

The effectiveness of a digital campaign to promote safe sexual practices among Australian young people

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Background:

- Young people are more likely to engage in unsafe sexual practices, which may be related to poor health literacy, perceived barriers and topic-associated stigma.
- Young people also routinely use digital technologies, spending a significant portion of their day online.
- Therefore, we launched the nation-wide digital campaign *Talk. Test. Enjoy.* to improve young people's knowledge, behaviours and social norms around safe sex.

In 2017, young people (15-29) in Australia accounted for:



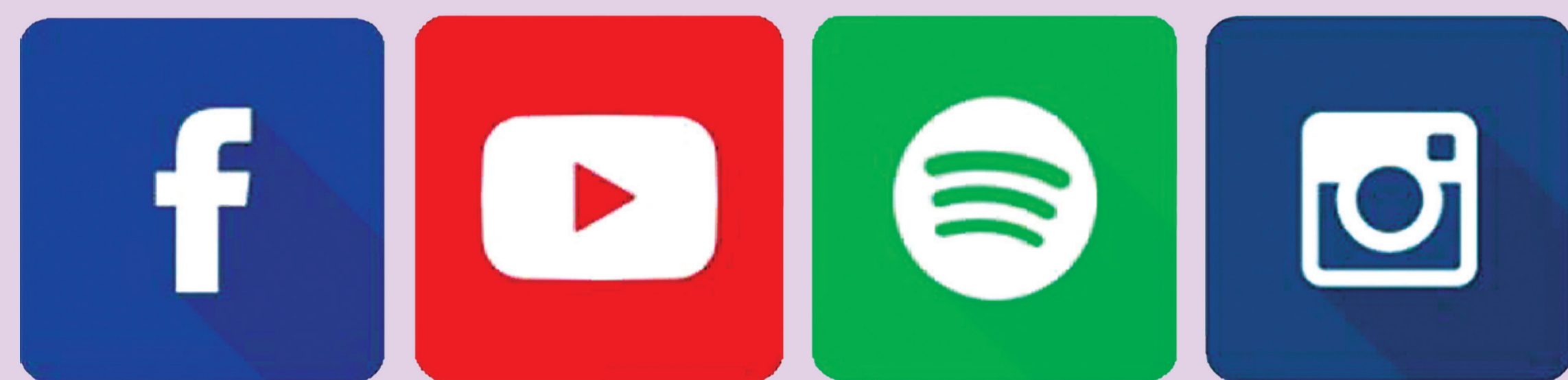
Aim:

To evaluate the effectiveness of the digital *Talk. Test. Enjoy.* campaign in increasing condom use, STI testing and normalisation of talking about safe sex among young people in Australia.

Methods:

Campaign implementation:

We designed 9 x 15-sec animations, promoting key messages via:



Campaign Key Messages

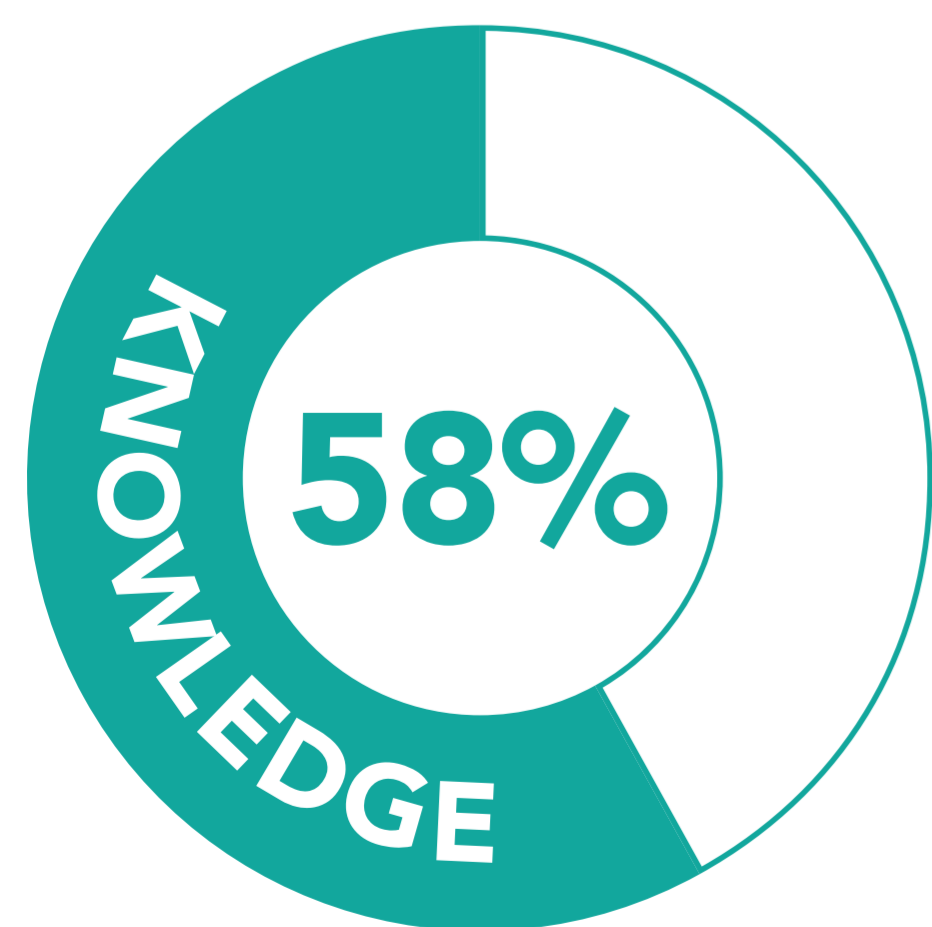
STIs	STI Testing	Condom Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce STI-related stigma • Increase the perceived risk of STIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase STI testing • Increase positive attitudes towards regular STI testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase condom use • Increase positive attitudes towards condoms as part of 'enjoyable sex'

Evaluation:

- **Eligibility criteria:** Between 18-29 years old and living in Australia.
- **Procedure:** An online cross-sectional survey measured participants' knowledge, awareness and behavioural intentions to get tested for STIs, use condoms and talk with their sexual partner/s about STIs.

Results:

1689 eligible participants ($M^{\text{age}} = 21.36$, range = 18-29) completed the online survey. Most participants reported that the campaign increased their sexual-health related **knowledge** and **awareness** and encouraged them to **use condoms**, **get tested for STIs**, and **talk to their sexual partner/s about STIs**.



Conclusions:

- Short digital animations have proved successful as an informal means to engage young people with content, while increasing their sexual health related knowledge, awareness, and future behavioural intentions.
- The use of an online medium provides an opportunity to deliver highly accessible health interventions to potentially difficult-to-reach populations.
- Highly targeted segments of information can be integrated into the stream of digital media that young people already consume.
- Future research should assess whether the impact of the campaign on behavioural intentions translates to behaviour change.