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Contract Award Date: December 18, 2017  
Delivery Date: March 2018  
Contracted Cost: \$61,045 (taxes excluded)

# Focus Testing Creative Concepts for the Childhood Vaccination Advertising Campaign (HC POR-17-20)

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## Executive Summary

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Prepared for:  
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### Background and Objectives

The Public Health Agency of Canada will be launching a childhood vaccination public awareness campaign aimed at promoting the importance, safety, and effectiveness of vaccination, with the overall goal of increasing vaccination rates in Canada. Qualitative research was undertaken to assess the effectiveness of three new creative concepts for the vaccination campaign among the target audiences. The concepts were assessed based on message clarity, credibility, relevance and value to the target audience, appeal and appropriateness, and ability to motivate the audience to take personal action.

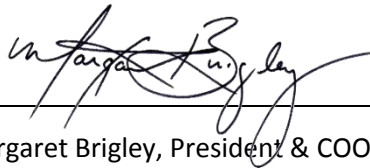
A total of eight (8) traditional, in-person focus groups were conducted with vaccine-hesitant pregnant women or those expected to become pregnant in the next year, and with parents of children 0 to 6 years old. Two groups per city were conducted in Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, and St. John's from January 11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. It should be noted that many of those in the first group were not yet pregnant.

Caution must be exercised when interpreting the results from this study, as qualitative research is directional only. Results cannot be attributed to the overall population under study, with any degree of confidence.

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_



Margaret Brigley, President & COO | Corporate Research Associates  
Date: March 28, 2018



## Key Findings and Conclusions

Findings of the *Focus Testing Creative Concepts for the Childhood Vaccination Advertising Campaign (POR-17-20) Groups* suggest that vaccine-hesitant parents and pregnant women or those expecting to be in the next year would welcome a public awareness campaign on childhood vaccination and are open to receiving information on that topic. Interest is greatest in accessing comprehensive and balanced information presented in an objective manner.

Results suggest that of the three creative concepts tested, the ‘Safety’ campaign should be further developed, as it was well received in Montreal and was considered the preferred approach in all English-speaking locations. The concept effectively positions vaccination as another means for parents to protect their children. The approach was seen as credible, realistic, and engaging, which helped grab attention. Though not believed to be informative in itself, the concept left a positive impression with participants as it normalizes vaccination and validates parents’ roles in protecting their children in a variety of ways. The tone of the video is interpreted as heart-warming and reassuring. The video was compelling to both groups, and particularly parents of young children. To broaden the concept’s appeal, consideration should be given to include greater diversity in terms of parents’ gender, family types, and socio-economic environments. In addition, the scene in the doctor’s office should more clearly show vaccination to strengthen the message and create better flow with the tagline.

The ‘Rhymes’ concept elicited mixed reactions. The concept was well received and preferred in Montreal while it was generally deemed problematic in English-speaking locations. The concept’s approach of combining a light-hearted lullaby with the serious topic of vaccine-preventable diseases created an attractive tension and sense of urgency in the French video. On the other hand, the English version was negatively received due primarily to perceived references to bullying by implying that an unvaccinated child named ‘Fran’ was targeted for spreading diseases.

The ‘Rhymes’ scenario introduced vaccination as a socially-responsible choice for protecting all children. Though this was viewed positively by some, others felt that it blamed parents who decide not to have their children vaccinated. Parents of daycare-age children were seen as the target audience, though it was believed that most decisions related to vaccination happen during the first year or two of the child’s life. Of the two taglines presented for this concept, “Don’t play with disease. Keep them safe with vaccines. / On ne joue pas avec la maladie. Protégez vos enfants avec la vaccination.” was preferred and considered less prescriptive.

Reactions to the ‘Kiss’ concept were generally negative across all locations and audiences. The approach was deemed as oversexualized for showing young children kissing on the mouth, and the lack of reference to vaccination in the scenario itself was believed to weaken the message. Indeed, the situation featured did not point exclusively to vaccine-preventable diseases and when combined to the tagline, “It’s no big deal. They’re vaccinated”, could mislead viewers by suggesting that vaccination protects children from becoming sick when kissing other children. The French tagline, “C’est beau. Ils sont mineurs et vaccinés” was more commonly associated with the meaning of the original expression (majeur et vacciné) than with vaccination, specifically that people are responsible enough to make their



own choices. In addition, the light-hearted scenario of children playing combined with the tagline while intended to reassure parents, appeared to some as trivializing the decisions related to vaccination. From a creative standpoint, it was mentioned in Montreal that the concept wrongly introduced an element of racism, by suggesting that it was all right that a white girl kiss a black boy because she is vaccinated.

Despite diverse reactions to the concepts tested, all were seen as having a moderate call to action leading to the website, primarily due to a lack of understanding of what information would be available online. Incorporating teaser information about the website content (potentially including facts) may strengthen this call to action. At the same time, to be of value and perceived as a trusted reference on childhood vaccination, the website must provide comprehensive and balanced information that takes into consideration various points of view on the matter. In terms of a website URL, a non-hyphenated, short and simple name is preferred, with the original English version ([Canada.ca/ChildhoodVaccines](http://Canada.ca/ChildhoodVaccines)) being preferred. An alternate French URL was suggested and preferred, namely [Canada.ca/VaccinsEnfants](http://Canada.ca/VaccinsEnfants).

Research findings clearly show that there is value in further developing the 'Safety' concept with some modifications, as well as establishing a related website that provides relevant information. The Government would also benefit from positioning itself as a credible and trusted source of such information, by providing access to balanced viewpoints on vaccination, as well as engaging the public to reflect on these choices rather than directing them to do something.

