Strategic Message Planner: BULLYBLOCKER

1. Advertising Goal

* Bully victims will be encouraged and comfortable with anonymously texting the bully blocker line feeling assured that they will receive quick and effective support that is sensitive to their situation.
* By developing this positive relationship with bully blocker, victims will feel more comfortable and therefore be more likely to use the text line.

1. Client: Key Facts

* The BULLYBLOCKER program was created in 2011 by the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office in attempt to reduce future crime by putting a stop to bullying in the county.
* The program utilizes a text line allowing victims and/or witnesses to anonymously report cases of bullying.
* The BULLYBLOCKER text line received 101 texts during its first 129 days.
* Partnered with Mobile County Sheriff Department’s Cool School program sponsoring schools every other Friday of the school year.
* The Mobile District Attorney’s Office in accordance with the recent state law making bullying a class C misdemeanor, guarantees bully victims that they will be supported by the district attorney’s office and will find an appropriate solution to a given situation.

1. Product: Key Features

What is the Product?

* The BULLYBLOCKER program is a text line connecting students with the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office allowing victims as well as witnesses to report cases of bullying while remaining anonymous.
* Victims or witnesses of bullying can text the word “BULLYBLOCKER” to 839863 to receive a timely response from the Mobile District Attorney’s Office.
* This response will then ask the sender a series of questions about his or her situation.
* Once properly informed of the situation, the text message sent by the victim and/or witness is submitted to an investigator in the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office.
* An investigation by the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office then begins and the school administration is notified of the incident.
* A record of the text is documented and a representative from the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office follows up with the school making sure the situation is being addressed.
* If the problem is not being addressed by the school, the D.A.’s office works to help resolve the issue at the school.

What Is the Purpose of the Product?

* To become aware of and respond to reports of bullying in an effort to decrease bullying in and out of schools in Mobile County and eventually decrease future crime.
* The program is an outlet for students who wish to simply talk about bullying in a safe environment while remaining anonymous.
* Decrease and relieve the stresses and tribulations of bullying victims.

Who and What Made the Product?

* The Mobile County District Attorney’s Office created the program and implemented the text line on September 27, 2011.
* Helping Families Director Anne Sirmon is overseer of the program and responder of texts.
* Anne Sirmon is continually visiting new schools in the Mobile County giving presentations on bullying and explaining how the text line operates.

1. Target Audience: Demographics and Psychographics

The target audience for this ad will consist of students, ages 10 to 17, in Mobile County who are victims or witnesses of bullying. One-third of all students, ages 12 to 18, have admitted to being bullied. The BULLYBLOCKER program targets these cases of bullying that occur on school campuses, after school, on buses and via social networking sites. Specifically, bully victims have often been found to exhibit difficulty in making friends, physical and psychological distress, submissiveness, social anxiety, depression and a negative self-image.

1. Product Benefits

* Victims and witnesses of bullying will be able to report cases of bullying quickly and easily while remaining anonymous.
* After receiving a text report, action will be taken and targeted specifically at the schools where the instances of bullying have occurred. This action will consist of contacting the school principal and giving bullying presentations to students.
* The BULLYBLOCKER line provides a medium for victims to simply talk about a problem they are having with bullying and ask for advice without officially reporting anything.
* Bully victims will be guaranteed that their anonymous tips be acted upon in an attempt to resolve the issue.
* BULLYBLOCKER can act as a second, supporting party decreasing the anxiety and strain of enduring bullying alone.
* Allowing BULLYBLOCKER to intervene when a case of bullying is reported can reduce the amount of bullying withstood by a person giving them freedom without fear.
* Texting BULLYBLOCKER can be the first step in creating a life of happiness and success, free from bullying in addition to preventing future crime in Mobile County.

1. Direct Competitors and Brand Images

“Talk About It”

* School officials accept anonymous emails from students through a program called “Talk About It.”
* The program was designed to increase communication between students and faculty in order to prevent the escalation of any problem a student may be having on school grounds.
* Students can choose to talk about a variety of topics such as: bullying, cyberbullying, eating disorders, cutting/self-injury, pregnancy, gangs, stress, fighting and family problems.
* Students can choose to send their message to any of the staff members who agree to receive these messages.
* Students can also access the program by texting with their cellular devices.
* Should the situation call for immediate action (such as in the case of a student threatening suicide or harm), the program also maintains the capability to quickly identify and locate the student in order to intervene.

“BULLYBLOCKER”

* The BULLYBLOCKER program focuses on the prevention crime in Mobile County by putting a stop to bullying within the county’s schools.
* When a victim or witness of bullying uses the text line, he or she will be contacting a member of the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office.
* Should the school be incapable of preventing these occurrences of bullying, the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office will help resolve the issue by speaking to the students about bullying and, if necessary, will prosecute the bully to the full extent of the law.
* The BULLYBLOCKER text line has earned credibility from its past success, such as receiving 101 texts in the first 129 days and intervening on a potential suicide in   
  December of 2012.
* The anonymity of the text line provides students who might otherwise be too afraid to come forward to report a case of bullying, an avenue through which they may present their issue without fear of a bully’s retaliation.
* Today’s bullying not only occurs on school grounds, but on school busses and online in what’s known as “cyberbullying.”
* More than 160,000 students stay home from school every day as the constant fear of the next incident of harassment impedes them from acting as themselves and enjoying their school years.
* By utilizing a youth accepted technology such as texting, young people can become connected to the laws that are in place to protect them and can be assured that an appropriate solution will be found for the bullying.
* Along with the recent state law making bullying a class C misdemeanor, BULLYBLOCKER has the authority of the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office to guarantee a proper resolution is found or legal action is pursued to the full extent of the law.

1. Indirect Competitors and Brand Images

Bullies

* Bullies make a student feel as if they are alone. They will make their victim feel trapped with no way of obtaining help.
* Using fear as a tactic, bullies discourage students from reaching out for help.
* A student may fear rejection or hostility from fellow students or even friends if his or her attempt at receiving help is not kept to confidentiality.

School faculty members

* Mobile school administrations will be less likely to advocate the BULLYBLOCKER program in its efforts to reduce the amount of bullying in the school.
* Faculty members may feel as though the BULLYBLOCKER program undermines the school’s policies and highlight the school’s inefficiency in handling their own bullying problems.
* The interference of the Mobile County District Attorney’s Office on the school’s active policies regarding bullying may reflect a poor image on the school’s disciplinary recourse.

1. Product Brand Image

* Current brand image: Less than the majority of the target audience is familiar and comfortable enough with BULLYBLOCKER to act independently and text reports of bullying.
* Desired brand image: BULLYBLOCKER is a sure option for victims and witnesses to anonymously report bullying with minimum effort and be guaranteed specific action be taken according to the incident reported.
* Brand Image Challenge: To create a more positive and conscious relationship between BULLYBLOCKER and students of Mobile County increasing their contribution of traffic on the text line.

1. Strategic Message: The Promise

* BULLYBLOCKER offers victimized students an opportunity to anonymously report their experiences with bullying and request help allowing targeted action to be taken catering to their specific needs.

1. Supporting Evidence: The Proof

* Through previous success in resolving bullying issues, the BULLYBLOCKER program holds credibility in its capability of finding solutions to specific bullying problems.
* The BULLYBLOCKER ad campaign will encourage bully victims to use the text line by broadcasting and elevating the perceived quality of the product through proper advertisements.
* Victims of bullying will feel more comfortable in utilizing the text line after the perceived quality of the product, along with the brand image, is elevated and ads communicate the sensitive and effective manner of action taken in response to reports of bullying.