

How Right Now Campaign

Campaign Overview

National Conference on Health Communication,
Marketing & Media

Presentation Date: August 24, 2021



 **How
Right
Now**



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by Amelia Burke-Garcia, PhD
NORC at the University of Chicago

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by Cynthia Crick, MPH
Centers for Disease Control and
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NORC at the University of Chicago

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by Craig W. Thomas, PhD
Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention


The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Campaign Introduction & Formative Research

Amelia Burke-Garcia, PhD, MA
NORC at the University of Chicago

Campaign Overview



Comprehensive effort to reach groups that are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and are facing adverse mental health and emotional well-being challenges due to the pandemic

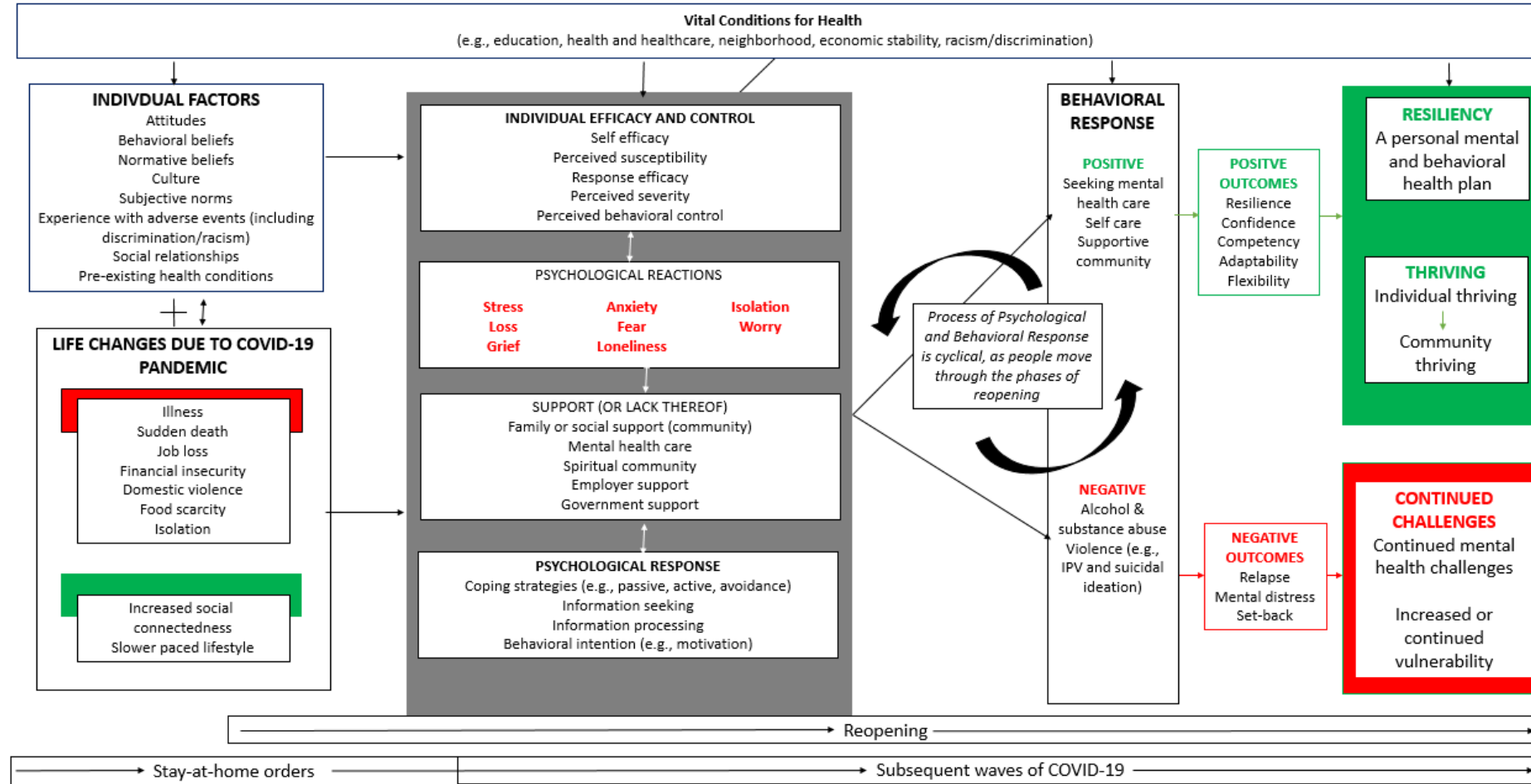
- Grounded in evidence-based health communication, psychology and behavior change theory

→ Desired outcomes:

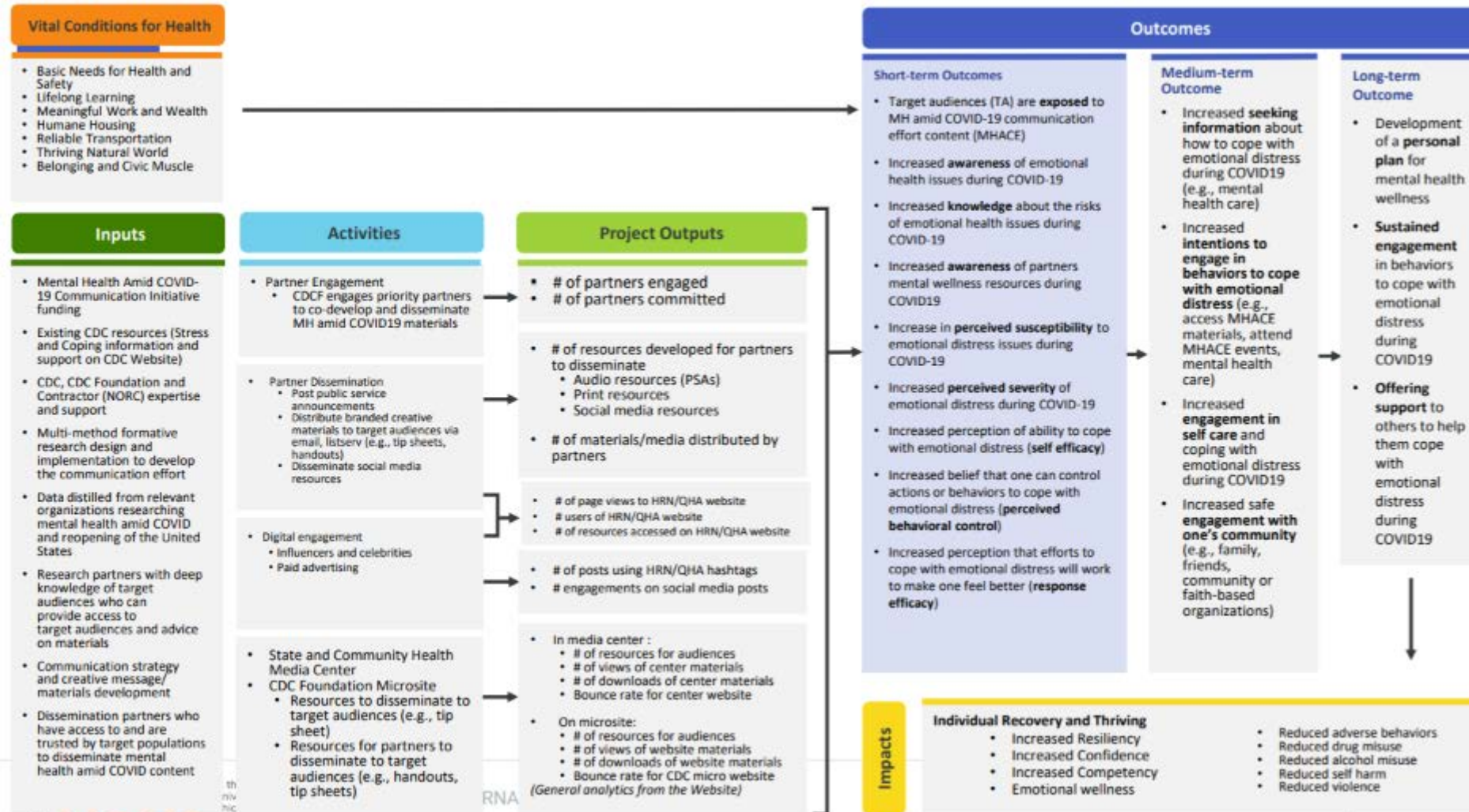
- Improved coping and emotional well-being among audiences
- Reduction of risk of adverse behaviors

- Priority audiences (with an emphasis on groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19)
 - Older adults (65+) and their caregivers
 - People with pre-existing physical and mental health conditions
 - People experiencing violence
 - People experiencing economic distress
- Nimble and responsive implementation informed by research
- Conducted in partnership with audience-focused public health organizations

Conceptual Model



Logic Model



Formative Research: What We Did



eScan

>700 peer-reviewed and grey publications and existing communication campaigns – in both English and Spanish



Data Distillation

>20 data sets analyzed



Social Listening

>1 million social media posts (a total of 129,322 were relevant) – in both English and Spanish



Partner Needs Assessments

>150 partner and influencers assessed; 16 needs assessment calls held



Partner Listening Sessions

6 partner listening sessions conducted to date; 29 members of audiences participated



Online Focus Groups

10 online focus groups conducted; 58 members of audiences participated

AmeriSpeak® May Omnibus Survey

Total Weighted Sample: 250,925,936

Total Unweighted Sample: 1,065

1,004 (English-language)

61 (Spanish-language)

Total Weighted Screened Sample: 161,265,124

Total Unweighted Screened Sample: 731

682 (English-language)

49 (Spanish-language)

What We Learned

- Validation messaging resonates
- Hope and resilience messaging resonates
- People want help, but make it easy and have it come from a trusted source
- The idea of self-care seems to resonate, but it's different for different audiences
- Need to meet them where they are – culturally sensitive and not overly prescriptive
- There is a need for more translated – and transcreated – messages and resources for the Latinx population + partners that serve this community



Additional Insights

- There is a gap between what our audiences want + what our partners already have
- There is also a reported gap in the number of partner resources that explicitly provide mental health solutions (based on partner messaging bank)



What is our Value Proposition? What Do We Have to Offer?



Tailoring Messaging by Audience Group + Need

Audience	Biggest Challenge	Possible Solution
People ages 65 and older	Isolation, Helplessness, Anxiety	Increase social connection, new ways of connecting with loved ones/friends, communities (overcome technology barriers); enhanced sense of connectedness and belonging
Their caregivers	Fear, Stress, Burnout	Techniques for managing stress (self-care, reaching out for support, reframing situation to reduce feelings of inadequacy/failure)
People living with pre-existing conditions (mental)	Loss of routine; Exacerbated mental/behavioral health issues; Isolation	Help with simple routine; self-care; stress management techniques
People living with pre-existing conditions (physical)	Fear of getting sick, fear of lost routine	Help with continued social distancing through reopening while building back some routine; self-care, self-management
People experiencing violence	Trapped; Helplessness; Trauma; Isolation	Helplines, virtual therapy, coping
People experiencing economic distress	Distress + Grief over loss (e.g., loss of control, employment, educational progress, ability to meet basic needs); Fear of getting sick	Connections to services (food, free resources and mental health services)

Brand Development

CONCEPT A1



CONCEPT A2



CONCEPT B1



CONCEPT B2



Testing with Partners
AND
Copyright, Trademark,
Social Media, & Other
Campaign Reviews



Final Brand Selection

How
Right
Now

Qué
Hacer
Ahora

How
Right
Now

How
Right
Now

Qué
Hacer
Ahora

Qué
Hacer
Ahora

How
Right
Now

How
Right
Now






The Campaign

Cynthia Crick, MPH

CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease
Prevention and Health Promotion, Division
of Population Health



**Truthfully, how
are you feeling
today?**

▶ Afraid

▶ Angry

▶ Grieving

▶ Lonely

▶ Sad

▶ Stressed

▶ Worried

▶ Not Sure

How Right Now/Qué Hacer Ahora was developed to help address feelings of stress, grief, and loss. The website begins by asking a single question—“*How are you feeling today?*”

Visit www.cdc.gov/HowRightNow and www.cdc.gov/Quehacerahora
to explore the resources.

Messaging + Content

Promotion



- Social graphics
- Launch videos
- Influencer content
- Digital and radio ads

Coping



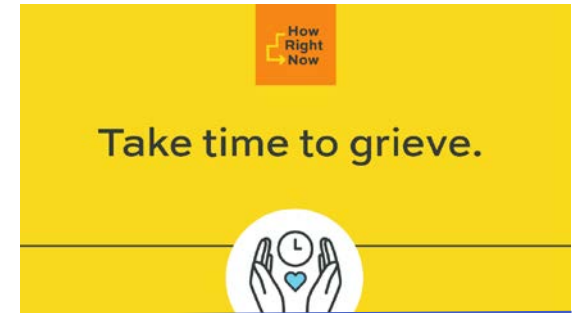
- Emotion one-pagers and associated resources
- Social graphics
- Crisis lines

Talk



- Conversation guide
- Listening animated graphic
- Expert videos
- Celebrity PSAs

Grief + Gratitude



- Refreshed resources
- Social graphics
- Expert videos on grief
- New gratitude video

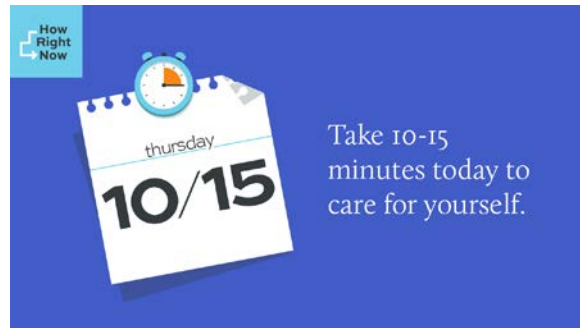
The campaign has many different types of content that can address any number of emotions and needs.



Other *How Right Now* Content

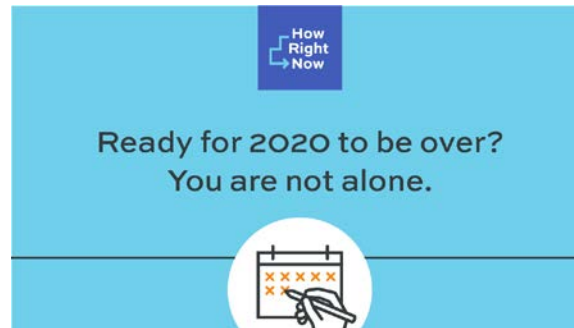
10/15 Day of Action

10-15 minutes for self-care



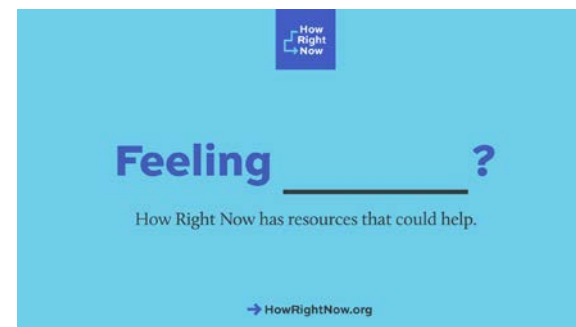
12/3 Day of Action

1, 2, 3 things to be grateful for



HRN/QHA Anniversary

Resources to help with emotions



Mental Health Awareness Month

Individual & expert quotes



Implementation through + with Partners

- Partners were convened monthly about *HRN/QHA* plans and to hear from them
- They were engaged around key campaign moments (e.g., 10/15 Day of Action), and received weekly content pushes and monthly newsletters from the *HRN/QHA* team to continue promotion
- Partners shared messages and materials with their audiences via:
 - Social media channels (paid and organic)
 - Webinars
 - SMS (text message) campaigns
 - Email blasts/newsletters
 - In-person events



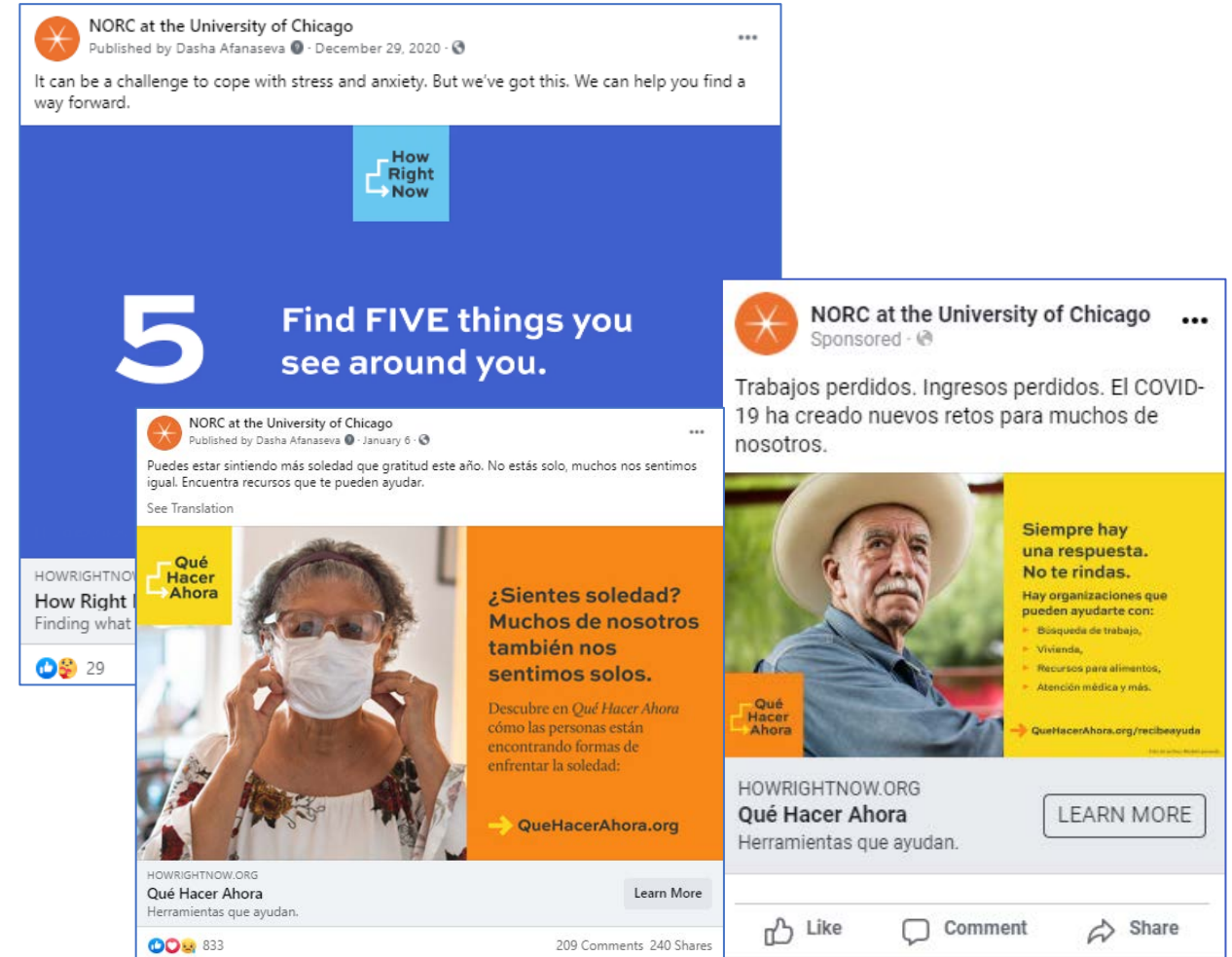
Implementation through Celebrities + Influencers

- *HRN/QHA* also engaged celebrities and influencers, providing them messages and materials to share on their social media platforms
- Celebrities and influencers received approved content that they could share with their followers
- Some messages were posted as approved; others, mostly with influencers, were adapted to include their individual voice and personal stories



Implementation through Targeted Ad Buys

- Starting in November 2020, *HRN/QHA* began to run targeted ad buys on traditional and digital platforms
- These included:
 - Search ads on Google
 - Social media ads on Facebook and Instagram, including a small pilot on the platform Reddit
 - Radio ads
- These have continued through this reporting period (November 2020–May 2021)





Findings from the Evaluation

Jennifer Berkold, PhD

NORC at the University of Chicago

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the context for, implementation, and reach of the *HRN/QHA* campaign, as well as to assess changes in *HRN/QHA* audience's knowledge, self-efficacy, perceived susceptibility, behavioral control, information seeking, and *HRN/QHA* promoted behaviors over time.



Evaluation Questions

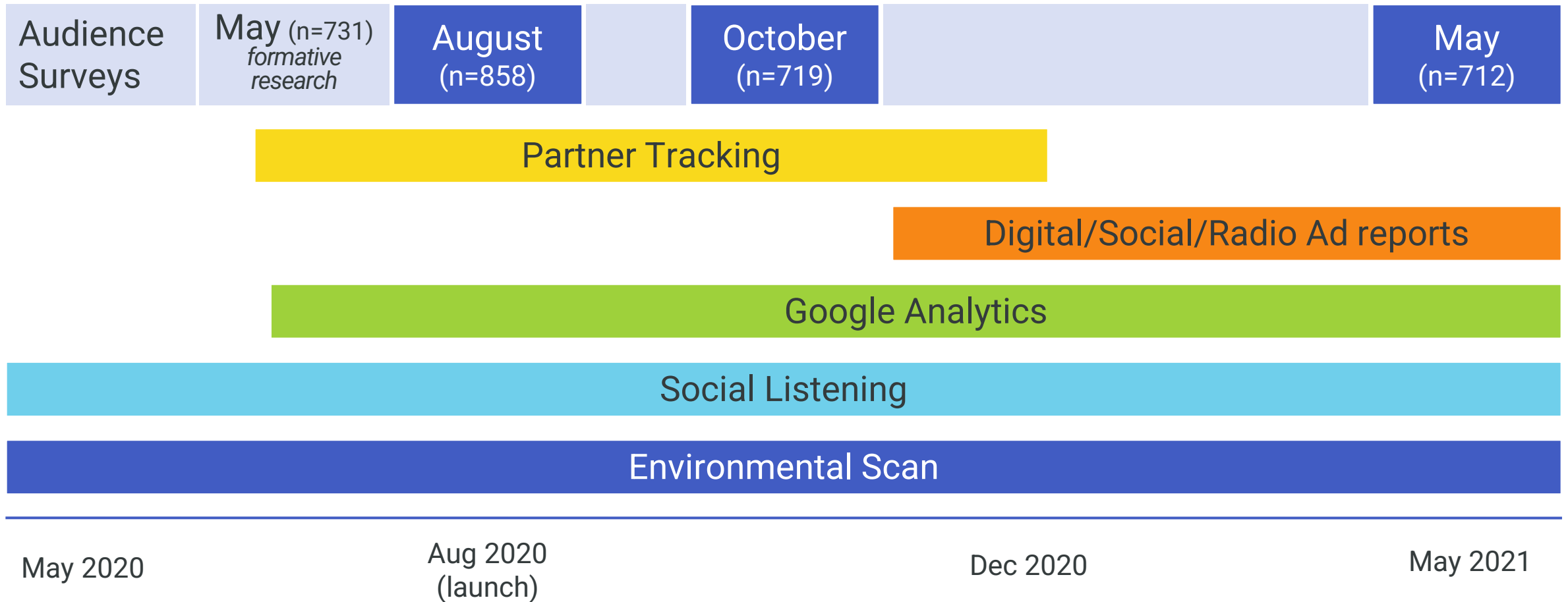
Process Evaluation

- What is the context for implementation of the *HRN* campaign?
- How is the *HRN* campaign implemented?
- How many people are reached by the *HRN* campaign?

Outcome Evaluation

- What *HRN* messages/materials are audiences exposed to?
- To what extent is exposure to *HRN* associated with audiences':
 - Emotional health awareness and beliefs
 - Information-seeking behaviors
 - Coping behaviors
- What are audiences' thoughts about *HRN* messages/materials?

Design + Methods Overview



Evaluation Main Take Aways

Several main themes emerged from this evaluation:

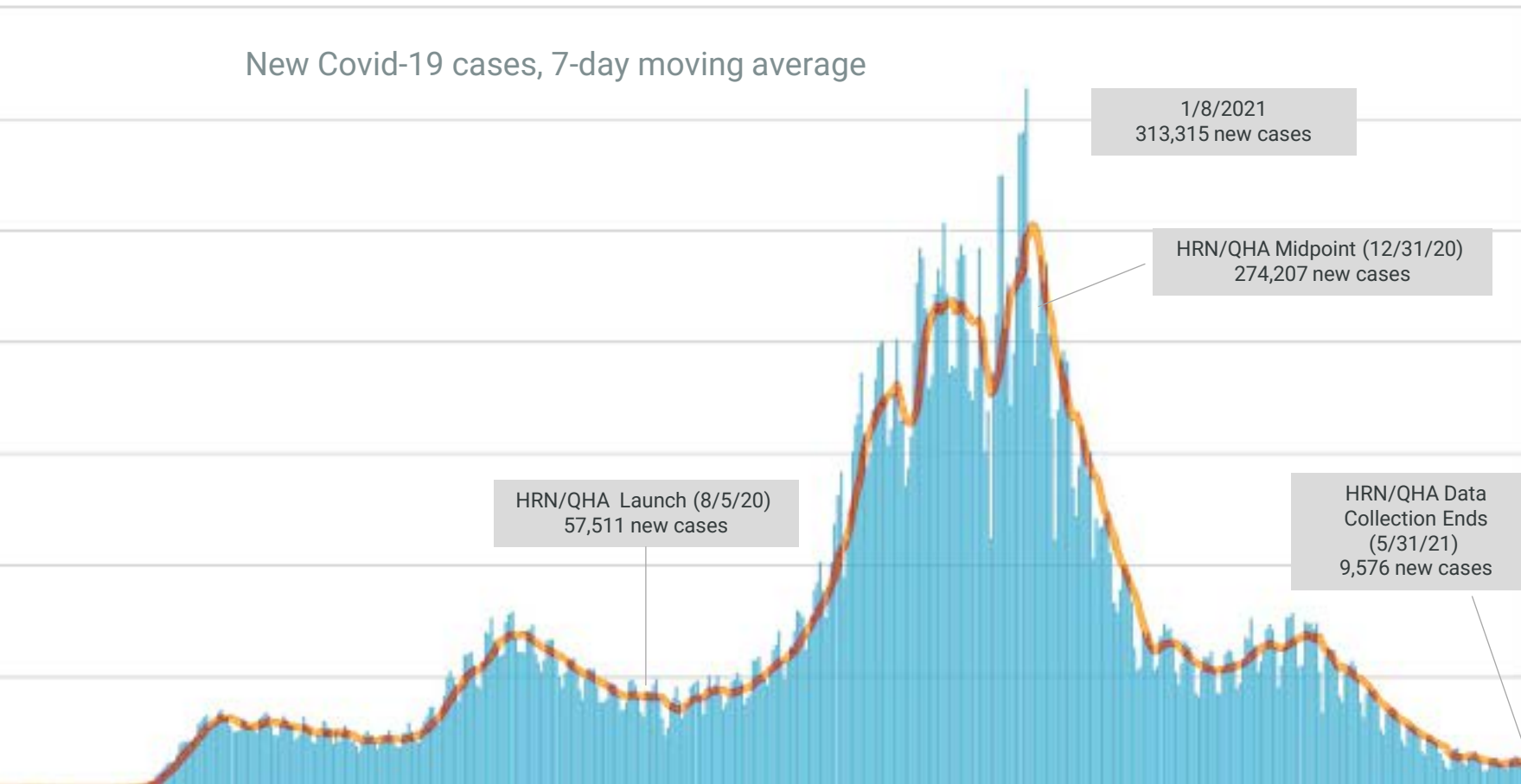
- *HRN/QHA* has been nimble and responsive throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, meeting its priority audiences **where they are, with what they need, when they need it**
- These **adaptive techniques** resulted in increased reach of and engagement with the campaign
- *HRN/QHA* content drove community engagement - **online and off**
- *HRN/QHA* was effective with the audiences that needed it most:
 - **People experiencing violence**
 - **People experiencing economic distress**
 - **Communities of color**
- Positive campaign effects were found for these audiences for:
 - **Increased resilience**
 - **Increased use of self-care strategies**
 - **Increased community engagement**



Process Evaluation

Covid-19 Trends: Online + Off

New Covid-19 cases, 7-day moving average



Across this time period, conversation on Twitter also shifted:

May 2020 – May 2021

Mentions of “sadness” (English) and “miedo [afraid]” (Spanish) remained high over time—and just started to decline in May 2021

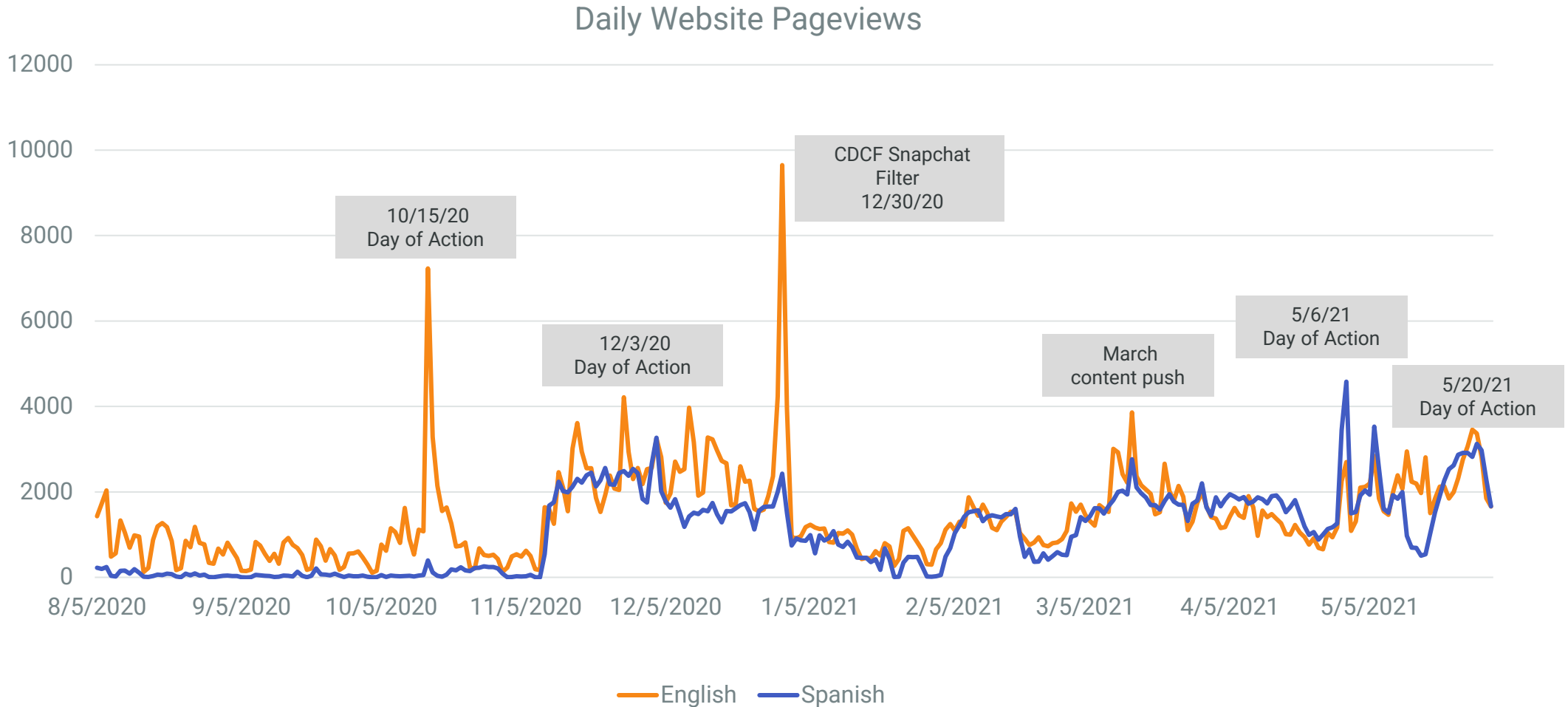
April 2020

Mentions of “coping” increased during lockdown

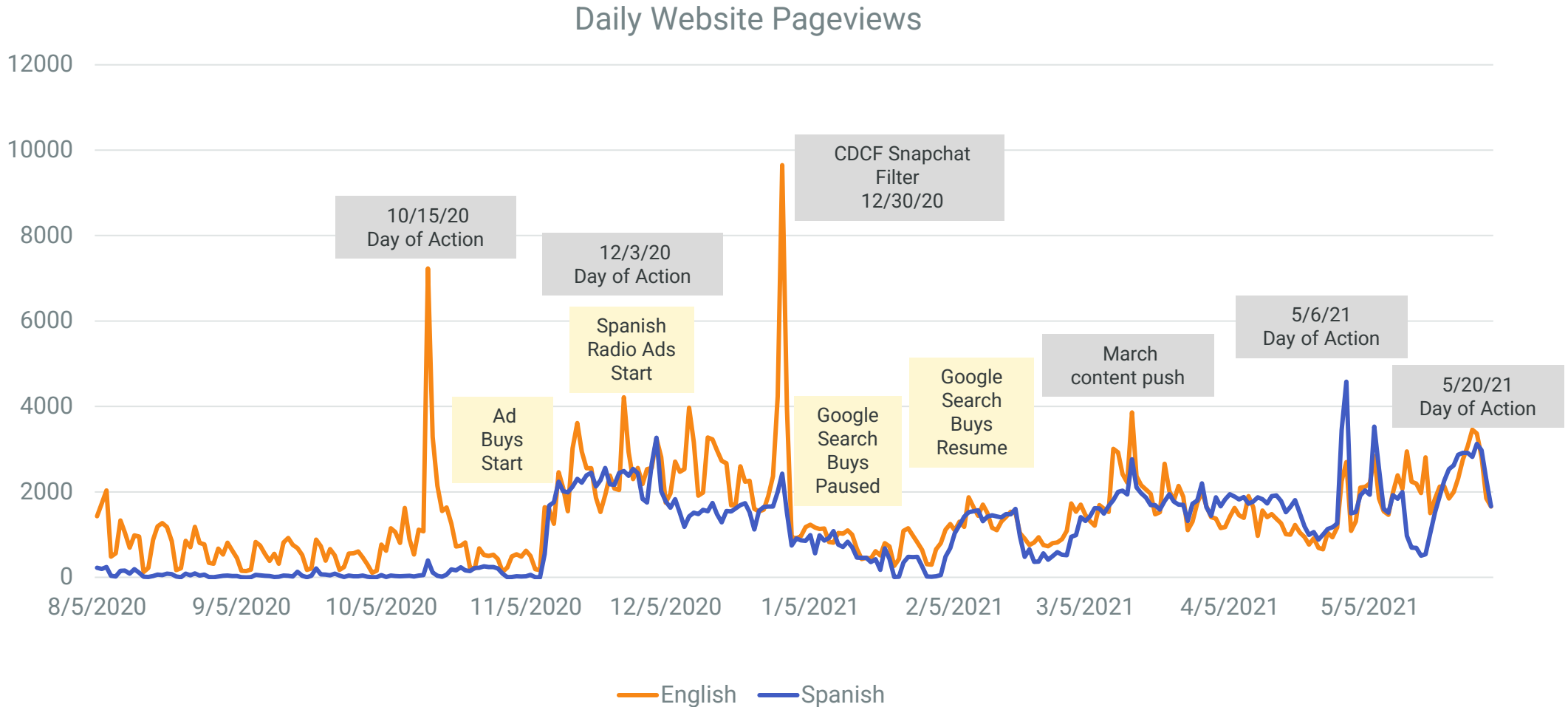
November 2020 – January 2021

Mentions of “stress” increased over the holidays

Campaign Tactics Increased Website Traffic



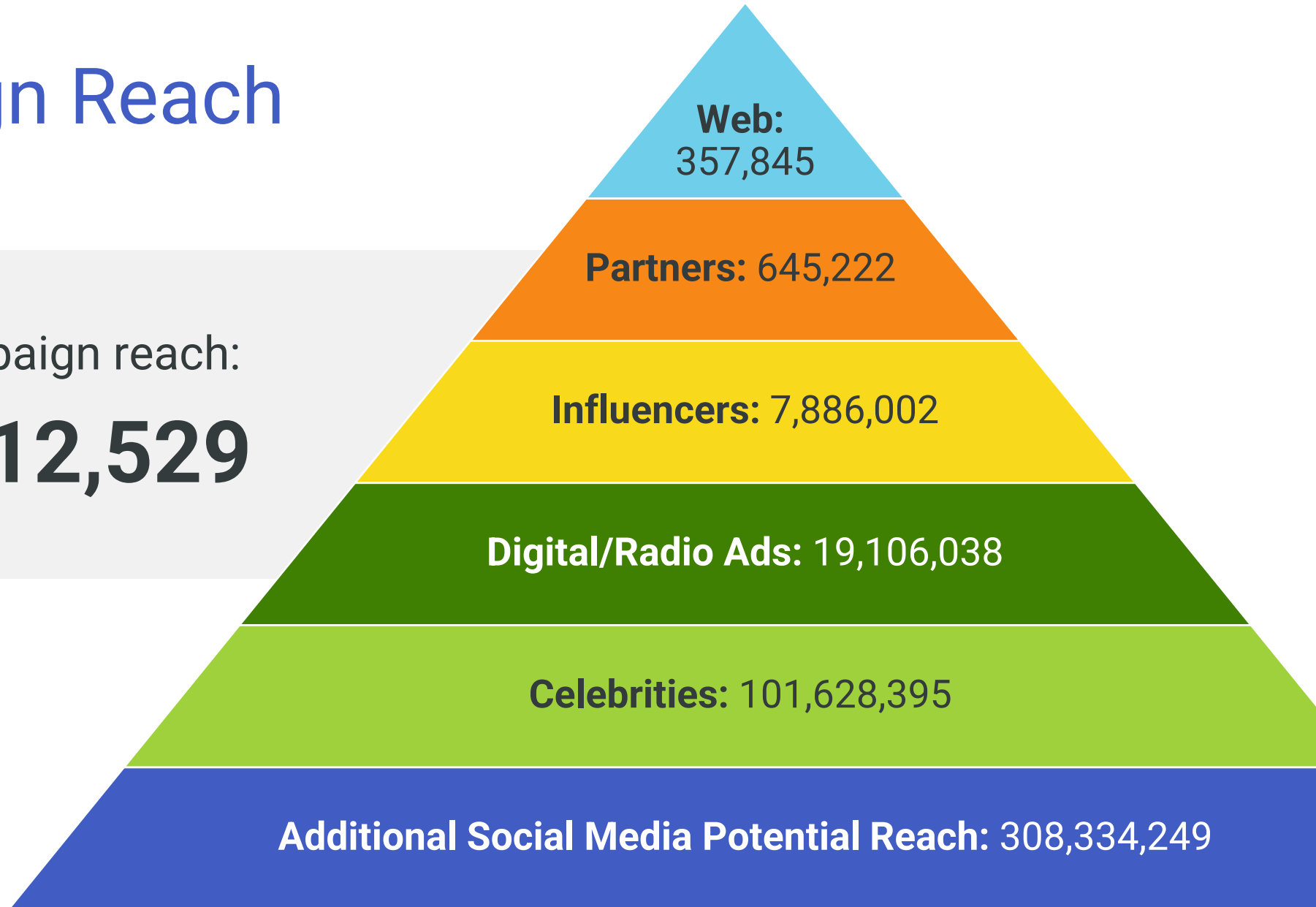
Campaign Tactics Increased Website Traffic



Campaign Reach



Total campaign reach:
437,312,529



Implementation: Facilitators

There were several factors that enabled the implementation of campaign tactics.

Partners

- Campaign toolkits provided partners with messages and campaign creative
- Partners could co-brand *HRN/QHA* resources
- In monthly brown bags, new information was shared, and partners learned from each other

Influencers + Celebrities

- Video content was the preferred format for message dissemination
- Posts with personal content and specific ways to adopt recommendations were popular amongst followers
- Days of action helped to coordinate and focus message dissemination

Ads

- Digital ads were the highest drivers of traffic to the *HRN/QHA* website
- Ability to adjust and conduct experiments with ads while in market allowed for improved targeting and continuous improvement

Implementation: Challenges

There were several factors that created challenges for the implementation of campaign tactics.

Partners

- Partners expressed concerns regarding relatively low audience engagement with campaign materials; this was not unique to HRN/QHA though

Influencers + Celebrities

- Ensuring diverse perspectives from “everyday” influencers requires substantial effort and connections
- Difficulty confirming celebrity commitment
- Some celebrities appeared to delete their campaign-related posts after activations

Ads

- Facebook flagged some *HRN/QHA* ads because they believed the messages implied people had a specific health condition
- Transition to CDC.gov required ads to be updated while in market which disrupted approvals and ads running consistently

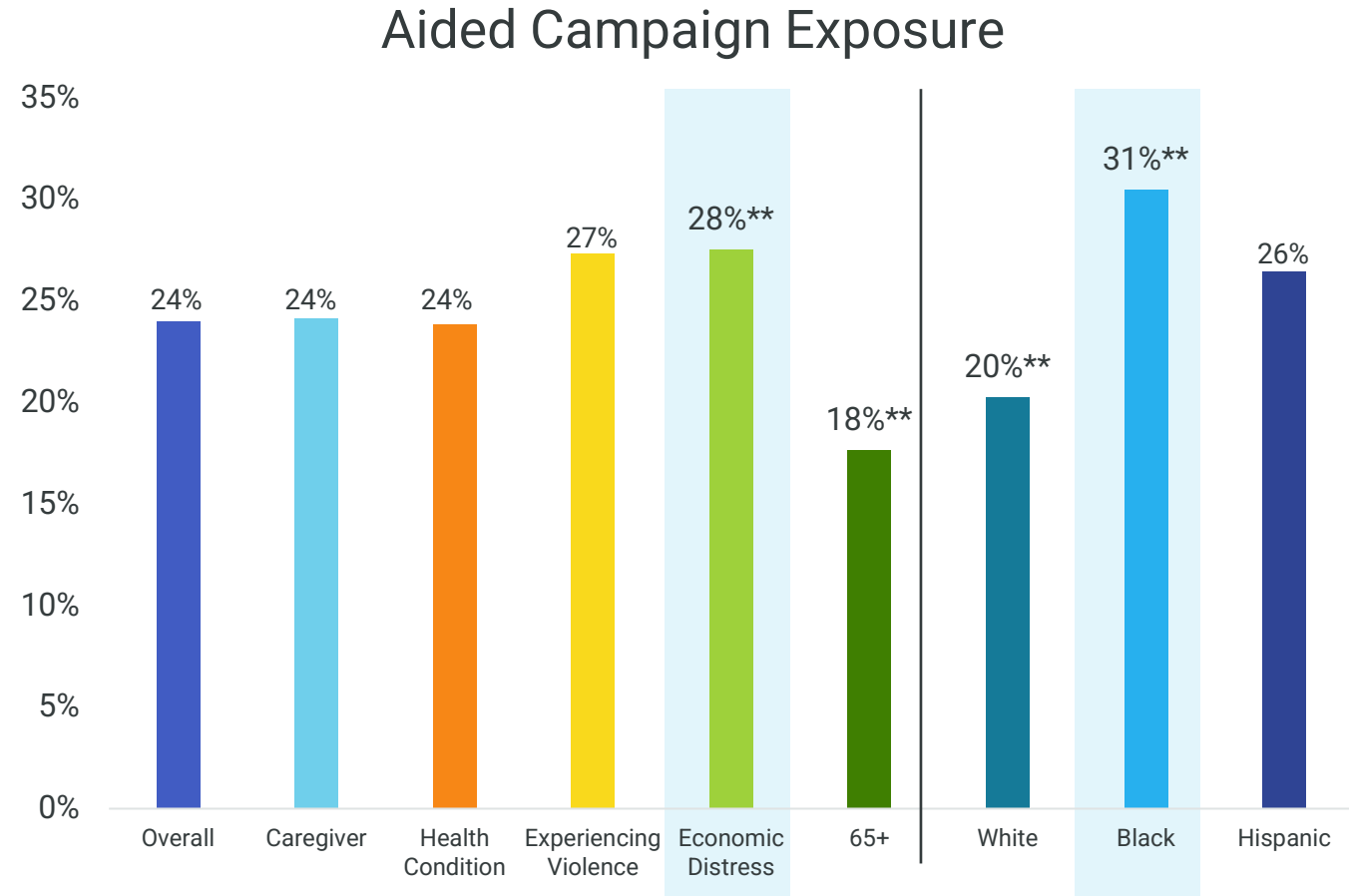


Outcome Evaluation

Notable Findings from the Outcome Evaluation

HRN has worked for those that need it most.

- Among *HRN*'s priority audiences, those experiencing violence and economic distress had the most need
- Greater need was also identified among African American/Black and Hispanic/Latino individuals
- Positive campaign effects were found for these audiences for:
 - Increased resilience
 - Increased use of self-care strategies
 - Increased information seeking
 - Increased community engagement



Exposure + Stress

Controlling for demographics, region, survey cohort, and COVID-related experiences, people who reported message exposure experienced **higher overall stress and discord in the family.**

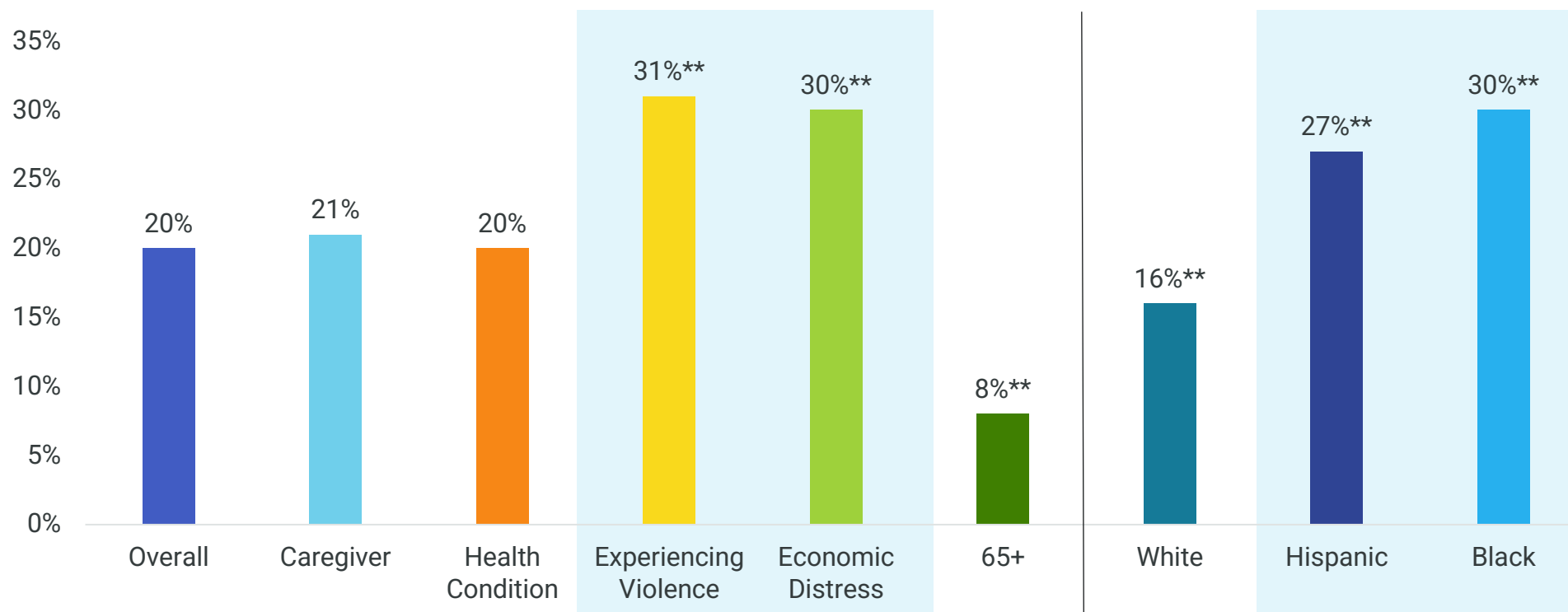
1.6x higher odds of reporting **overall stress** during the pandemic**

Exposure + Information Seeking

Controlling for demographics, region, survey cohort and COVID-related experiences, people who reported message exposure had 2.2x higher odds of reporting trying to find information or resources to support their emotional health.**

Meeting Audience Needs: Information Seeking

Tried to find any information or resources to support emotional health during the COVID-19 pandemic





Highlight:

Respondents **experiencing violence** and **economic distress** reported the highest levels of information seeking. **African American/Black** respondents had the highest levels of information seeking, followed by **Hispanic/Latino**.


Source: Aggregated results from HRN/QHA August 2020 (n=858), October 2020 (n=719), and May 2021 (n=712) surveys

**Statistically significant difference by audience group, $p < .05$


Behavior Change: Community Engagement

 **NORC at the University of Chicago** Sponsored · 

Expressing gratitude could help others know how much they're appreciated and improve our own wellbeing. Find inspiration for ways to be grateful at HowRightNow.org.






Even when we're feeling low, there are people or things in life to be grateful for.



HOWRIGHTNOW.ORG
How Right Now
Finding what helps.

[LEARN MORE](#)

 Like  Comment  Share


New Communities on Social Media

- For all our target audiences, "Feeling Low" received majority favorable ratings on believability, worth remembering and relevance in the survey.
- Engagement with the "Feeling Low" ad in social media was also high
 - It received numerous comments and engagement in both Spanish and English
 - The majority of comments were from women who expressed agreement by saying, "True!" or "Amen," and a few individuals who mentioned specific people or things that they were grateful for
- HRN/QHA helped to create new online community spaces, as conversation evolved around sharing mental health struggles and coping strategies

 **Irene King**
Totally true!!
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 27w

 **Barb J Pierzchalski**
for sure life health family i could go on and on forever i am so very grateful for everything and everyone
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 27w

 **Marcia Caldwell**
Yes there certainly is! Keep looking for them.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 30w


 **Sandy Hartman**
The truth and amen.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 30w

 **Elizabeth Dean Luther**
Amen. ***
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 30w

 **R Ann Mesaros**
I have found this out during these holidays. Two families made my holidays wonderful, and others too. But espècially these two families. I will never forget their kindness during this sad time. Thank you again.
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 27w

 **Julie Morris**
That's right
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 31w

 **Virginia Licitra**
AMEN AND AMEN
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 30w

 **George Androsiglio**
Like having a good wife how will take care of you like now when you need her the most
[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Message](#) · 27w



Message Impacts, by Priority Audiences

Respondents who were experiencing violence or economic distress reported significantly higher levels of positive change in self-care strategies and resilience strategies after viewing HRN/QHA messages.

Message Impacts, by Race/Ethnicity

After viewing messages, African American/Black respondents reported higher levels of supporting their community and using strategies to cope, and Hispanic/Latino respondents reported higher levels of confidence in bouncing back.



Summary, Implications & Future Directions

Craig W. Thomas, PhD

CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease
Prevention and Health Promotion, Division
of Population Health

Audience Need + Campaign Impact

- Among *HRN/QHA*'s priority audiences, those **experiencing violence** and **economic distress** had the most need
- Greater need was also identified among **African American/Black** individuals and **Hispanic/Latino** individuals
- The campaign worked best with the audiences that needed it most
 - Campaign exposure was highest among these audiences
 - Attitudes toward the *HRN/QHA* website were more favorable among these audiences
 - Campaign messages had greater impact with these audiences in promoting resilience and use of coping strategies

Campaign Strategies

- During this period of rapid change, flexibility was key to campaign implementation
- Synthesizing multiple streams of research data enabled the campaign to better understand rapidly changing contexts and emerging audience needs
- Though influencers were generally perceived as less trustworthy messengers than partner organizations, influencer approaches were best positioned for the priority audiences that most needed to hear our messages



Campaign Strategies (cont.)

- Targeted ad buys and influencer outreach increased reach, especially with Spanish language speakers
- These adaptive techniques resulted in increased reach of campaign and engagement with the content



Messages + Resources

- The most effective campaign creative offered positive messages with actionable suggestions
 - We saw this both with the attitudes toward the creative tested in the survey, and in the patterns of resources that users accessed on the website
- The most common emotions experienced were grief (English speakers) and fear (Spanish speakers)
 - The most popular website resources accessed by English users related to grief, while the most popular among Spanish users were focused on fear
 - Similarly, on Twitter, sadness was a commonly mentioned emotion among English speakers, and fear was commonly mentioned among Spanish speakers

Implications + Future Directions

- Given the salience of the campaign with those experiencing other significant life stressors (e.g., financial hardship, violence, stigma, racism), *HRN/QHA* has an opportunity to provide emotional wellness supports well beyond COVID-19
- Differences in emotion responses by English- and Spanish-speaking audiences indicates a continued need for in-language and culturally appropriate communications and outreach strategies



Implications + Future Directions (cont.)

- Future communications should leverage that 1-2 punch—validating current feelings then providing positive, actionable suggestions
- Much information sharing and community building is happening natively on social media, which suggests a continued need for *HRN/QHA* to:
 - Leverage communication channels that meet people where they are
 - Employ hybrid evaluation methods that can assess user experience journeys as well as social media engagement
- Measured reviews for the website, combined with relatively high bounce rate, suggest a need for usability testing and further refinement of the website

Implications + Future Directions (cont.)

- Consider revisiting the priority audiences to ensure the campaign continues to support those with greatest need:
 - Older adults, while at risk during the earliest stages of COVID-19, have since indicated higher levels of resilience and less information seeking behavior than other audiences.
 - Emerging evidence from the environmental scan suggests further need for supports to younger audiences, as well as for people of color, and healthcare professionals/frontline workers
- Conduct secondary research on existing *HRN/QHA* survey data to further refine and segment new audiences
 - Develop new content to support the management of chronic stress and burnout, anger and resentment, and hope
- Conduct formative research to understand the needs of harder to reach audiences (e.g., Asian Americans) that have been underrepresented in the campaign to date

Implications for Emotional Wellness Campaigns

- Including ad dollars in the budget in order to increase traffic to important resources and improve content placement
 - But a communications approach that leverages different tactics to meet people where they are is key (so don't forget the partners, celebrities, and influencers)
- Research is an important ongoing investment
 - Formative research yields important insights about audience needs, trusted messengers and message frames
 - Once active, ongoing research and monitoring allows communicators to identify and respond to emerging needs as well as to refine channels
- Prepare for the long haul. Emotional wellness is an ongoing need, particularly for those experiencing chronic symptoms of anxiety and stress. Periodically, campaigns may need to update resources or refresh content

Thank you.