

Public Abstract

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Title: Young blood: Recruiting young people to give blood by applying concepts of self-perception and social norms theories to recruitment ads

If blood collection agencies are to continue meeting the demand for a safe and adequate blood supply, communication professionals must find ways to recruit more donors to give blood more times. One possible demographic to target is young people, who could supply blood for years to come if they became regular donors.

Previous research indicates that those who have not donated before report that they are more likely to give if they feel pressured to adhere to society's prescribed social norms. On the other hand, previous donors cite that they are motivated by altruism to help those in need.

The results of this 2 x 2 factorial experiment, which applied both of these motivations to print advertisements, showed that donors and non-donors alike rated altruistic ads higher than social norms ads on the overall attitude assessment scale. Also, both groups reported that they were more likely to donate blood after exposure to altruistic ads.

Continued research is needed to determine effective communication tools that can reach the full range of people necessary to help keep the nation's blood supply pumping.