



CENSORSHIP, BARRIERS, AND WINS WHEN RECRUITING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR VIRTUAL APP INTERVENTIONS

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IGNITE AND INSPIRE: UNITING FOR IMPACT

2024 TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION GRANTEE CONFERENCE

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This opportunity was made possible by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (90AP2697-01-00).

OUR GOALS FOR THE DAY

After viewing this presentation, participants will be able to...

- explore the multifaceted aspects of social media censorship impacting youth recruitment in research studies;
- learn the skills required to create a compelling ad copy amid rapidly changing social media restrictions; and
- identify two strategies to navigate rejected or censored ads on various social media platforms.

OUR TIME TOGETHER

- ★ Welcome & Introductions
- ★ Background Information about Censorship
- ★ The Art of Powerful Copy
- ★ The Ads Appeal Process
- ★ Reflections / Closing

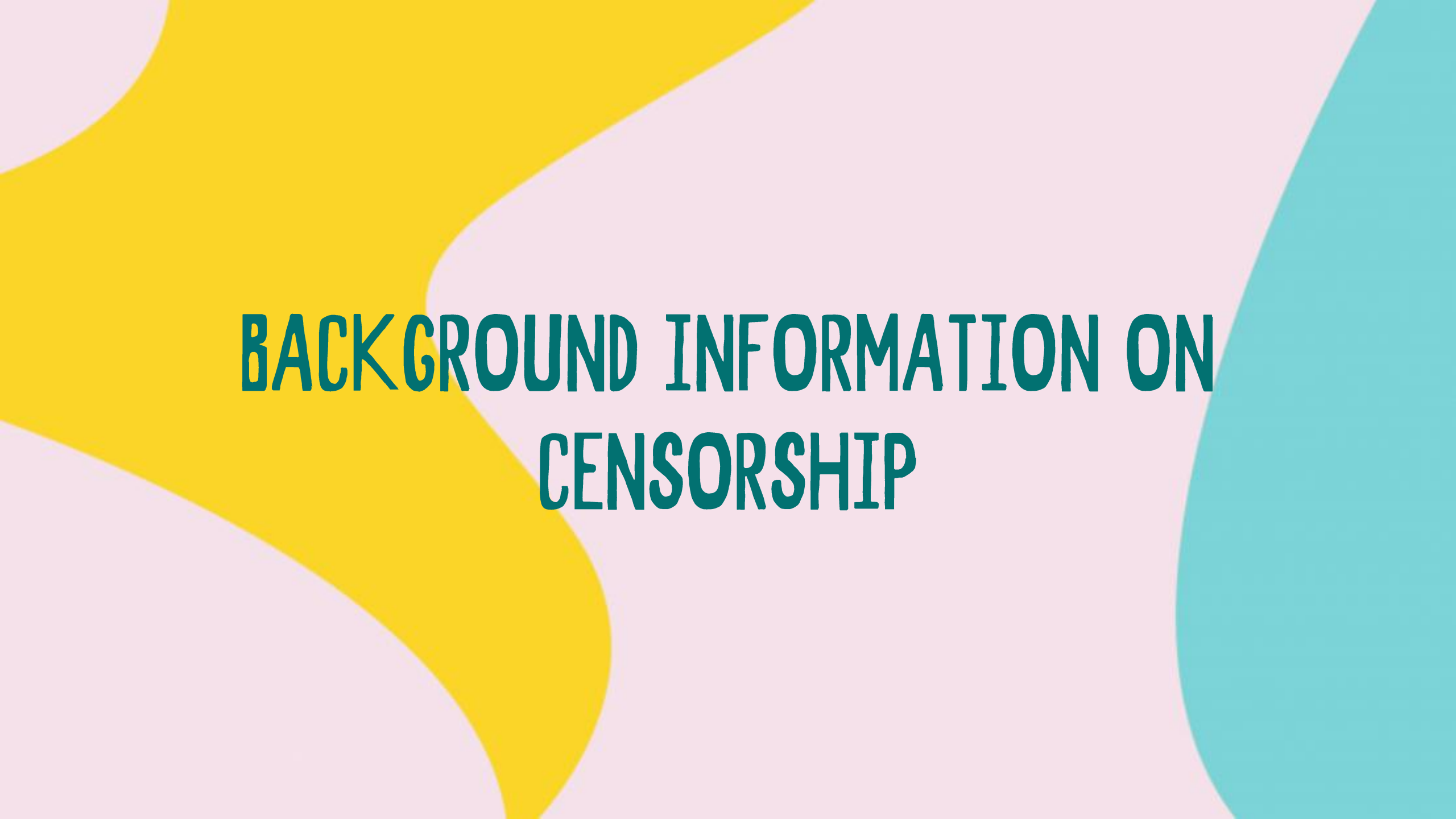
AD CENSORSHIP ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

- Scan the QR code with your phone.
- Vote True or False for each question.
- Results will be shown on our presentation screen!

SCAN FOR POLL





BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CENSORSHIP

WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH CENSORSHIP?

- It restricts adolescent's access to vital information.
- It hampers public awareness of important sexual health issues and resources.
- It reinforces the stigma around discussing sexual health openly.
- It prevents effective use of social media for recruiting and engaging young people in research studies.

HOW CONTENT GETS SUPPRESSED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Algorithms determine the visibility of content on social media platforms.
- Moderators remove content that violates platform guidelines.
- AI Tools on ad platforms skew approvals and suppress sexual and reproductive health content.
- Users report content, but misuse leads to inaccurate reporting.

WHERE WE' RE SEEING CENSORSHIP IN SOCIAL MEDIA

- TikTok: Content with "sex," "lesbian," or "abortion" is flagged, removed, or suppressed in captions.
- Facebook: Sexual health ads are often rejected or need language changes.
- Instagram: Sexual health posts are shadowbanned, reducing visibility.
- YouTube: Sexual health videos are often demonetized or age-restricted, limiting their reach and accessibility.



EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CENSORSHIP

CENSORSHIP WE HAVE FACED ON SOCIAL MEDIA THROUGHOUT RECRUITMENT FOR A RESEARCH STUDY

We've faced our ad accounts being frozen, limitations on ad targeting, rejection for being a "prohibited industry," and more...

Define who should see your ads

Search themes

What are some words or phrases people use when searching for your products or services?

Add search themes (7 of 25)

Health × Personal Care × Reproductive Health ×

Birth Control × Relationships × Wellness ×

Health Care × Add search themes (up to 25)

One or more of your search themes can not be used.

Fix or request an exemption

Try changing or removing these search themes. If you're sure that your search themes comply with our policies, request a review and we'll take a look.

Birth control

- Birth Control

Show details

The status of your ad delivery

2022-09-17 20:19:26 UTC-05:00

Hey There Healthy Teen Network0304,

Your ad(s) were **Rejected** because they don't comply with our advertising policies. Log in to your account to learn more about the reason(s) for the rejection.

Account ID: 7071278413515980802

Account Name: Healthy Teen Network0304

Ad group name: Ad Group Get website visits 20220913103358

Ad group id: 1743866946931730

Rejection Reason


Ad 1743866947909649 Rejection Reason:

The product/service promoted on the ad/landing page belongs to a prohibited industry of the targeted location(s) in your ad when we take our own business evaluation, user experience and the value of advertisement impact, etc. into consideration.

Affected Regions: US


EXAMPLES OF SRH TOPIC CENSORSHIP ON SOCIAL MEDIA FROM FOLKS IN THE FIELD

FDA-approved fertility tracking tool had ads removed from social media


 **Kristina Cahoj**
CEO at KEGG
23h · 🌐

"Women's health is suppressed on social media. It's not because we are violating terms and conditions, it's because of sloppy AI that is flagging us as sex or porn."

50 women's health companies has signed our petition to end women's health censorship on [Meta](#) and [TikTok](#)




Why Is Social Media Censoring Female-Bodied Sexual Health?
beautymatter.com • 3 min read

 Only you can see this post. It's been removed because it goes against our Professional Community Policies. [Learn more](#)

Ad sharing information about breastfeeding was rejected by Meta's "adult content" policy

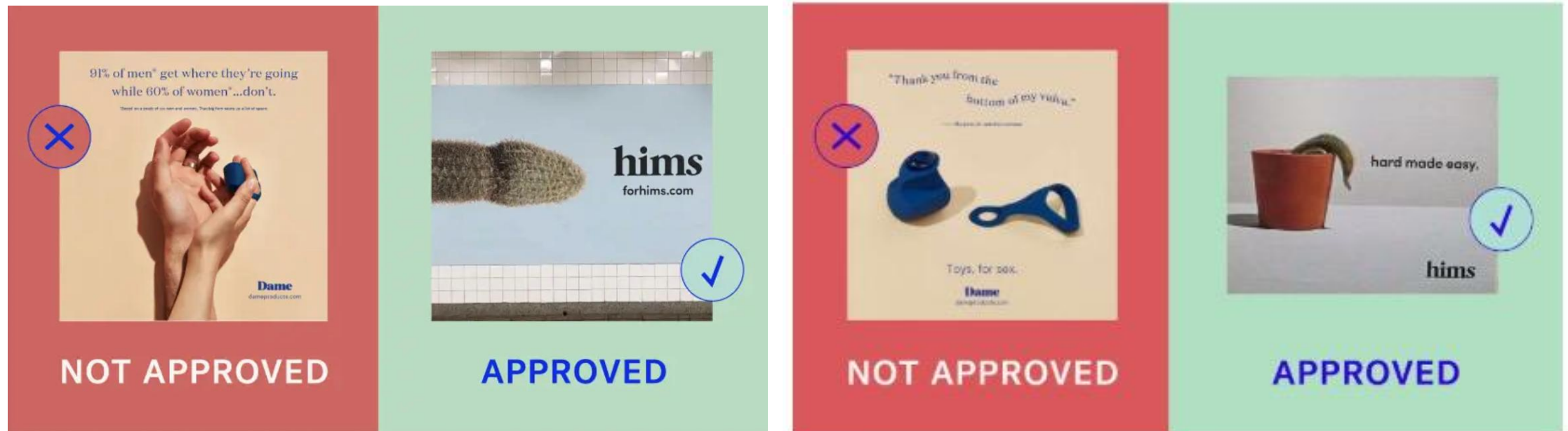
Post: "Breastfeeding can be tricky, and the let-down..."



 **Review rejected**
Ad still doesn't comply with our Adult Content policy.

EXAMPLES OF SRH TOPIC CENSORSHIP IRL

Dame's winning lawsuit against the NYC MTA over their subway ads



THE ART OF POWERFUL COPY

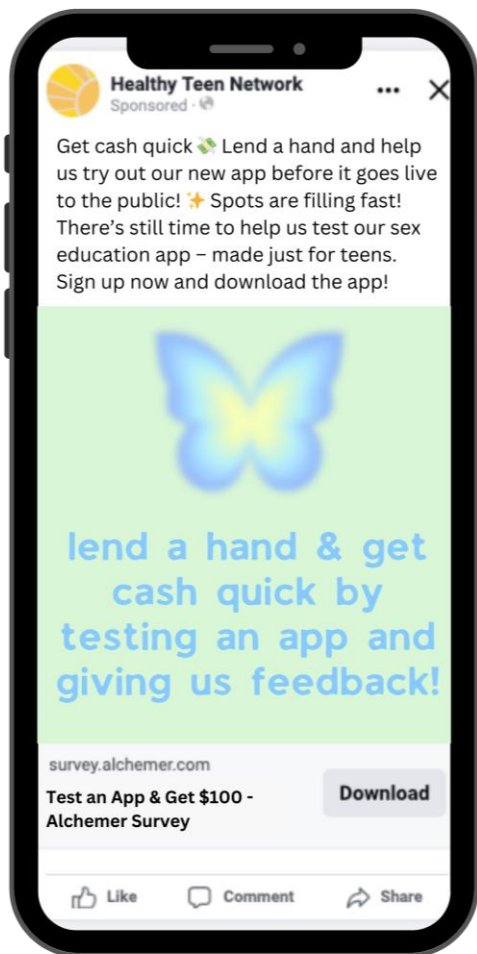
AD COPY CAROUSEL ACTIVITY

- There are posters with sample social media ads showcasing different styles of ad copy and visuals.
- We'll focus on the ad copy; this includes the captions, headers, and text in the ad images.
- Take a Sharpie and a pack of green & pink sticky notes when you go up to one of the posters.
- As we tell you to, move around the room to each poster.

AD COPY CAROUSEL ACTIVITY

- Review the ad copy on each poster.
- Use one sticky note per comment, or item.
- **Green** Stickies: List changes you would make to the ad copy.
- **Pink** Stickies: Note if you think the ad was approved (or not).

1



2



3





AD COPYWRITING BEST PRACTICES

BEST PRACTICES FOR AD COPYWRITING

- Familiarize yourself with different restrictions across platforms.
- Headline copy and text on images must match, especially when including \$ incentives for young people.
- Use relevant hashtags OR avoid them altogether (dependent on platform).
- Use short, enticing copy with one clear call to action.
- Avoid using SRH terms when necessary (dependent on platform).



STILL IMAGE AD BEST PRACTICES

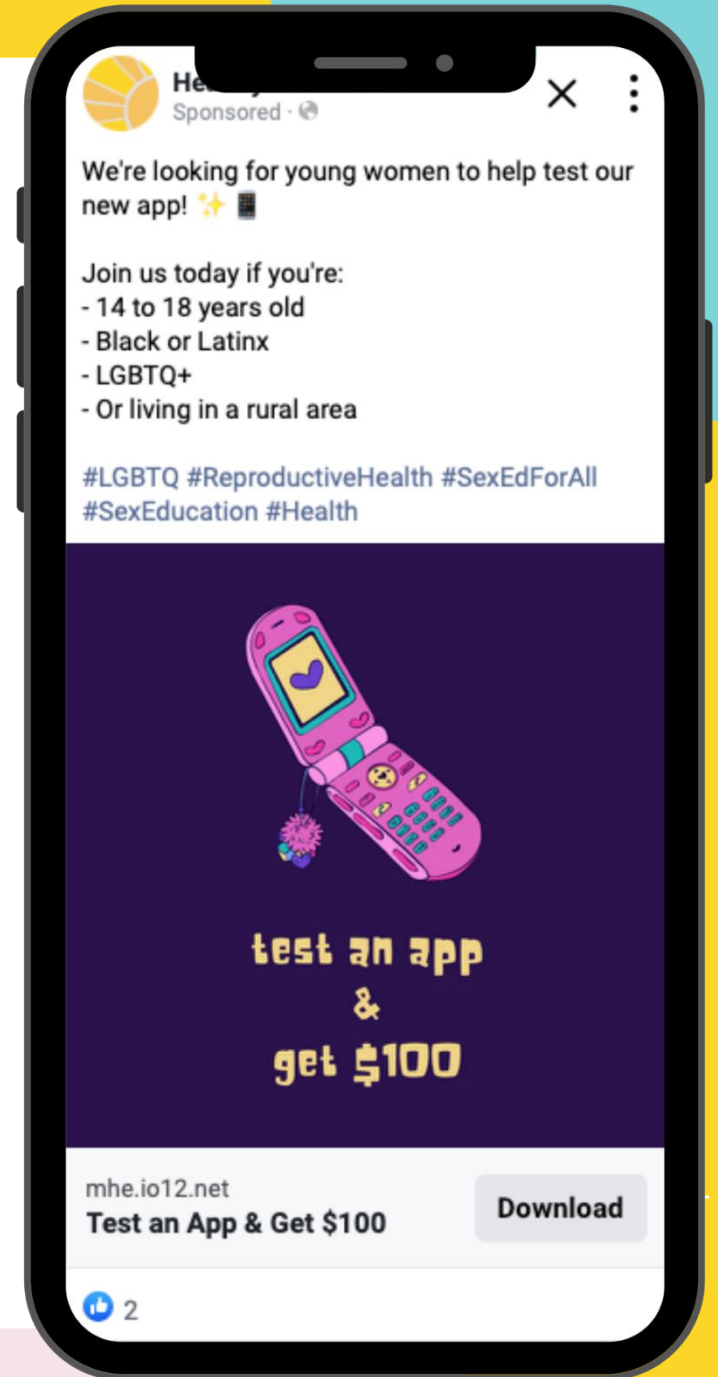
Leverage your audience on an existing social media account

Simple graphic with minimal text
Text should have a direct ask but not pushy
Colors should have high enough contrast
Typeface should be easily readable and large
Avoid stock imagery

Button with clear direction for the user to take

Use concise copy with a call to action and emojis

Add relevant hashtags



The background is a light blue gradient. It features several large, teal-colored five-pointed stars of varying sizes and orientations. Interspersed among these are smaller, red, four-pointed sparkles or starbursts. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and celebratory.

VIDEO AD BEST PRACTICES

Leverage your audience on an existing social media account



Video should be under 30 seconds
People in the video should reflect intended audience
Add trending, upbeat music to the background
Add subtitles (if applicable) for accessibility



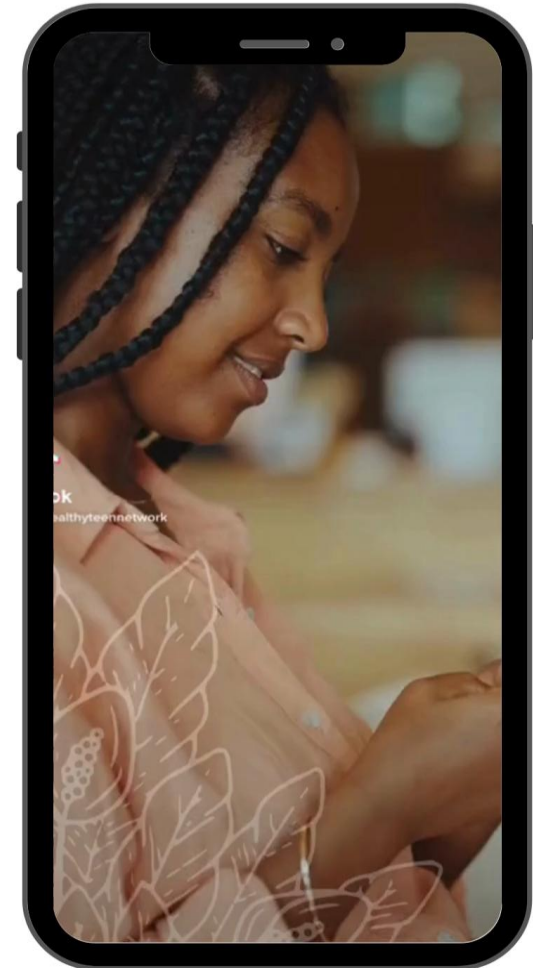
Include a still graphic with your call to action



Use a button with clear direction for the user to take



Do not include SRH language in caption or image
(can try seggsed or seggs)



THE ADS APPEAL PROCESS

BEST PRACTICES FOR APPEALING REJECTED ADS

- Keep screenshots of ad rejections
- Document all appeals by platform
- Reach out to a representative from the platform
- Submit an appeal explaining the important and education value of the ad
- Mention that the ad is part of an IRB-approved research study
- Be ready to update your copy or graphics to run the ad again



EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL APPEAL

Re-state the reason they gave you for your ad rejection and request clarity

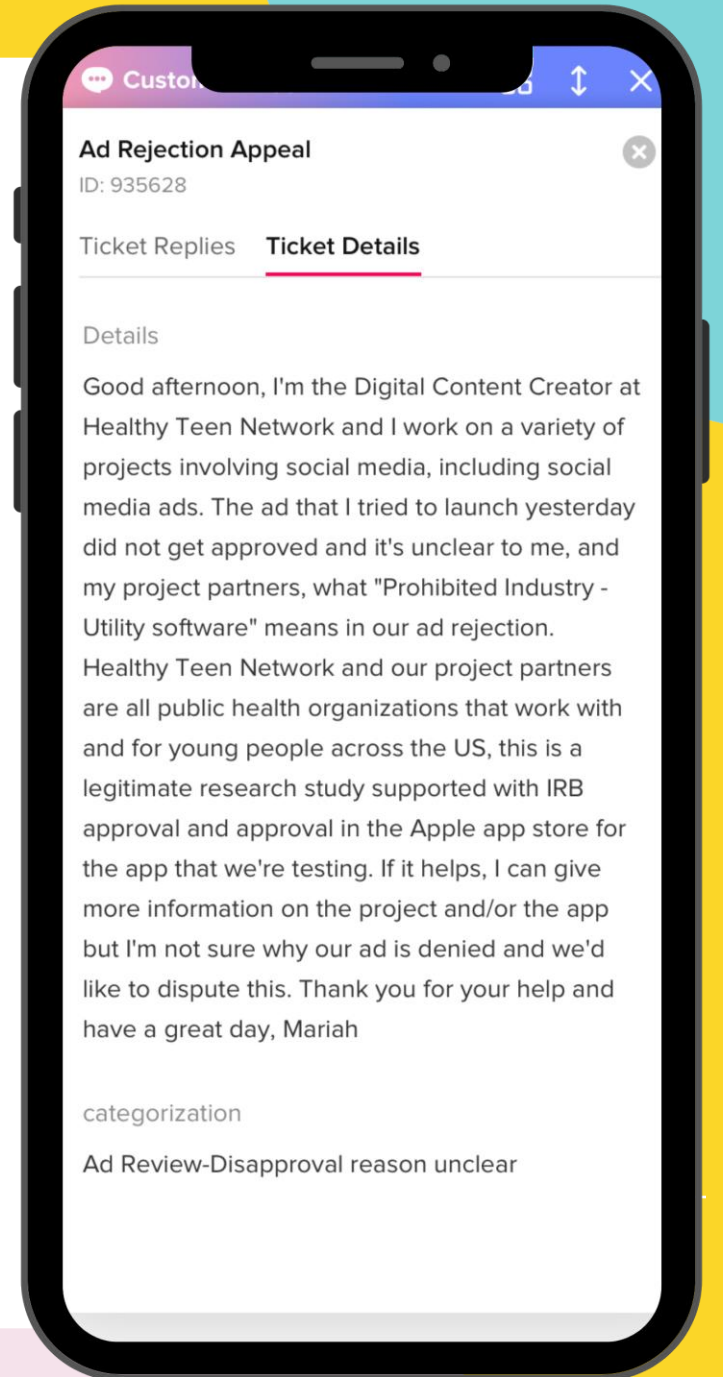


Tell them who you are and where you work
State your credentials for the ad (e.g., IRB-approved research study with several nonprofit organizations)



Don't share too much and do not use SRH language in your ad appeal copy

Mention that you can provide them with additional information as needed



The background features a composition of organic, flowing shapes in three colors: a dark teal on the left, a light sky blue in the center, and a bright yellow on the right. The shapes overlap and curve, creating a modern, abstract aesthetic.

REFLECTIONS & CLOSING



What is one question you still have about censorship of sexual and reproductive health topics on social media?



Let's work together to advance social change, so young people get the education & care they need & deserve.

Connect with the [Repro Uncensored Coalition](#)

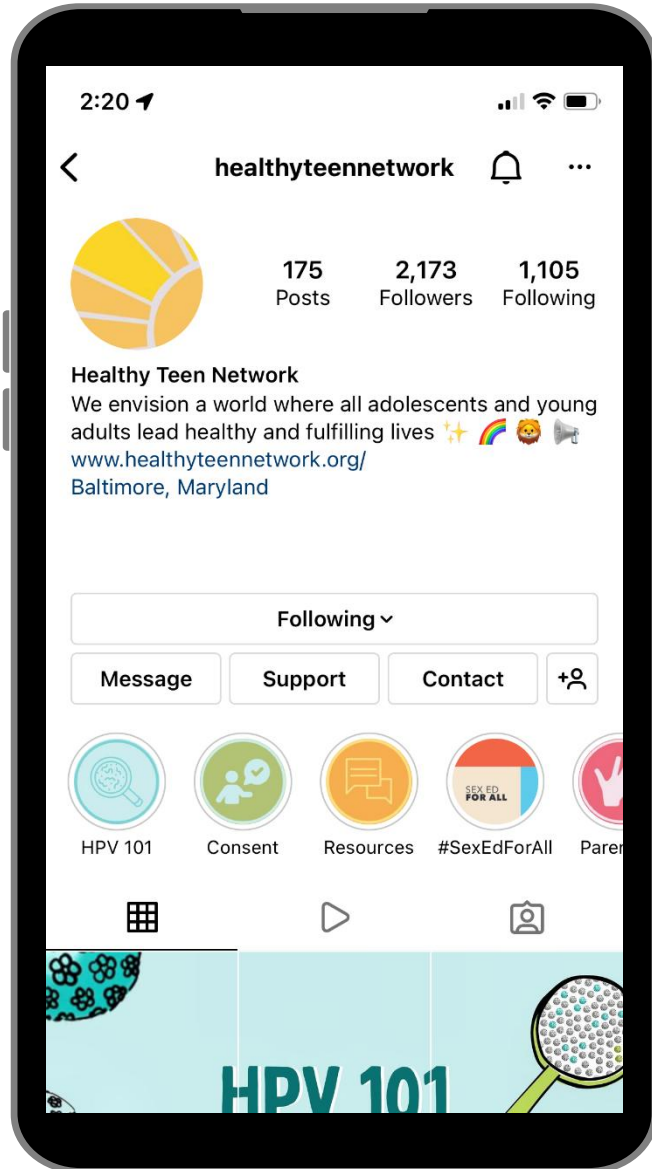
WANT MORE INFO?

- [Navigating Sexual & Reproductive Health Censorship on Social Media](#) | Blog Post
- [Additional Examples of Censorship](#) from Xtra Curricular | Webpage
- [4 Sexual Wellness Brands Fighting Censorship](#) | News Article



REFERENCES

1. [Amnesty International Report on Tech & Reproductive Rights](#)
2. [Blog Post from Healthy Teen Network on Navigating Sexual and Reproductive Censorship on Social Media](#)
3. [TECHsex USA report on Youth Sexuality and Reproductive Health in the Digital Age](#)
4. Journal Article | [“It would be weird to have that on Facebook”: young people's use of social media and the risk of sharing sexual health information](#)



STAY IN TOUCH

www.HealthyTeenNetwork.org





THANK YOU!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO COMPLETE YOUR SESSION FEEDBACK FORM!