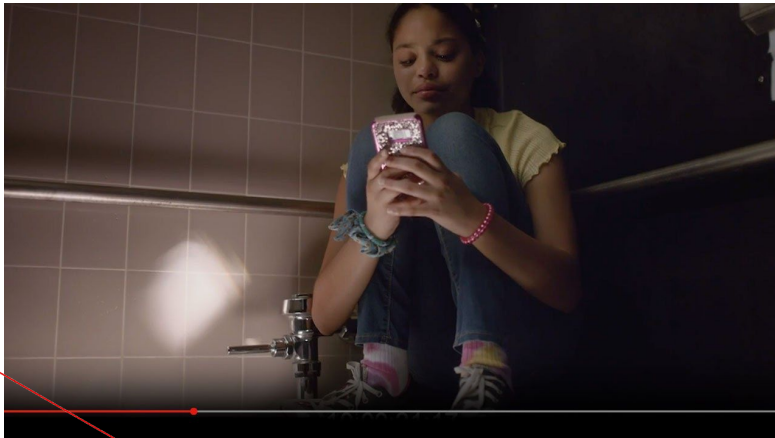
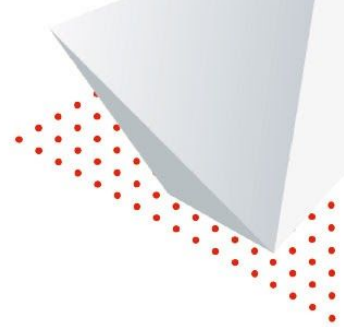


# Sandy Hook Promise: Back to School Essentials

Sandy Hook Promise, BBDO New York



## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Sandy Hook Promise is a small non profit in the gun-control space. Rather than solely pursuing policy change, it empowers individuals to prevent violence by educating on the signs that someone may be planning a shooting. In order to shock people out of their apathy on the subject of gun violence and generate likes and shares, Sandy Hook needed to create a PSA that stimulated an immediate emotional response. With donated media and a strong creative, they were able to truly create a conversation. Sandy Hook Promise launched their new PSA in September of 2019 as students prepared for the new school year.

## CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

The goal of the PSA was to point out the absurdity of accepting gun violence as the “new normal,” jolt viewers out of their complacency on the issue, and remind them that school shootings are preventable.

To succeed, the PSA would need to capture the country’s attention, build awareness and spark conversation, as well as capture new supporters willing to become advocates and action takers.

## CREATIVE STRATEGY

The “Back-To-School Essentials” PSA explores the tension between the traditional view of back-to-school, and the new reality lockdowns, shooter drills and the ever-present threat of gun violence. It starts out like any other cheerful back-to-school ad—but soon takes a darker turn. A boy at his school locker talks about his perfect new backpack. A girl in a classroom mentions her colorful new binders. But it soon becomes clear that a shooter is active in the school, and the pupils must use their new school items to save their lives. A skateboard is used to smash a window to create an escape route. A sock becomes a tourniquet. A girl uses her new phone to text her mom a final message. The commercial closes by pointing out that the only real back-to-school essential is learning to spot the signs of a potential shooter.

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Sandy Hook Promise is a small non-profit without the resources to buy paid media. So the film needed to be shared in order to be effective. In the end, Sandy Hook Promise spent \$25K on pair media and another \$12K on influencer support. They were given another \$4M in donated media.

## WHAT ROLE DID YOUTUBE PLAY?

YouTube extended the reach of the Sandy Hook Promise campaign and introduced a skippable element to the plan. The benefit of the skippable ad was that a user could actively choose to watch – and more often than not, when they did watch, they took action to take the pledge.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

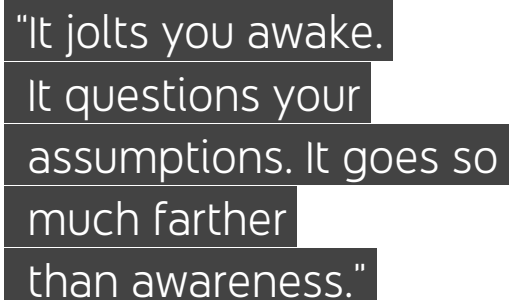
- The video received nearly 76 million views (over 26M in the first 24 hours) and a staggering 3.9 billion media impressions.
- Over 4,400 media stories covered the spot, with many featuring forceful op-eds or extended, emotional on-air discussions of the PS
- Google searches for “Sandy Hook Promise” was 4x higher than at any time since the organization’s inception
- The PSA became a trending topic on Twitter and shared by celebrities like Kim Kardashian and Mark Ruffalo, as well as 11 of the 2020 Democratic Presidential candidates.
- Forty-eight thousand people made the Sandy Hook Promise, and SHP added more than 78K new social media followers.
- There was a 0.37% CTR which was significantly higher than expected for any video, and was the highest performer on the plan.

## WHY DID THIS CAMPAIGN WIN?

This is an outstanding piece of creative that was catapulted by the use of YouTube as a large scale platform that enables conversation to drive further engagement and action

## LESSONS LEARNED

The Sandy Hook Promise video achieved enormous reach with a highly thought provoking message. In addition to **58% of 2020 finalists and 6 of 7 winners used the unique reach of YouTube to find vast audiences.** Additionally, **emotion is a hallmark of 83% of finalist cases.**



“It jolts you awake.  
It questions your  
assumptions. It goes so  
much farther  
than awareness.”

CHRISTINE CHEN, PARTNER, HEAD OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY,  
GOODBY SILVERSTEIN & PARTNERS