



Sept. 8, 2015

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Website recognized for synthetic drug education *DHS-sponsored KnowtheDangers.com wins top professional award*

“Cannabinoids” and “cathinones” may not roll off the tongue of most people, but “Spice” and “K2” are well known to many youth. That’s why educating teachers, parents, and youth about the dangers of synthetic drugs is the goal of an innovative prevention effort, KnowtheDangers.com. The website and related social media campaign were recently awarded first place in the Best Cause Awareness category in PR Daily’s 2015 Digital PR and Social Media Awards.

For the past year KnowtheDangers.com has offered information about drugs many parents and professionals who work with young people have never heard of – drugs that are all too common across Minnesota. Most recently, KnowtheDangers.com has added a new piece to the prevention puzzle by reaching out directly to youth with a savvy new campaign. In addition to a [new area of the website](#), the youth campaign adds outreach through social media such as Facebook and Twitter to reach its audience with information and hard-hitting messages.

“We have to do more to reach youth with the facts,” said Minnesota Department of Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson. “A harmless looking package may contain toxic chemicals that can not only be highly addictive, but can also put a user in the hospital.”

Since its launch in September 2014, KnowtheDangers.com, which has been featured on CNN and other news agencies, has received over 25,000 unique visitors, and its Facebook page reached over 120,000 individuals. The program has been previously recognized by Marketing Healthcare Today Magazine with a gold Aster award for a government agency website and a silver award from the National Health Information Resource Center, a national organizations for professionals who work in consumer health fields.

The KnowtheDangers.com campaign was designed by the Russell Herder agency under contract with the Minnesota Department of Human Services. PR Daily is a daily news site that delivers news, advice, and opinions on public relations, marketing, social media, and the media. The Digital PR and Communications and Social Media Awards showcase the best of digital public relations, communications and use of social media.