Broderson Award Submission: Here to Help Maine – Maine CDC
Category: Integrated Communication **Campaign Dates:** June – December 2024
Budget: $312,375

SITUATION ANALYSIS: Maine faces a significant challenge with suicide, ranking 15th nationally with the highest rate in the Northeast—15–20% above the national average. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for Mainers aged 15–34, 4th for ages 10–14 and 35–54, and 9th overall, with an average of 266 deaths annually. To address this, the Maine CDC provides critical resources like the Maine Crisis Line (988) and heretohelpmaine.com. Rinck partnered with the Maine CDC to raise awareness of these vital services through a comprehensive integrated public health campaign.

The 2024 campaign launched in the wake of the devastating Lewiston mass shootings in fall 2023, which claimed 18 lives, injured 13, and left the state reeling. The tragedy's lasting emotional impact highlighted the urgent need for accessible mental health support. To meet this need, the Maine CDC and Rinck focused on connecting Mainers to essential resources, promoting resilience, and reducing mental health stigma. Messaging was tailored through two targeted efforts—one for youth and one for adults—this submission highlights the adult-focused campaign.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES The 2024 Here to Help Maine Campaign aimed to address Maine's high adult suicide rates and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. Targeting Maine adults aged 25 and older, the campaign focused on enhancing mental well-being, fostering open conversations, and encouraging use of available resources.

Objectives: Recognizing the complexity of mental health and suicidal ideation, the campaign concentrated on raising **awareness** and promoting **engagement** with resources.

- **Awareness:** *(June – December 2024)* Increase awareness of resources such as the Maine Crisis Line (988) to reduce suicide attempts and deaths. Target awareness metrics: 20.8M impressions, 1M video views, 200K social engagements.
- **Engagement & Education:** *(June – December 2024)* Enhance mental health, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking by sharing stories, tips, and resources, resulting in 83.5K ad clicks to the Maine Crisis Line, 1,250 resource downloads, 150K website visits.

This integrated campaign leveraged relatable content to connect with Maine adults, driving meaningful awareness, education, and engagement around mental health.

STRATEGIES/TACTICS Rinck's 2024 trauma-informed suicide prevention campaign for the Maine CDC was built on extensive research, including Maine CDC data, past campaign evaluations, behavioral data analysis, and input from mental health professionals. Research revealed stigma as a key barrier preventing adults from seeking help, guiding the strategy toward peer-driven storytelling, trauma-informed messaging, and easy access to resources like the Maine Crisis Line (988). Insights from commonly searched terms related to depression, PTSD, and loneliness informed content development to encourage help-seeking behaviors.

To reach Mainers effectively, Rinck implemented a multimedia strategy emphasizing authenticity, accessibility, and hope. Targeted digital ads delivered vital information, influencer stories fostered connection, and website updates ensured a welcoming, trauma-informed experience. With a $312,375 budget, media allocations were informed by past performance to maximize impact. This data-driven

approach aimed to guide Maine residents toward the help they need during vulnerable moments, promoting resilience and reducing mental health stigma.

EXECUTION From June through December of 2024, the Here to Help Maine campaign employed an engaging and effective multi-channel approach to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and connect Maine residents with mental health resources.

- **Media Strategy:** Ads ran on Meta, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, programmatic platforms, and paid search. Deliverables included videos, static ads, and keyword-targeted text ads sharing advice and resources. Ads targeted Maine residents searching for keywords like "suicidal thoughts," "PTSD," "hopeless," and "job loss," ensuring outreach to those most at risk. The campaign was executed according to plan, with in-campaign optimizations made to prioritize top-performing ads per platform and constant evaluation of platform performance as a whole.
- **Influencer Collaboration:** The influencer campaign was executed according to plan. Six Maine-based influencers shared authentic personal stories and contributed to a PSA to humanize mental health struggles, amplify campaign reach, and drive audiences to resources. Influencer content was boosted with paid media to extend reach. Rinck developed an influencer overview to track all contracted partners, their agreed-upon deliverables, and rates, as well as provide a place to capture live links, paid boosting timing and budgets, and log ad codes.
- **Website Updates:** The "Here to Help Maine" website was updated with accessible design and trauma-informed messaging, serving as the central hub for campaign resources and connections to treatment.

RESULTS The 2024 Here to Help Maine Campaign effectively exceeded almost every objective working toward increased awareness, education, and engagement against suicide prevention and reduced mental health stigma in Maine. Suicide rates for this time period are not yet available.

- 19.7M Impressions (missing our KPI goal by just 5%), ensuring broad visibility across Meta, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube, and programmatic ads.
- 6.3M Video Views (exceeding our goal by 530%!!) driven by emotion-focused, peer-driven storytelling.
- 207.2K Social Engagements amplified by influencer collaborations.
- 195.6K Ad Clicks to the Maine Crisis Line (a 134% increase over KPI benchmark!) including 745 clicks to text, 537 clicks to call and 210 clicks to chat.
- 1,500 Resource Downloads reflecting strong content engagement.
- 159K+ Website sessions with a 50.81% engagement rate. Visits came from over 297 different Maine cities/towns with resource pages showing a 420% higher average duration than previous campaigns.