Social Marketing, Health Literacy & HP 2020

PubH 209.23

Public Health Branding: Theory and Practice
Overview

- Health literacy is about health equity
- Health equity and social determinants of health can be improved through social marketing
- Healthy People 2020 focuses on these issues
- How can social marketing improve equity and the social environment to promote health?
Using Social Marketing to Address Health Literacy

- Social marketing uses the 4 Ps of place, price, product & promotion
- These strategies align with multiple social ecological levels
- For example, there are opportunities to prevent childhood obesity at the family, school and community levels
  - Promotion to encourage healthy parental food choice, place strategies in schools, price strategies to change community environments
- Health literacy can be promoted for its benefits just like commercial products and other PH behaviors
What Health Literacy Stands For - Branding Healthy Behavior

- Realizing the HP 2020 vision of the “healthiest nation” with health equality
- Build a social movement around increasing Health Literacy modeled on other successful movements
  - Tobacco control
  - Breast cancer prevention
  - Politics and policy advocacy
- Model socially desirable behaviors (e.g., valuing increasing one’s health literacy, accessing educational resources)
- Build Health Literacy as a lifestyle brand
Example lifestyle brand: VERB
It’s What You Do

- Make physical activity fun
- Combine active behaviors to create new, hip games
Healthy People 2020 is taking steps in this direction...

- Inform stakeholders & ensure access to information
- Build public support
- Reach previously unaddressed audiences
  - General public
  - Groups suffering from disparities
- Create a recognizable brand that promotes healthy behavior
- Provide framework for communication & social marketing interventions (eg, health literacy)
Obesity Prevention Social Marketing Using Multiple “P” strategies at Multiple Ecological Levels:

1) Reactions to promotions
2) Price sensitivity
3) Product (brand) associations
4) Placement to fit audience lifestyle

Reduced obesity risk factors:
- Improved nutrition (eg, parental food choice)
- Increased physical activity (eg, children’s exercise)

Reduced obesity health impacts:
- (eg, long-term reductions in BMI)

Policy level
(eg, advocacy campaign to promote trans fat ordnances)

Media level
(eg, promotional campaigns like VERB to reach consumers)

Community level
(eg, Empowerment of youth in 5-4-3-2-1 Go!)

School level
(eg, Change food products, adjust prices, in cafeterias/vending)

Family level
(eg, Community resources to make it easier for parents to promote healthy active lifestyles)

Individual level
(eg, Advertising or social networking)

Note: Implementation strategies can work from higher levels down to change risk factors, or try to directly change risk factors depending on program context, resources, and other inputs.

Figure. Obesity Prevention Social Marketing Framework (Source: Evans et al, 2009)
Conclusion

- HP 2020 squarely focused on health equity and social determinants
- Building a multi-level approach to health utilizing communication and marketing
- Using communication and marketing 1) to promote stakeholder buy in, 2) as intervention strategy
- Social marketing interventions can focus on health literacy as a critical health equity issue for next decade