Making Recycling Matter: Educate, Motivate and Activate

College and University Recycling Coalition
October 10, 2016
Objectives

• Share some education and behavior change strategies
• Share how to incorporate in your programming
• Discuss some of the tools and resources available
Who We Are

Keep America Beautiful **inspires and educates** people to take action every day to **improve and beautify** their community environment.

We envision a country where every community is a **clean, green and beautiful** place to live.

We provide the **expertise, programs and resources** to help people:

- End Littering;
- Improve Recycling;
- Beautify communities in America.

Our collective action champions **environmentally healthy, socially connected** and **economically sound** communities.
Strategic Impact Goals (2025)

- **End Littering**
  - Reduce litter by 35% in Keep America Beautiful affiliate service areas

- **Improve Recycling**
  - Improve recycling attitudes and behavior by 20% and quality by 15%; Provide 5 million individuals with on the go recycling

- ** Beautify Communities**
  - Improve, restore and maintain 1 million public spaces
Improve Recycling: 2015 Actions & Impact

Raising Awareness:
National public service advertising campaign that has over $118 million in donated media and 3.8 million website visitors.

$118 million
in donated media to date.

Pledge to Recycle:
215,000+ individuals have taken the "Be Recycled" pledge. Since 2011

Support Public Space Recycling:
1 million + people provided with daily access to on-the-go recycling. Since 2010

Recycling Ambassadors:
Work with and provide resources to 6,000+ educators to unify, simplify and amplify recycling messaging and approaches.

Research to Identify Successful Strategies:
First-of-its-kind research regarding recycling bin configuration and communications, improving recycling by 20% in office settings.

Collected Items for Recycling & Reusing:
262+ million lbs. through America Recycles Day, Recycle-Bowl, RecycleMania and the Great American Cleanup.

Greenhouse gas emissions avoided
equivalent to 87,827 cars removed from the road for a year based on CO2 equivalent reductions from recyclables.

K-12/College Students:
Through our competition programs, we annually engage 5.5 million students.

Data based on 2015 Keep America Beautiful reporting unless otherwise noted.
Improve Recycling

Educate, motivate, activate individuals to recycle

- America Recycles Day
- “I Want To Be Recycled” PSA
- Recycling on the Go
- Recycling @Work
- Recycle Mania
- Recycle-Bowl
Do people care about recycling?
What Works: Different Types of Recycling

Note: Meta analysis of recycling studies, combined across three types of programs. N=41 public, N=52 curbside, N=18 central collection. Osboldiston & Schott (2012)
KAB Behavior Change System

- Integrated Approach
  - 5 Step Management Process
  - 4 Behavior Strategies
- Created by Behavior Scientists and Experts
- Field-Tested
Getting People To Recycle

Behavior Change Strategies:

- Commitment
- Social Norming
- Removing Barriers
- Communication
- Competition

The Homer Principle:

- Recycling isn’t focus of their attention
- All bins are “waste” bins at first glance
The Role of Commitment in Promoting Behavior Change
A Strategy Guide for America Recycles Day

P. Wesley Schultz, Ph.D.
California State University

Key findings. In the academic research literature, there are more than 100 studies of commitment. Among these are 32 studies that have studied commitment strategies in the specific area of pro-environmental behaviors, such as recycling. The following quotes from reviews of the research underscore the potential for commitments to induce change:

“The findings indicate that commitment techniques have considerable impact in motivating individuals to recycle and that they may be able to overcome some of the limitations encountered by incentive-based programs in promoting resource conservation” (Katzev & Pardini, 1987).

“...commitment... strategies were generally most effective in encouraging environmentally responsible behavior” (Dwyer et al., 1993)

“Taken together, the results suggest that making a commitment to engage in a behavior increases the likelihood of doing it” (Schultz & Kaiser, 2011)
America Recycles Day Commitment

**JOIN US IN RECYCLING MORE.**

For America Recycles Day 2016, I pledge to:

**Learn**
I will find out what materials are collected for recycling in my community.

**Act**
Reduce my personal waste by recycling. Within the next month, I will recycle more and I will buy products made with recycled content.

**Share**
In the next month, I will encourage one family member of one friend to take the #BeRecycled pledge.

**TAKE THE #BERECYCLED PLEDGE**

66,259

PEOPLE HAVE SIGNED THIS PLEDGE.

BE THE 66,260TH!
• Response rate: 10%
• Report knowing more: 32%
• Report more committed to act: 34%
• Encourage others: 32%

• Pledge Impact (survey conducted 2013)
How it has been used on campuses
Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort
Old Message:
Help us conserve our national resources!
New Message:

Many of our guests have expressed to us their approval of conserving energy. When given the opportunity nearly 75% of hotel guests choose to reuse their towels each day.
Results

Number of towels taken out of the room on the first towel replacement day.

Findings: A 25% reduction in the number of towels used!

Research: A literature review recommended how to use feedback, prompts, positive emotional states, extrinsic motivation and social norms.

RecycleMania Strategies:
• Feedback (weekly)
• Prompts (posters)
• Positive emotional states
• Norms
Recyclers find it easiest to recycle in their own residence. The chart shows the percentage of recyclers who find it easiest to recycle at each location:

- **Residence**: 74%
- **Workplace**: 35%
- **Public places**: 30%
- **Local schools**: 28%
- **Public parks**: 27%

Q: For each of the following locations, please tell me how difficult it is to recycle there, using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is not difficult at all and 10 is extremely difficult (0-4 not difficult)

Base: Recyclers, n=793
Knowledge of Recycling

There is no significant difference in how knowledgeable college-aged adults vs. adults 35+ are about recycling.

Q: How knowledgeable are you about recycling in terms of knowing how and what to recycle.

Age 18-24:
- Extremely/very knowledgeable: 46%
- Somewhat knowledgeable: 40%
- Not too/not at all: 13%

Age 35+:
- Extremely/very knowledgeable: 48%
- Somewhat knowledgeable: 43%
- Not too/not at all: 9%
**Adults 35+** report that they *regularly recycle* significantly more than college-aged adults.

- **Age 18-24**:
  - Not currently recycling: 34%*
  - Occasionally recycle: 27%
  - Regularly recycle: 39%

- **Age 35+**:
  - Not currently recycling: 18%
  - Occasionally recycle: 22%
  - Regularly recycle: 60%**

Significant at 95% (***) confidence

Q: Frequency of recycling.
Attitudes about Recycling

More **college-aged adults** say that recycling is something they can be better at doing

**Adults 35+** more often report that recycling is something they can make an effort to do regularly at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recycling is something I can be better at doing</th>
<th>I can make an effort to recycle regularly at home</th>
<th>I can make an effort to recycle regularly outside my home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="36%25" alt="18-24" /></td>
<td><img src="37%25" alt="18-24" /></td>
<td><img src="36%25" alt="18-24" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="26%25" alt="35+" /></td>
<td><img src="50%25" alt="35+" /></td>
<td><img src="31%25" alt="35+" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at 95% (***) confidence
Adults 35+ recycle cans, bathroom plastics, and plastic bags/wrap significantly more than college-aged adults

- **Cans**: 45% (18-24) vs 58% (35+)
- **Bathroom plastics**: 42% (18-24) vs 57% (35+)
- **Plastic bags/wrap**: 48% (18-24) vs 55% (35+)

Significant at 95% (***) confidence
Objectives:

• Test the impact of recycling and trash bin configurations on recycling in the workplace.

• Metrics
  - Increase recycling
  - Reduce trash in the recycling bins
  - Reduce recyclables in the trash bins
Four Set-ups Tested

1) Little trash bin with desk sized recycling bin

2) Equal size trash and recycling

3) Recycling bin only

4) Information only
Common Area Bins and Signage

These are some common recyclable items in your office. Please put these items in a recycling bin:

- Office Paper
- Plastic Beverage Bottles
- Aluminum Beverage Cans
- Foam Dinner Boxes
- Soup Cans

These are some common non-recyclable items in your office. Please put these items in a landfill bin:

- Food Scraps
- Bubble Wrap
- Plastic Eating Utensils
- Used Paper Plates
- Paper Towels

**Please note that there are some common items. For a more comprehensive list of recyclable and non-recyclable items see your building manager or your waste hauler’s website.**
Frequency of Incorrect Disposal

PERCENTAGE OF OFFICES WITH MATERIAL IN RECYCLING BIN
Trash materials most commonly found in recycling bins

PERCENTAGE OF OFFICES WITH MATERIAL IN TRASH BIN
Recyclable materials most commonly found in trash bins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Recycling Bin</th>
<th>Trash Bin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper Towels</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Scraps</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic Utensils</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Paper Plates</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions and Recommendations

[Image: Recycling symbol with the word 'RECYCLING']
Conclusion: Little Trash Most Successful

- Increased correct disposals
- Decreased recyclables in the trash from 29% to 13%
- Decreased recycling bin contamination by 20%

Positive experience
One thing I particularly liked about the Recycling at Work was: “different sized bins really helped.”
Equal Size - Fairly Successful

Some desirable changes:
- Kept trash out of the recycling
- No significant decrease in recyclables in the trash
- No significant change in the weight of paper in trash
- Decreased recycling bin contamination 17%

Positive experience

The thing I did differently because of Recycling at Work was... “I recycled more often and with more confidence since I now have a better understanding of what to recycle and what not to [recycle].”
Recycling Only - Least Successful

Poor results

- Undesirable or neutral audit results
- 14% increase in recyclables in the trash
- No change in weight of office paper in the trash
- No change in recyclables in the recycling

Neutral to Negative experience

One thing I would change about Recycling at Work is: “[I] need to have both trash cans in my office, not just a recycle bin. For example, I eat a banana every day and having to walk the peel to the kitchen room is a nuisance.”
• No behavioral changes
• Some changes in knowledge
• Insufficient to change behavior
  – Necessary to go beyond
Resources

• See [http://recyclingatwork.org](http://recyclingatwork.org) for more information, tools, report and fact sheet
Increase recycling participation by creating strong passion and reason to believe in recycling.
Strategic Territories

Five creatively driven strategic territories:
Campaign Goals

• **Increase** recycling participation
• **Educate** and **motivate** people to recycle more
• **Transform** recycling into a daily social norm
• **Provide** tools to inform people how & where to make recycling happen

Call to Action
• Give your garbage another life.
Superhero :30
Campaign Results Overview

$125M
Total campaign donated media

38%
Have seen/heard the campaign

3.8M+
Visitors to Website

Exposure
Awareness
Engagement
Integrated Campaign

Mobile ◦ Social ◦ Outdoor ◦ Partnership ◦ TV ◦ Online ◦ Radio
Objective:

- **What do people associate with recycling: shape, color, wording**
  - Partnered with George Washington University
  - 2014 on-line survey of 750 people

- **Key take-aways:**
  - Blue = recycling – 79%
  - Green or Brown for composting (41%/51%)
  - Square bin = recycling, round = trash
  - Messaging:
    - “Mixed Recycling” works (77%)
    - “Single Stream” Doesn’t (11%)
    - Icons + words – potential for confusion – in the field study underway
Conclusions

• Behavioral strategies can make a difference
• Proven through research, testing and evaluation
• Key Approaches:
  • Convenience
  • Communication
    • Model Behavior
    • Be positive
    • Keep it simple
  • Consistency
Theme: #BeRecycled

– “#BeRecycled” invites individuals to actively live a recycled lifestyle.

– We encourage everyone to commit to the “Reduce. Reuse. Recycle,” mantra in every aspect of their lives – at home, at work/school, and on-the-go.

– And, it doesn’t have to stop there. There is an abundance of consumer products for purchase that are made from recycled content – make a pledge to buy those items over the traditional versions.
America Recycles Day
Tools & Resources

- AmericaRecyclesDay.org provides event organizers with a wide variety of tools and resources to make event organizing easy and successful.
Resources

• America Recycles Day - http://americarecyclesday.org/
  • Public Space Infrastructure BMPs

• Recycle-Bowl - http://www.recycle-bowl.org/

• Recycling @Work - http://recycle@work.org

• National PSA Campaign - www.iwanttoberecycled.org
QUESTIONS?
Recycling Department

Brenda Pulley
Senior Vice President, Recycling

Alec Cooley
Director, Recycling Programs

Tyler Orton
Manager, Recycling Programs

Giulia Manno
Program Coordinator, Recycling Programs

Emily White
Marketing Manager, Programs
UNIFY, SIMPLIFY AND AMPLIFY
There is no significant difference between college-aged adults vs. adults 35+ in terms of attitudes about recycling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>18-24 (10%)</th>
<th>35+ (11%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recycling is inconvenient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycling makes a difference</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recycle b/c recycled materials</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with various statements about recycling.
More adults 35+ report that they consistently recycle in the bathroom than college-aged adults.

At home - Kitchen
- 18-24: 63%
- 35+: 69%

Office/workplace
- 18-24: 42%
- 35+: 44%

At home - Bathroom
- 18-24: 39%
- 35+: 55%**

Public places
- 18-24: 41%
- 35+: 46%
Barriers and Benefits

- **Barrier:** Anything that reduces the probability of a person engaging in the target behavior
  - Structural: difficulty, lack of access, lack of knowledge or awareness ...

- **Benefits:** Anything that increases the probability of a person engaging in the target behavior
  - Structural: lack of motivation, saving money, improve property value, safer, more beautiful ...