REQUESTER: Director, Navy Staff (DNS)/ Navy Surgeon General

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE:

Objective 1: Educate Sailors, family members, civilian workers and American public of the health dangers and hazards of designer drugs including synthetic cathinones (also known as Bath Salts).

Objective 2: Deter service members and other community members from using Bath Salts and other synthetic drugs.

Objective 3: Correct any misinformation regarding Bath Salts and their adverse health effects.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Objective 1: Primary: All Sailors, Marines, their family members and civilians working for the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps.

Objective 2: Secondary: All other military branches and members, the American public and the media.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN: The U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) Public Affairs office launched a robust campaign at the direction of the Director, Navy Staff (DNS) and the Navy Surgeon General to combat the use of the synthetic drugs known more commonly as "bath salts."

This diverse campaign included a myriad of multimedia tools used to educate various audiences and equip commands worldwide to better educate their personnel. The campaign involved a webpage offering a variety of resources, numerous broadcast/print stories, blogs, posters, and a high definition Public Service Announcement which supported and bolstered the overarching Navy communication campaign and garnered a multitude of national media interest. By proactively flooding the gate with factual and balanced health information regarding the health risks of Bath Salts use, Navy Medicine effectively helped shape the information environment by showing the Navy is aggressively meeting the challenge posed by this new trend. Additionally, by putting Navy Medical leadership on the record through a constant flow of blog posts and Navy News Service stories, we have left a trail of "breadcrumbs" online in terms of facts and quotes for bloggers and journalists to use at their convenience ensuring that Navy is accurately portrayed as a leading voice regarding the prevention of Bath Salts and synthetic drug use. BUMED Public Affairs also created a "one-stop shopping" Synthetic Drug resource webpage and a Captain's Call/Social Media toolkit for use throughout the Navy on Spice. Our communication products have been credited by Commands worldwide as being a key asset in their local communication efforts and have also resulted in multiple follow-on media inquiries from national and trade journalists that have resulted in beneficial articles that increased the depth and breadth of our communication efforts in reaching our key audiences.

“BATH SALTS: It's not a fad...It's a NIGHTMARE” Public Service Announcement: The PSA (runtime: 6:37) was produced, in-house with no contracted production services, by the Navy Medicine Visual Information Directorate at the direction of BUMED public affairs to inform our service members and beneficiaries of the risks to one’s health and career in the event of Bath Salts usage. It was posted on Navy Medicine’s YouTube site on Dec. 19, 2012 and has received nearly 600,000 unique views. The video was also packaged and sent for air time to the Armed Forces Network and The Pentagon Channel by their request for use on their networks. Several other federal agencies are now using it in their training programs, including the Department of Transportation and the Union Pacific Railroad. This PSA led directly to coverage on National Media outlets including ABC News, CBS News and CNN.

CAMPAIGN RESULTS: Through our robust information campaign, Navy Medicine has become a leader in synthetic drug awareness and deterrence. Through use of our traditional and social communication channels and creation of multimedia products, we have led the way in fighting the use of these dangerous designer drugs. Our proactive media engagement with Navy & Marine Corps Times, Associated Press and more has netted more than 400 stories nationwide reaching millions of people nationwide. Our presence on several of our social media networks has led to enhanced awareness of the dangers of Bath Salts with key audiences. Our YouTube videos have been viewed largely in Fleet Concentration areas, thus meeting the goal of educating the Warfighter, their families and our Navy and Marine Corps communities.

URLs for various products:

“BATH SALTS: It's not a fad...It's a NIGHTMARE” Public Service Announcement (VIDEO):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhlaHwnErBI>

Navy Medicine Bath Salts Web Page: <http://www.med.navy.mil/Pages/Syntheticdrugs.aspx>

Bath Salts Posters:

<https://admin.med.navy.mil/SiteCollectionImages/Spice%20Images/BATH%20SALTS%20Full%20Size.pdf>