
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW AD CAMPAIGN CALLS ON RESIDENTS TO STAY HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Kent County Health Department, area hospitals partner to stem the recent rise in COVID-19 cases with a multi-media holiday campaign

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH (November 19, 2020) In an effort to stem the recent spike in COVID-19 cases, the Kent County Health Department has launched a comprehensive advertising campaign to convince area residents not to gather for the holidays. The multi-media “I love you so” campaign will run on local TV and radio stations, cable networks, print and digital platforms, including local minority-owned outlets, through the end of the year.

“From the onset of the pandemic, the County’s communications team has worked nonstop to get vital information out to our community,” said Kent County Administrator, Wayman Britt. “With this latest surge coming just as we enter the holiday season, community and healthcare leaders called on the Health Department to develop an even more visible and aggressive advertising campaign to discourage gathering during the holidays.”

Kent County is seeing more than 500 new coronavirus cases each day – a 10-fold increase over the last eight weeks. Local positivity rates are running between 10-19%, the highest they’ve been since the start of the pandemic, putting a significant strain on local hospitals, frontline healthcare providers and public health investigators and contact tracers.

“This really is a ‘tough love’ message for our community. We all want to get together to celebrate with family and friends, but those gatherings are the perfect places for the virus to spread,” said Kent County Health Department director, Dr. Adam London. “We are asking everyone to make their own health and the health of their loved ones their top priorities this holiday season.”

Spectrum Health, Mercy Health Saint Mary’s and Metro Health have been sounding the alarm to the community and have signed on as partners in the campaign.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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The message builds on the sentiment, "I love you SO I'm staying home," acknowledging the dual desire to be with loved ones over the holidays but also to protect them from the spread of the coronavirus. Campaign creators hope the desire to help keep loved ones safe wins out.

"This is a difficult moment. There is so much emotion tied to telling someone you love that you're not going join them for a holiday celebration," said Josh Leffingwell, partner at Well Design Studio, the agency that led creative development of the campaign. "We wanted to give people language to use with their friends and family. It's a simple message: 'I love you so much that I'm willing to miss our holiday gathering to help keep us all safe.'"

Well Design Studio partnered with Ingalls Pictures to produce television and social media videos for the campaign. With opening visuals showing neighborhoods throughout the community, soundtracks capture typical holiday banter about food, family and football. As the camera enters several houses, viewers see families and friends gathering virtually, each celebrating in their own homes while enjoying the company of those they love.

"Technology can't replace being with the people we love, but knowing our community, family and friends are willing to sacrifice for us helps in this moment," said Leffingwell.

The \$250,000 public education campaign, funded with CARES Act dollars, launches with Thanksgiving themed ads across all media this week. The new ads will launch before the December holidays and will run through the end of the year.

To see sample "I love you so" Thanksgiving ads, visit <https://youtu.be/6e3u1cQ5zWU>.

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