



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee **Date:** January 20, 2003
From: Kate Sparrow **File:** 3425-01
 Director Recreation and Cultural Services
Re: **Communications Strategy to Discourage Street Racing**

Staff Recommendation

That this report commenting on the youth involvement in the Communication Strategy to discourage Street Racing be received for information.

Kate Sparrow
Director Recreation and Cultural Services

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Communications and Public Affairs.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Community Safety Division	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

Staff Report

Origin

At the December 10, 2002 meeting of the Community Safety Committee, the Communication Strategy to Discourage Street Racing was approved and it was requested that the Coordinator of Youth Services comment to Committee on youth driven initiatives. This report addresses factors for consideration in the delivery of such information to youth.

Analysis

The marketing of information to youth is predicated by simple messages and an appreciative understanding of contemporary marketing to this age group. Generation “y” youth (8-23 yrs. of age) live a world of instant access to information in which they multi-task in a variety of information platforms: internet, e-mail, ICQ/chat messaging, text messaging via cell phone, television, movies, music and music videos, radio, and print media.

A recent study found that on average a youth can recognize in excess of 200 corporate icons and logos, but are unable to identify simple trees. The marketing of images and messages is a powerful tool that characterizes pop culture as one that self-identifies through what they relate to visually. Young people have the ability to process and filter through huge amounts of information, retrieving the relevant and discarding the rest. Creating these primary identifiers, visually or conceptually, within the campaign, is key to effectively reaching youth. The campaign should be as equally appealing, provocative and captivating to the targeted audiences in order to be useful. Effective marketing of the strategy’s key messages should employ similar media platforms that youth can identify with.

The media platforms chosen to convey messages can be applied throughout the community in a number of settings such as: media events, schools, trailers at movie theatres, radio stations, late night programs and youth events in general.

Factors for Marketing to Youth

- » Simple, concise messages written for impact.
- » Use of images within the campaign to create identifiers.
- » Convey messages in the language and format of pop culture (eg. video and audio clips delivered with beats and an mc, interactive website or downloadable “games” that promote the major themes, use of rave style cards for print materials).
- » Use of performing or visual arts.
- » Sharing of information through internet, e-mail, e-messaging and on-line chat platforms.
- » Develop clever messages that promote choices/consequences.
- » Develop messages that create paradox to conventional advertising and thinking.

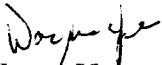
Community Involvement

The role of young people will have a positive impact in developing the campaign. The chosen mechanisms to deliver the messages will dictate the skill profiles of the youth selected to both develop and deliver any given messages.

For example a performing arts group may script a presentation for an audience of students that expresses and explores the impacts of street racing. Other youth with internet and programming skills could develop on-line forums/games/chat rooms or websites as part of the campaign. This level of involvement may be beyond the scope of just involving secondary school students. Technical advisors and mentors would need to be employed to manage the overall production of the campaign. These steps will help ensure that the delivery of the message is produced in a way that is sufficiently "cool" and impact its intended audiences.

Financial Impact

Costs will vary depending on the selection of formats chosen to deliver the messages, within the Communications Strategy, and related technical and support costs. The use of multi-media production resources in-house is limited and outside resources are required. Grant funding for this type of crime prevention initiative exists and may be explored.



Wayne Yee
Coordinator Youth Services

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