



Mental Illness and Stigma Working with the Media

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Media and Mental Health Promotion Campaigns

The Flemish experience
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Two recent projects

- 2001, Year of Mental Health

An all over campaign, one year campaign for general public
“Mental Health, let’s talk about it!”



- How different is different?

A yearly (since 1991) campaign for adolescents

Two recent projects

Two different approaches

- “2001”
 - Media attention is one of the major objectives
 - Media are involved in the whole concept
 - A nation-wide campaign
- “How different is different”
 - Media attention is only a side objective
 - Local media reporting on local actions

General Aims of the campaigns

- Inform the public (the adolescents) on:
 - Specific diagnoses (Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disease, Depression, Borderline,....)
 - What is it
 - How do you get it
 - How do you treat it
- Mental health services (hospitals, community mental Health centres, sheltered living, etc...)
 - What do they do
 - Where can I find one
 - How do I contact them

General Purposes of the campaigns

- Emphasise the importance of mental health
 - Mental health is as important as Physical Health
- Inform that treatment is possible:
 - There are lots of services that can help you
- Tolerance: the right to be different

Media implication

- **Media set the news**
 - without media your campaign will never come out of your inner circle
- **Media set the public agenda**
 - Without media your campaign will not reach (interest) the public
- **Media attention is political pressure**
 - Without media your aims will never come on the political agenda

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Have a clear media strategy

- Do know what you want
 - negotiate with media about the themes: use their knowledge and experience: be partners