



Description Of The Project

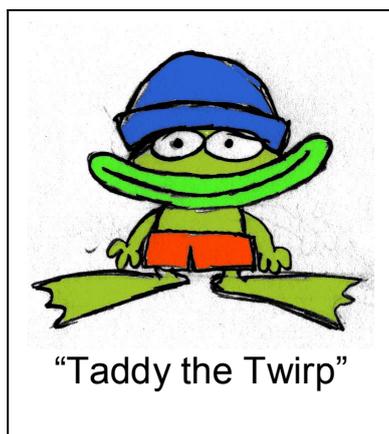
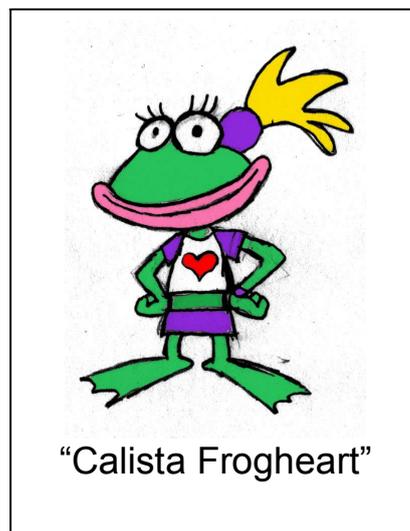
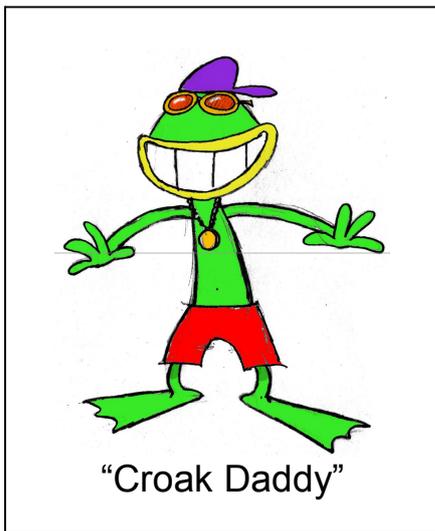
Prompted by the injury of a boy in a stormwater drain, the Cairns Regional Council devoted funding to a public awareness campaign aimed at highlighting the dangers of playing in these underground systems.

To engage the pre-teen target audience, Council commissioned two animated television commercials, involving four frog characters whose streetwise demeanour and comic rap songs, coolly deride the idea of “messing with da drains”.

The advertisements, radio jingles, life-size mascot for public appearances, and publicity material, all combine to make a dedicated education program that covers the dangers of playing in pipes and drains for both wet and dry conditions.

Synopsis That Best Describes The Project

To highlight the dangers of playing in stormwater pipes and drains, Cairns Regional Council focused an entire cross-media marketing campaign around four animated frogs, whose quirky, engaging message to young kids, coolly derides the idea of “messing with da drains”.





Concept & Objectives Of The Project

With the target group of the project being young boys between the ages of 8 and 13 years, it was determined that a group of animated characters, along the lines of the highly popular “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles” were needed to capture the attention of this demographic - hence “The Frogs” were born.

Frogs of the cute, green variety are definitely appropriate to become the champions of safety and eco justice in the wet and wonderful world of drains, and not just because they have big eyes and a nice smile.

In real environment terms, frogs are considered one of the important biological barometers of an ecosystem’s relative health. Frogs aplenty indicates an ecosystem is in relatively good shape, whereas an absence of frogs spells potential trouble. So it seems that frogs genuinely have the credentials to be our voice for “drain consciousness”, and safety.

With the deft hand of professional cartoonists, our frog characters were born, bearing all the accoutrements of cool, with a streetwise rapping style to boot. By humanising an animal that boys in this area are so familiar with, and imbuing it with traits that this age group find very hip and attractive, we hoped to encourage the target audience to take immediate ownership of this education program.

The overriding objective of the project was to keep kids out of drains due to the plethora of dangers that can be found within, such as flash flooding and consequent drowning, poisonous gases, dangerous animals, drug users, broken bottles, subterranean dwellers, etc.

Another objective was the need to speak “to” the kids, not “at” them, and to provide a competitive and appealing education program given the barrage of sophisticated imagery that jostles for the attention of this age group everyday. Council, therefore, took the initiative of employing the services of a professional cartoonist who provided the computer animated television commercials, and the catchy radio friendly rap songs that form the basis of the campaign.

The education program runs continually throughout the year, with high rotation periods such as just before the traditional “wet season”, as well as in school holidays and other public holidays or special events. The concurrent airplay of both television and radio commercials is further consolidated by the public appearance of the life-size costumed mascot, “Croak Daddy” at age appropriate events and venues, and the associated giveaways of stickers and removable “tattoos”, paraphernalia appealing to this age group.

In downtime, Council shifts into a more scattered rotation of the “dry” advertisement, and an awareness that there are still dangers to be found in pipes and drains even when there’s no water in them. This is subtly underlined with posters being dispersed to all school and Council libraries.

A final objective of the program was that it had scope for future campaigns, and could be expanded to encompass other issues relating to the drains, such as the importance of educating the public to look after stormwater drain water quality. In this regard, the Council is completely satisfied that the Frogs “have legs”.

For further information please contact Council’s Public Consultation and Communications Officer on 4044 3303 or e-mail feedback@cairns.qld.gov.au