



1. National Allergy Strategy, Sydney, Australia
2. Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI), Sydney, Australia
3. Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia, Sydney, Australia
4. Perth Children's Hospital, Perth, Australia
5. The University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia

250K – ENGAGING TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

ABSTRACT

Background: The National Allergy Strategy 250K resources were developed to support to the 250,000 teens and young adults living with severe allergy in Australia. This project aimed to improve the 250K website and increase engagement with teens and young adults living with severe allergies.

Method: We engaged with 30 teens and young adults through the 250K Youth Camp in January 2019, sought feedback about the 250K website and proposed new 250K programs (such as chat rooms and a peer mentor program). Additional feedback was sought from 250K website users via an embedded survey and the 250K Youth Advisory Team (YAT) between October 2018 to March 2019. The young adult website topics were based on camp and 250K YAT discussions and information collected through the national online survey and focus groups undertaken in 2016/17.

Findings: Discussions with camp participants and the 250K YAT indicated the original 250K website was more suited to school-aged teens and a new resource was needed for older teens and young adults. To do this, the original 250K website homepage needed to be rebuilt and a separate young adult website developed. The 250K young adult website includes information such as managing allergies in the workplace, when moving out of home, at university, when consuming alcohol, identified from camp and 250K YAT discussions.

Chat rooms and a peer mentor program were also identified as initiatives teens and young adults were interested in participating in.

Conclusion: The original 250K website was redeveloped with a new home page, to serve school aged teens. A new 250K young adult website containing older teen and young adult content was developed. Both websites include end-user evaluation, for continuous quality improvement. Chat rooms were held to engage with 250K Youth Camp participants and the 250K YAT. A peer mentor program is also in development.

New 250K homepage

- A new landing page was created to allow young people to choose the site most appropriate for their age.

250K teen site homepage refresh

- The original 250K site is now a school aged teens site and the home page has been given a new look to generate new interest in the site.

250K young adult website

- A new site styled for young adults and containing content tailored to young adults has been developed.
- Content includes topics such as managing allergies at university, in the workplace, when starting a family, when moving out of home.

Connect 250K chat rooms

- The chat rooms allow us to connect with young people living with severe allergy and most importantly, allow them to connect with each other in a facilitated environment.
- Young people can use an alias to remain anonymous and can openly share and discuss information with others in a secure and supportive environment.

Social media strategy

- Over the past year we have been raising awareness about allergy management through news items and social media posts.
- The social media posts are designed to direct young people to the news item on the 250K websites.

Peer mentor program

- We are in the process of developing a peer mentor program based on the resources used by Food Allergy Canada.
- The resources are being customised to Australia and the needs of young Australians.
- Some of our 250K Youth Advisory Team will become our first peer mentors and will undergo training in November this year.



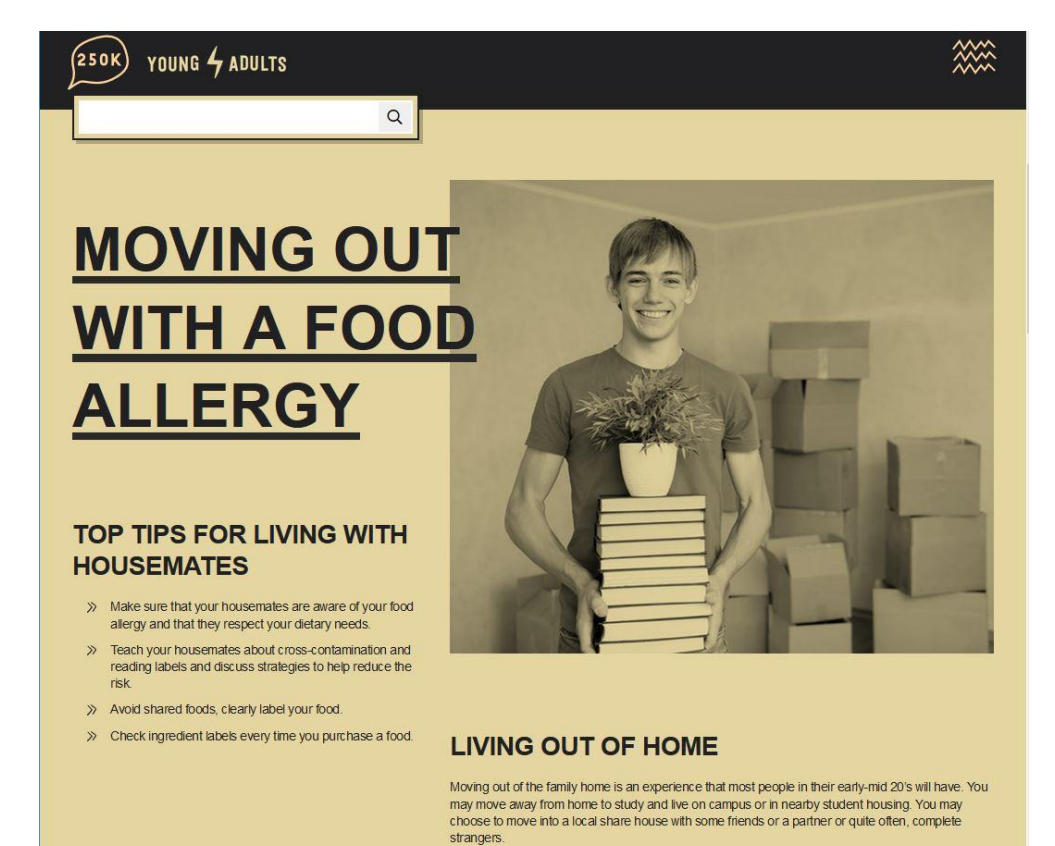
← New 250K homepage



↑ New 250K school aged teens homepage



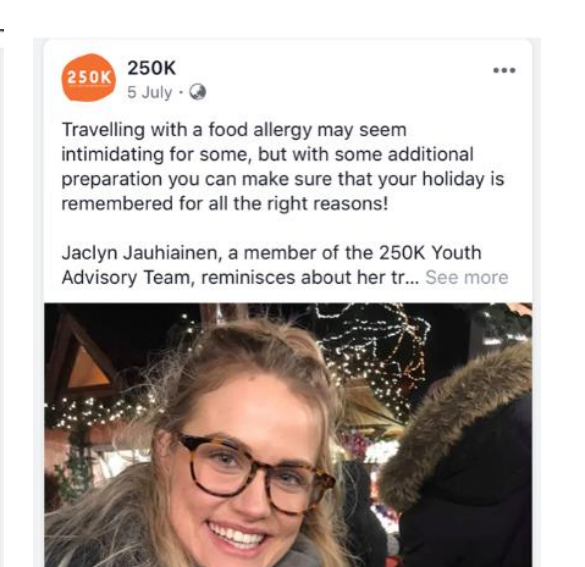
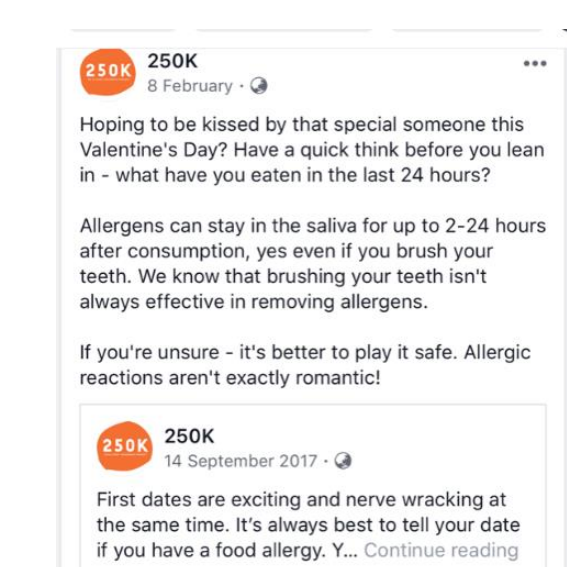
← New 250K young adult website



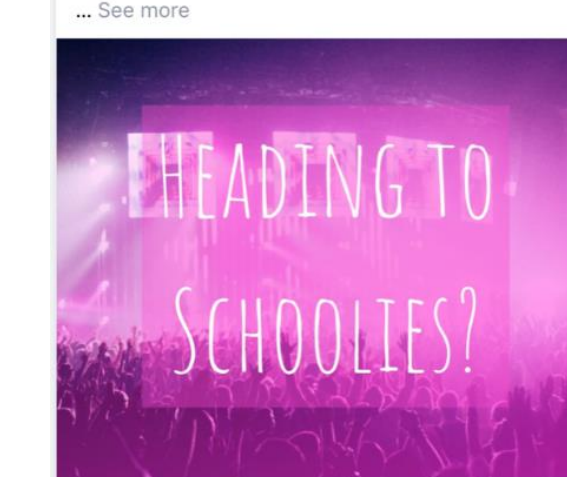
↑ Sample 250K young adult website content



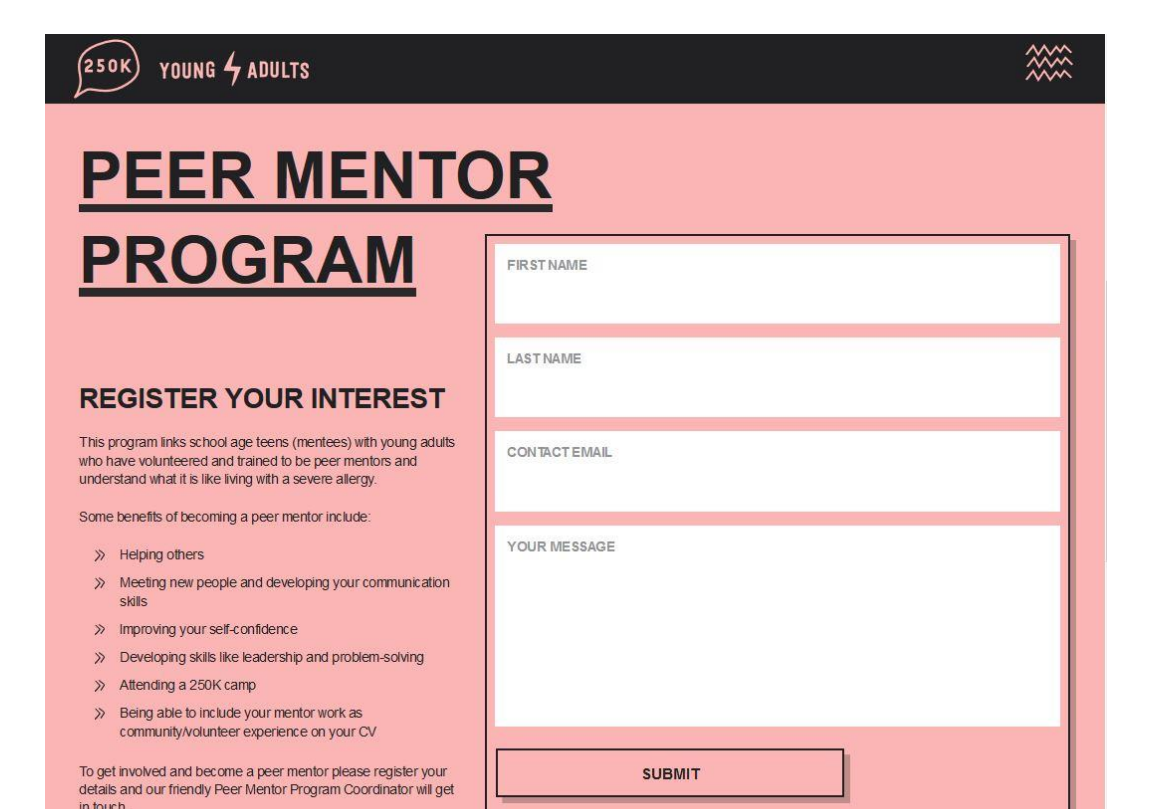
← Connect 250K chat room logo



← ↑ Examples of social media posts



↓ Registration of interest form for 250K peer mentor program



250K - an allergy awareness project supported by



This project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health.