

About the *Entitled to Respect* Campaign

Throughout the spring and summer of 2001, affiliates of the Epilepsy Foundation conducted a nationwide, multiple-question survey of 19,441 teens. The findings were revealing...and disturbing.

Nearly half of the teens surveyed (49%) had not even heard of or read about epilepsy. The same exact percentage thought epilepsy might be contagious. And 36% of respondents said they thought kids with epilepsy would likely be bullied or picked on in school.

With results like these, the Epilepsy Foundation knew that an outreach program to educate teens about the realities of epilepsy was an urgent necessity. That campaign, called ***Entitled to Respect***, launched in fall 2001.

The campaign's core message — that teens with epilepsy are dealing with their condition and deserve to be treated with the same consideration as anyone else — struck a chord with the media. During Epilepsy Month, in November 2001, more than 1.5 million story impressions were registered in the print media, ranging from major dailies, such as the *Detroit News* and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, to approximately 95 community newspapers. Impact was equally strong in broadcast media, with more than 55 TV broadcasts about the campaign, while an audio news release generated 350 broadcasts, and radio PSAs registered more than 40 million impressions.

It helped, of course, that those PSAs were recorded by America's hottest singing group 'N Sync. That the most "in demand" act in American entertainment in 2001 would lend its time and fame to ***Entitled to Respect*** is vivid testimony to the strength of the campaign's message about fairness and compassion.

That message is being carried even farther in the fall of 2002.

The *Entitled to Respect* Campaign 2002: Building on Success, Reaching New Audiences.

During its launch year, ***Entitled to Respect*** focused exclusively on getting its message in front of teens. For 2002, "tweens" (10-12 year olds) have been added as a target audience, because so many attitudes form in this period of near-adolescence. In order to reach teens and tweens in their environments, the *Entitled to Respect* campaign uses both peer-to-peer communication and celebrity spokespersons to get across the message that teens with epilepsy deserve the same respect as anyone else.

This year, Ashton Kutcher, the young film and TV actor who plays Kelso on the hit series *That '70s Show*, is serving as celebrity spokesperson, along with the young new music group Triple Image, who have a special appeal to the tween audience. The focus of the celebrity radio public service announcements — and of all ***Entitled to Respect*** communications this year — will be to correct misinformation about epilepsy and to provide basic information on the condition and about seizure first aid. In addition to the PSAs, communication avenues will include print public service announcements, the www.entitledtorespect.org Web site and microzines, folding educational brochures with a bold, contemporary graphic design especially appealing to tweens and teens.

With help from Teen Review Panel members from across the country — some with and some without epilepsy — the Epilepsy Foundation created these materials and developed ideas for teens and tweens to become involved locally, as well as nationally, in programs about epilepsy.

Getting Teens in Every Community Involved

Epilepsy Foundation affiliates across the U.S. will conduct in-school and community outreach through school presentations, partnerships with local community groups, educational materials such as an interactive CD-ROM, the *Entitled to Respect* Teen Ambassadors Project, *Entitled to Respect* Instant Messaging Programs, events to raise awareness in specific communities, and support groups for teens with epilepsy. The microzines and book covers will be distributed to teens through clothing stores, doctor's offices, health classrooms, and guidance offices in schools, libraries, shopping malls, coffee shops, and after-school hangouts like the YMCA.

About the Epilepsy Foundation

The Epilepsy Foundation, with national offices in metropolitan Washington, D.C., and a network of 60 affiliates throughout the nation, is a non-profit volunteer organization devoted to research for the cure, education, advocacy, and the provision of services in the community for people with seizure disorders and their families.

The Entitled to Respect 2002 campaign is supported in part through an unrestricted educational grant from Abbott Laboratories.