

Education NEWS & NOTES

Giving Teens A Boost to Stay In School

(NAPSA)—The high school dropout rates in this country are staggering. One student drops out of high school every nine seconds in America. Additionally, the rate at which students leave high school between grades nine and 10 has tripled over the last 30 years.

Add to this the fact that aside from increased unemployment, dropouts are often at a greater risk for drugs, gangs, poverty and teenage pregnancy and it's clear that dropout prevention is a critical issue deserving of the nation's attention.

In response to the widespread national dropout rate, the Ad Council and the U.S. Army are continuing their high school dropout prevention initiative with a new interactive campaign called "Boost."

Advertising for "Boost" includes TV, radio, in-school posters, outdoor and Internet advertising, which is intended to support and encourage those who may be at risk of dropping out. The PSAs urge parents, coaches, mentors and friends to give struggling kids a "boost" to help them stay in school and graduate.

The decision to drop out of school does not happen overnight; it comes after years of frustration and failure. Often, those that drop out have run out of motivation and have no source of support or encouragement in school or at home. The campaign reminds us that sometimes a "Boost" can mean the



A program encourages students to stay in school and not to drop out.

difference between graduating and dropping out.

The TV and radio spots feature at-risk high school seniors, the "Class of 06," who are recording their struggles to stay in school by filming documentary-style videos of themselves and their friends/family.

The students also encourage others to submit their stories and inspiration for staying in school at a new Web site, www.BoostUp.org. The Web site offers information and resources for teens and those who support them to graduate.

"Despite all that we have accomplished during the past six years, there are still hundreds of thousands of teens who make a life-altering decision to drop out of school each year," said Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Advertising Council. "This unique and compelling program will inspire students to join an interactive community where they can seek continuous support."