



AWARDS FOR  
EXCELLENCE IN  
**PUBLIC  
RELATIONS  
2023**



# Best Communications Campaign by a Registered Charity



**signs**  
**OF SUICIDE**

Knowing the warning signs of suicide  
could save a life.

## Campaign

Pieta, SIGNS of Suicide 2022

## Description of Campaign

Pieta's SIGNS of Suicide is an awareness campaign targeting young men, educating them to recognise SIGNS in others. Building on the creative, 'Swap the small talk, for the big talk', Legacy strategically positioned Pieta at the centre of the conversation, creating a powerful movement, generating over 4.5million in PR reach.



## Public Relations Consultant

Legacy Communications



## Client

Pieta

## Background to the Campaign

Legacy Communications was tasked with redeveloping Pieta's existing 'Know the Signs' campaign to reach a younger male audience (20+) and navigate them towards Pieta's HUB, dedicated to educating people about some of the SIGNS of Suicide, including Sleep Disturbance, Isolation, Giving away Possessions, No Interest in Anything and Speaking of no future.

The main challenge was to 'get men in their 20's to take note'. This could only be achieved by truly understanding this hard-to-reach cohort and what really matters to them. To avoid stale assumptions, Legacy carried out targeted research within this demographic, utilised our own in-depth knowledge, and used the data and insights available to us through the various tools. This research led us to the key insight that 'It's best to disrupt young men when they have a minute where they can pay attention'. Coupled with the data gathered, we strategically decided that the best approach for this campaign would be to meet these men where they have a minute and convince them to 'Swap the small talk, for the big talk'. As so many of the men Legacy polled revealed that they find it difficult to open up and most only do so in their own home, it would be a powerful approach to convince these

men to take the big conversations out of the dark and into light in places we know they're already going to be.

Barbershops emerged as the go-to location for young men. By identifying this opportunity, Legacy partnered with Sam's Barber's to strategically reach young males in that identified space where they had time to think and open up. Sam Barber's was the perfect fit as Sam has a number of high-profile barbershops around Dublin, previously carried out fundraising in support of suicide prevention and his key demographic aligned with that of the campaign.

Pieta's SIGNS of Suicide campaign, which ran between World Suicide Prevention Day 10th September and World Mental Health Day 10th October, allowed Legacy to flex various PR touchpoints that would not only cut-through the noise but make a long-lasting impact on people's lives during this monthlong period.

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## Statement of Objectives

Alongside aiming to generate media coverage to raise awareness of some of the SIGNS of Suicide and Pieta's services, there were supplementary objectives set out to achieve maximum exposure and campaign success:

1. Build on PR coverage with a focus on securing a prime-time national TV slot for Pieta representatives and 4+ national/regional radio features.
2. Build on the creative to deliver a digital first initiative to increase awareness and promote education of the SIGNS of Suicide campaign and Pieta's services among the younger male demographic on social media to drive traffic to the SIGNS of Suicide online HUB.
3. Develop a partnership with targeted and relatable ambassadors that have a story to tell and are relevant to younger men.
4. Provide a clear CTA to Pieta's services in all campaign elements across media, social, merchandise and in person events.
5. Create high quality and engaging video and social content with media partner LADbible Ireland to drive reach and awareness.
6. Build a lasting partnership with Sam's Barbers, encouraging men to talk openly about mental health.
7. Generate social reach and engagement across social channels to directly target young men.
8. Collaborate with Dublin Town & TUD to host impactful events in key hot spots where young men reside across the capital.
9. Exceed a reach target of 2 million opportunities to see or hear about the campaign nationwide.

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## Programme Planning and Strategy

Understanding the needs of the target demographic was a key consideration in the planning of the SIGNS of Suicide campaign as 60% of Pieta's clients are under 25 and according to the most recent CSO statistics 73% of suicides in Ireland in 2020 were men.

### Media Relations

The media relations element of the campaign utilised ongoing messaging that drove awareness of the SIGNS, navigated people to the HUB and sustained a clear call to action for Pieta's free services in media placements. The PR approach was strategically planned around a big impactful launch, followed by a sustained press office and key campaign spikes in both national and regional media.

Legacy utilised Pieta's young people stats, including the fact that 60% of Pieta's clients are now under 25 and this is increasing, to gain cut through using World Suicide Prevention Day as the news hook and ran the campaign through considered seeding out of exclusive interviews from Aaron J and Pieta CEO Stephanie Manahan with Ireland AM, and regional radio stations across Dublin and the country.

Legacy also created a photocall concept that included campaign ambassador Aaron J and Sam Donnelly of Sam's Barbers. We included the barber chair to keep the connection to the overall campaign, with ambassadors and the 1205 chair static while people on a busy street whizzed by out of focus to depict the flurry of thoughts that can be going through someone's head. It was also representative of the fact that feeling suicidal can be a very lonely place. Visually impactful assets were captured that elevated the press release and brought the struggle some people are going through to life.

## Ambassador Activity

When it came to choosing campaign ambassadors; relatability and authenticity were key attributes that men aged 20+ look for and hold to a high standard when choosing to engage with a campaign figure – meaning that it needed to be someone honest and raw. For this reason, Legacy strategically partnered with Singer and Songwriter Aaron J Harte, who was previously on Ireland's got Talent and achieved over 10million views on a song that was written about his own suicidal thoughts. Aaron's genuine and recognisable appeal to young men, paired with his personal newsworthy story made him the perfect partner for Pieta. Engagement with Aaron J played a key role across social and media. Aaron J has his very own personal reasons for supporting the campaign and Pieta and his authenticity played an essential role in ensuring the campaign was presented correctly. By telling his own stories on social media, in media interviews and through media partnerships, Aaron J continuously hits the target demographic.

Irish Hip-Hop star and mental health advocate Malaki was also part of the SIGNS of Suicide campaign. His rising stardom and previous connections with Pieta made him the perfect additional ambassador to support the campaign.

These men are followed by the target demographic, because they are the target demographic. Their audience actively goes to their page to consume their content because they enjoy and respect it. For Pieta, the ambassadors really helped to skyrocket the reach and achieve added visibility within the target demographic. Legacy utilised the ambassadors around media relations with quotes and interview placement, media partnerships, event participation and social media support throughout the campaign.

## Media partnerships

Legacy understood that this target demographic thinks differently; they consume news differently and they engage differently online. That's why we strategically partnered with LADbible Ireland. The LADbible group's mission is to 'give the youth generation a voice by building communities that laugh, think and act.'

The audience in Ireland is 2.1m with the majority of that being the male 18–34-year-old demographic, making it the perfect partner for this campaign. We worked with the group to create content that would be bespoke and shareable. We also utilised our ambassador Aaron J Harte to create engaging video content on the streets of Dublin, carrying out vox pop interviews with the public, opening up the conversation around mental health and recognising the SIGNS of Suicide. This content was shared across LADbible social channels, generating over **971,300 impressions**.

Our second SIGNS ambassador Malaki also collaborated with LADbible to produce interactive content on Instagram stories raising the question 'how do you look after your mental health?'. LADbible followers responded with their personal opinions and experiences, creating an even deeper understanding of the demographic.

In line with one of the core objectives set out in the brief to provide clear and targeted CTA's, LADbible curated a 3- frame Instagram story piece to drive awareness to Pieta's SIGNS of Suicide HUB and mental health resources. A SIGNS Of Suicide site takeover was also carried out on the LADbible website on World Suicide Prevention Day supported with ongoing tactical display and social advertising.

## Events

To really drive the SIGNS of Suicide messaging where our target demographic resided, Legacy executed two disruptive events during the monthlong campaign to place Pieta and the SIGNS of Suicide messaging in direct contact with the target audience.

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day 2022, Pieta partnered with Sam's Barbers and Dublin Town to create a popup event with ambassador Aaron J Harte to gain cut through in day-to-day life and disrupt people in the middle of their everyday tasks. Aaron J played an outdoor session in front of Sam's Barbers on Dame Lane. There was an address from Clyde Carroll of Dublin Town and Stephanie Manahan CEO at Pieta to address the importance of the campaign. Aaron J also spoke about his own experiences making it an extremely emotional event. This city centre event attracted crowds of young people and media interest. The event provided strong content for social media, and was shared not only by Pieta, partners, and ambassadors, but also by many of the attendees on the day.

In order to reach the target demographic in their day to day lives, Legacy continued the partnership with Sam's Barbers and offered students at TU Dublin's Freshers Week free haircuts, providing an opportunity to elevate their awareness of some of the SIGNS of Suicide. Pieta and Sam's Barbers spent a day with the students and achieved



huge attention from a captive audience, as queues lined up outside the tent, which provided the opportunity for key messaging and resources to be brought straight to hundreds of young men.

## Social Media

To uplift the social media strategy, Legacy utilised a combination of both paid and organic content and tactics to reach the target demographic, along with having a strong focus on impactful content. According to research from Young Social Innovators, Amara, Gen Z's spend 4+ hours a day on their smartphones, making it important to reach males aged 20+ on smartphone devices.

The organic social approach focused on key campaign initiatives such as the barbershop World Suicide Prevention Day session, and the TU free haircut event shared by our ambassadors, Sam's Barbers and Dublin Town.

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## Measurement

The campaign generated millions in earned media coverage as well as key opportunities to see or hear about the SIGNS of Suicide through TV, radio, social and digital publications.

TV feature & live interview on Ireland AM with SIGNS Ambassador Aaron J Harte and Pieta CEO Stephanie Manahan:

- 5 radio interviews, soundbites, and live reports across radio including Newstalk, FM104 and regional stations
- Generated a total campaign reach of **4,521,219+**
- Digital first campaign with total social reach of **1,562,730+**
- Succeeded in engaging the young male audience through our media partnership with LADbible Ireland which achieved over **8 million impressions** across social content
- Partnerships with Sam's Barbers and Dublin Town reached achieved **166,595+** social reach and in person engagement with campaign events
- **6,410** visits to the SIGNS HUB throughout the campaign month
- **6%** increase in young men reaching out to Pieta during the campaign
- **13%** increase in social media engagement during the campaign
- **50%** increase in social reach during the campaign.

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