

BESTIES, BE ICONIC AND TAKE CARE THIS MARDI GRAS



ACON Harm Reduction Campaign:
*Building on strengths to support LGBTQ+ harm reduction
at Mardi Gras 2024*
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Background

Summer and Mardi Gras are seasons of increased party culture for LGBTQ+ communities, presenting some increase in risks, but also offering opportunities for promoting safety and harm reduction. Local and national data tell us that LGBTQ+ populations use substances at higher rates than the general public and engage in specific practices that present unique risks. However, we also know that LGBTQ+ communities have well established cultures of care that focus on collective wellbeing. This established culture of support is a strength ACON sought to leverage and contribute to through the 2024 harm reduction campaign.

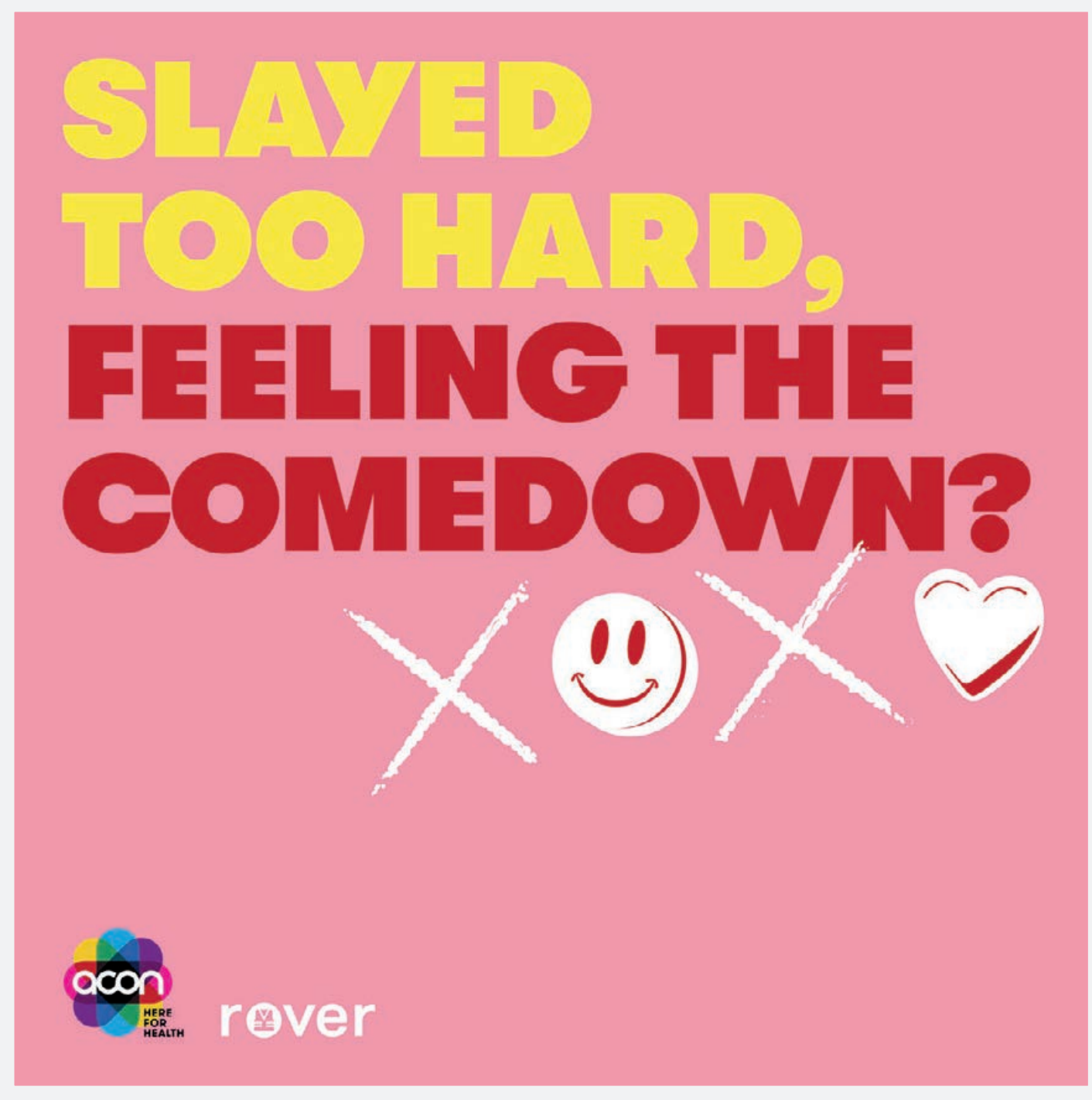


Naloxone messaging

The naloxone poster and digital asset received high interest from community and was highly requested by events and venues. The team had increased discussions with patrons, organisers and event staff about access to naloxone, and emerging risks of nitazenes and other opioid adulterants.

ACON Rovers

The ACON Rovers Program is a volunteer-based community led initiative, promoting a culture of care at sexuality and gender diverse dance parties and events since 2003. The Rovers were instrumental in contributing to the design, delivery and distribution of the 2024 campaign, from putting up posters at venues, events, and private parties, to utilising the campaign messages to facilitate brief interventions and conversations with patrons.



“Take Care xoxo” Campaign

“Take Care xoxo” is a targeted and pragmatic harm reduction campaign, that focuses on existing cultures of care. The campaign has 11 key messages and was delivered across print and digital platforms. The key messages covered:

- Naloxone
- Amyl x Viagra
- GHB
- MDMA
- Comedown care
- Polydrug use
- Consent
- Creating safe spaces
- LGBTQ+ specific messaging



Impact of campaign

- Great feedback was received by community for “speaking the right language”
- The digital campaign reached over 165,200 people across three weeks on ACON social media platforms
- Messaging was displayed across dozens of venues and events and was distributed across service providers.
- Community uptake and peer to peer sharing was very high, creating significant organic reach both online and with physical assets.

The campaign materials continued to be requested and utilised beyond Mardi Gras, and consultations have reported strong messaging recognition and alignment. This campaign coincided with Rover data from the Mardi Gras season that showed lower than usual drug presentations and increased reports of crowd care. The campaign contributed to increased safety across the season, encouraged existing cultures of care, and ensured that emerging risks were communicated in the right way to the right people.

Scan the QR Code for more info
about the campaign, and to see
full messaging.

Contact the team by emailing
harmreduction@acon.org.au



Proudly funded by the
NSW Government.