Fostering Sustainable Behavior Change

Beyond Brochures

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About the Speaker

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- President, Action Research
- M.A., Experimental Psychology
- 10 years applied experience
  - Pro-environmental attitudes and behavior
  - Community-based social marketing

Clients
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
- Urban Sustainability Directors Network
- City and County of San Diego
- CalRecycle
Sustainability

- **Growing recognition of the need for action**
  - Population growth & urbanization
  - Pollution
  - Climate change

- **Technology and Policy Solutions**
  - Technical, economic, institutional, societal obstacles
  - Time to penetrate markets, implement policies
  - Some technologies only effective if people use them
Sustainability = Behavior Change

- **Behavioral wedge** (Dietz, et al., 2009)
  - 7.4% reduction in US CO2 emissions in 10 yrs.

- **Diverse set of behaviors**
  - One-time (e.g., install water efficient toilets)
  - Repetitive (e.g., transportation habits)
  - Vary in cost, difficulty, and other obstacles
So how do we change behavior?
Traditional Approaches

Knowledge

If people know what to do, they will do it.

Knowledge ≠ Behavior Change

Awareness

If people know the severity of it, they will change.

Attitude ≠ Behavior Change

Economic

If it is in their financial best interest, they will do it

Enlightenment ≠ Behavior Change
Campaign Effects

• National effort in Canada to reduce CO2
• Heavy media advertising
• 51% knew program
• Few changed behavior

• 2001-2010
• $200 million advertising campaign
• One-time and repetitive actions
• Little impact behavior change
Beyond Brochures

- **Behavior change requires a different approach**
  - Process not a product

- **Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM)**
  - Origins in 100 years of social science
  - Research-driven
  - Community-based
  - Removes barriers
  - Outcomes (behavior change) not Outputs (# of impressions)
Community-based social marketing

- Select Behavior
- Barriers & Benefits
- Develop Strategy
- Pilot Test
- Implement Broadly & Evaluate

Step 1: Selecting Behaviors

- **Penetration**
  - Is there room to change?

- **Probability**
  - How difficult is change?

- **Potential Impact**
  - How much is change linked to outcome?
Step 2: Identify Barriers and Benefits

- Why aren’t people engaging the behavior?
  - **Internal**: motivation, knowledge, attitudes, etc.
  - **External**: infrastructure, access, etc.

- **Not based on a hunch!**
  - Multiple barriers can exist simultaneously.
  - Can vary by behavior, audience, season, etc.

- **Gather information from target population.**
  - Literature Reviews
  - Observations
  - Focus Groups
  - Surveys
Step 3: Develop Strategy

- Tools from Social Sciences
- Remove Barriers
- Personal Contact

Behavior Change
Tools of Behavior Change

- Commitment
- Social Norms
- Social Diffusion
- Prompts
- Vivid Communications
- Feedback
Personal Contact: Reach vs. Impact

Step 4: Pilot Testing

- Preliminary data about the efficacy of intervention
- Small sample (but out of the office)
- Refine, modify, re-pilot
- Cost-savings mechanism

Group A

Pre-Test -> Program -> Post-Test

Group B

Pre-Test -> Program -> Post-Test
Step 5: Implement & Evaluate

- Required by funder
- Justify program existence
- Preparing for budget cuts
- Can make changes
- Unintended consequences
- Inform future efforts
CBSM Successes

- 89% decrease in outdoor washing
- 67% decrease in dry-weather flow into storm drains

La Jolla Shores Business Outreach CBSM
Think Blue, 2009
CBSM Successes

- 248% increase in curbside oil pick ups

**Used Oil Recycling CBSM Pilot**
Cal Recycle, 2003
CBSM Successes

- 35% increase in usage of tire air pump

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CBSM Pilot to Promote Proper Tire Maintenance
Cal Recycle, 2005
Case Study

CBSM in Practice
City of Oceanside: “Doody” Dilemma

- **San Luis Rey River Trail**
  - Walking and Biking
  - Dog walkers

- **Pet waste**
  - Contains bacteria
  - Washes into ocean
  - Causes pollution
  - Beach closures
Step 1: Identify Behavior

- Who visits the trail?
  - In person surveys

- How much?
  - Observations

- Barriers/Benefits?
  - Mail survey
Step 2: Barriers & Benefits

- **Barrier Survey Results**
  - Didn’t care about law or health
  - Social responsibility
  - Didn’t pick up because....
    - Forgot a bag
    - No trash cans
Step 3: Develop Strategy

**Scoop the Poop**

**It's Your Doody**

Do your part to prevent water pollution.

OCC 4.14, 4.16.2 & 40.2.1
Step 4: Pilot Test

- 23% reduction in piles of pet waste left behind on trail
Data Driven at Every Step

Select Behavior

Barriers & Benefits

Develop Strategy

Pilot Test

Implement Broadly & Evaluate
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<th>Activities</th>
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<td>• Litter prevention</td>
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<td>• Outdoor washing (e.g., hosing, car washing)</td>
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References


