

## Use of a TV Show to Inform Latino Viewers about Construction Hazards and Safe Practices

### **Evaluating an Entertainment-Education Telenovela to Promote Workplace Safety**

*Diego E. Castaneda, DrPH, Kurt C. Organista, PhD, Leslie Rodriguez, PhD, and Pietra Check, MPH. Sage OPEN, July-September 2013.*

#### **Overview**

Occupational safety and health professionals and health communication experts collaborated with prominent Spanish-language television network Telemundo to incorporate a worksite safety storyline into the plot of a nationally televised telenovela (Spanish-language soap opera). Since fatal falls from ladders increased among foreign-born Latino construction workers even as the number of these workers declined on jobsites, the group chose a storyline to promote ladder safety aimed at this target audience, their friends and family. The storyline, written by Telemundo with input from experts at CPWR and NIOSH, contained three safety messages: “use the right ladder for the job,” “tie off ladders at both ends,” and “don’t carry tools in your hands while climbing a ladder.” The team developed a Spanish-language website on ladder safety and worked with Telemundo to create a PSA to drive viewers to site. Researchers conducted pre- and post-show audience surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of this intervention.

#### **For more information, contact:**

Diego Castaneda: [dr.castaneda@gmail.com](mailto:dr.castaneda@gmail.com)

#### **Read the journal article:**

<https://bit.ly/399Ddfa>

©2013, CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training. CPWR, the research and training arm of the Building and Construction Trades Dept., AFL-CIO, is uniquely situated to serve construction workers, contractors, practitioners, and the scientific community. This card was made possible by a cooperative agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH (OH009762). The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of NIOSH.

#### **Key Findings**

- An analysis showed significant gains on all three knowledge items in viewers with a personal connection to construction work (i.e., friends and family of construction workers, and workers themselves) versus those with no such connection.
- The findings highlight how audience members react differently depending on their own personal relationships with a specific public health issue.
- Website traffic spiked immediately after airing of the PSA, showing that interaction between media can complement the campaign.
- Using culturally relevant mediums can be an effective way of reaching and educating audiences about specific fall prevention information. This follows the Institute of Medicine’s recommendations to increase interventions and evaluations of culturally relevant and competent health communication.

#### Recommendations:

- Future Entertainment-Education studies should complement quantitative data by reaching out to a sub-sample of online survey respondents to conduct in-depth, qualitative interviews.
- Future research could further explore media interaction to include social media and mobile-phone-accessed media.
- Future interventions should incorporate “process outcomes” to provide research on collaboration – and improve understanding between those working in entertainment needing to add dramatic value and those in public health needing to communicate actionable and accurate information.



**THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION  
RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

[WWW.CPWR.COM](http://WWW.CPWR.COM)