

Strategic Message Development

Campus Suicide Prevention
Grantees Technical
Assistance Meeting
Jan. 17-18, 2007

Today we will focus on...
Strategy – *Anara Guard, Linda Langford*

- Stigma reduction – *Patrick Corrigan*
- Safe messaging – *Jane Pearson*
- Group exercise – You

How does your
messaging fit into your
overall strategy...?

Messaging = materials you
develop and disseminate,
training and forums you offer,
other communications

The headline we will never see...

**BROCHURE
CHANGES
STUDENTS—
PROBLEM
SOLVED!!**

Social Marketing is

“...not a science, but rather a professional craft...that targets complex, often socially controversial behaviors, with delayed and distant benefits, to audiences who often do not recognize they have a problem, much less are looking for a solution.”

William Smith, 2006

Strategic message development...

Helps you reach identified audiences with messages that are designed...

...to affect specific behaviors

...in engaging, safe and effective ways, and

...that fit your overall program strategy.

“Fit your overall strategy”

- Does the concept of the message fit your local problems, and your overall strategy for change?
- Do the messages make sense given other prevention efforts on campus?
- What specific behavior are you trying to change? Why? What are the barriers to this change? What are the benefits to this change?

“Price”

- What the consumer pays to obtain the product:
 - Time Effort Risk
 - An *exchange* of value
- To sell: benefit \geq cost. How will you overcome the barriers? View from the audience’s perspective...



Where will you get info?

- Information sources to help design an effective messaging campaign:
 - Focus groups
 - Interviews with target audience
 - Surveys
 - Polls re: attitudes and behaviors of target population
 - Literature*

Reducing Stigma

- Is stigma truly a barrier to the behaviors you are trying to change?

Questions to consider

- *What* are you trying to change?
- *Who* is your target audience?
- What does your target audience currently *think* or *believe*?
- What *impact* do you want your message to have?
- What *measures* can you use?

Messages that “stick”

- Simple – use analogies
- Unexpected – develop jarring, unexpected messages
- Concrete – use specific language and details
- Credentialed – rely on authorities or testable ideas
- Emotional – tap into negative or positive feelings
- Stories – tell stories about real people

Other considerations

- Localize your information
- Culturally appropriate
- Timing
- Dosage – repetition of message
- Credible messenger or influencer
- Credible channels

Measure your results

- What behavior do you want to change?
- How will you know if it did?
- Something tangible—calls to a hotline, donations
- Can be a proxy for the real results you want to know

Resources

- NIMH Reporting on Suicide
www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideresearch/mediasurvivors.cfm
- Social Marketing Toolkit
www.SoundPartners.org
- “Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes”
www.agoodmanonline.com
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
www.sprc.org Search for: Social Marketing

References

- Chambers DA, Pearson JL, Lubell K, et al. The science of public messages for suicide prevention: A workshop summary. *SLTB*, 2005; 35(2): 134-145

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- Rudd MD, Berman AL, Joiner Jr. TE, et al. Warning signs for suicide: Theory, research, and clinical applications. *SLTB* 2006; 36(3): 255-262 Available fulltext free online at <http://www.atypon-link.com/GPI/doi/pdfplus/10.1521/suli.2006.36.3.255>

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- Smith WA. Social marketing: an overview of approach and effects. 2006. *Injury Prevention* 12 (Suppl 1); i38-i43
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center. 2006. *Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention*. Available online at <http://www.sprc.org/library/SafeMessagingFinal.pdf>

More references

- Van Orden KA, Joiner Jr. TE, Hollar D, Rudd MD, Mandrusiak M, Silverman MM. A test of the effectiveness of a list of suicide warning signs for the public. *SLTB*; 2006; 36(3): 272-287
