

Homeland Security Launches New Ads to Demonstrate Importance of Family Emergency Planning

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and The Advertising Council unveiled new public service advertisements (PSAs) today to support the Ready Campaign. Ready is a national public service advertising campaign designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The new PSAs unveiled today include television, radio, print, internet and outdoor versions created pro bono by BBDO New York. Also released today is a television ad featuring First Lady Laura Bush discussing emergency preparedness. All of the new PSAs highlight the fact that many families have not yet taken the steps needed to prepare for emergencies including getting an emergency supply kit, making a family emergency plan and learning more about different emergencies and their appropriate responses.

"These new ads will encourage all Americans to take some basic steps to prepare their families for emergencies," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "By simply taking a little time to sit down together and make an emergency plan, families can help answer important questions, such as where to meet, how to communicate with each other and what to do in the event of an emergency."

The new documentary-style television and radio ads feature real families discussing their emergency plans, or lack of and ask, "Is your plan any better?" In her PSA, Mrs. Bush encourages Americans to take some basic steps to prepare their families for all types of emergencies.

The new PSAs will be distributed to television and radio stations nationwide this week via FastChannel and all of the new ads can be viewed on the Ad Council Web site at www.adcouncil.org.

The Ad Council has declared Ready one of the most successful campaigns in its more than 60-year history. Since its launch, the campaign has generated more than \$593 million in donated media support. As of September 30, 2006, the campaign's Web site has received more than 1.9 billion hits and 24.3 million unique visitors; the toll-free number has received more than 272,000 calls; and more than 9.7 million Ready materials have been requested or downloaded from the Web site.

"We're very proud of the progress we've seen with the Ready Campaign, but there are still too many Americans that haven't taken any steps to prepare for emergencies," said

Ad Council President and CEO Peggy Conlon. "The real families in these new spots will resonate with audiences as they illustrate the need for every family to create a family emergency plan."

While there is still a long way to go to ensure that all Americans have taken steps to prepare, there are indications of progress. A study conducted in June by the Ad Council on behalf of the Ready Campaign recorded significant positive increases in preparedness behaviors. It found:

- 91 percent of respondents said it is "very" or "somewhat" important for all Americans to be prepared for emergencies
- From 2005 to 2006, the proportion of Americans who said they have taken any steps to prepare rose 10 points, from 45 percent to 55 percent
- There were also several notable increases in key preparedness behaviors from 2004 to 2006:
 - Put together an emergency kit: 44 percent in 2004 to 54 percent in 2006
 - Created a family emergency plan: 32 percent in 2004 to 39 percent in 2006
 - Searched for info about preparedness: 28 percent in 2004 to 40 percent in 2006

The Ready Campaign, launched in February 2003 by DHS and the Ad Council, asks individuals to do three key things to prepare for emergencies: get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses. The campaign also includes a Spanish language version, *Listo* as well as two extensions, *Ready Business*, which focuses on business emergency preparedness and *Ready Kids*, a tool to help parents and teachers talk to children about emergencies and emergency preparedness.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) promotes individual emergency preparedness through the Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps as part of a broader national effort conducted by the Department's Directorate for Preparedness. Ready is a national public service advertising campaign produced by The Advertising Council in partnership with DHS. The Ready Campaign is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. Individuals interested in more information about family and business preparedness can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials. Citizen Corps, DHS' grassroots effort, localizes preparedness messages and provides opportunities for citizens to get emergency response training; participate in community exercises; and volunteer to support local first responders. To learn more and to get involved, contact your nearest Citizen Corps Council by visiting www.citizencorps.gov.

The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to

effect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives. To learn more about the Ad Council and its campaigns, visit www.adcouncil.org.