Chapter 4
Health Communication

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION METHODS
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Health Communication - defined

Everett Rogers (pioneer in the field of communication):

“Any type of human communication concerned with health.”
Health Communication - defined

- Healthy People 2010:
  “the art and technique of informing, influencing, and motivating individual, institutional, and public audiences about important health issues.”

- National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the CDC:
  “the study and use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community decisions that enhance health.”
Health Communication

Bensley:
“A very broad field of study that includes analysis of the:
- interactions between health care providers and consumers
- ways consumers seek relevant health information
- provision of social support
- sharing of health information
- use of communication between health care providers
- administration of personnel and resources
- development of health communication campaigns
Importance of Health Communication

Effective health communication is central to health promotion because it influences behavior.
Effective health communication interventions

Influence:
- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Perceptions
- Awareness
- Social Norms
- Values

Change Behavior
Effective Health Communications includes:

- Careful planning
- Strategic analysis
- Thoughtful selection of:
  - Strategies
  - Settings
  - Channels
  - Communication methods
- Continual return to consumers to ensure they received the intended messages, understand them, respond to them positively, and adopt the intended health behaviors.
Health communication influences behavior by drawing from:

- Social psychology
- Education
- Mass communication
- Social Marketing
QW: Describe ‘Health Communication’
“Health communication campaign interventions **must** be guided by evidence-based strategies if they are going to be effective.”
“Campaign messages needed to reach and influence target audiences must be strategically developed from the audience perspective.”

“The more you invest in your target audience before, during, and after your interventions, the more effective you become in influencing change.”
“Health behaviors and health status are influenced by a variety of factors; therefore, the use of strategic communication intervention to address these health problems must also be multifaceted.”
Health communication interventions must use many different techniques

- interpersonal counseling,
- support groups,
- Lectures (overhead transparencies, Power Point)
- workshops,
- newspaper and magazine articles,
- pamphlets, fact sheets
- computer-based information systems,
- school- and primary care-based educational programs,
- billboards,
- posters,
- radio/television programs, and
- public service announcements (PSAs)
QW: What helps make a Health Communication successful?
“Health communication campaigns are carefully organized and disseminate information designed to educate specific groups about imminent health threats and risky behaviors that are potential hazards and raise awareness of health threats and to move target audiences to engage in healthy behaviors.”
Health Communication Model

A process with several sequential and interrelated stages.
Health Communication Models Share Several Common Features:

- They include strategic design of communication based on:
  - Analysis of the consumers’ characteristics
  - Identification of consumers’ needs
  - Market factors
  - Communication methods
  - Communication settings
  - Communication channels

- Pre-testing
- Effectively managing the process
- Evaluation
**Channels** (from the ones that *reach the least number of people, at the top of the pyramid*, to the ones that *reach most number of people, at the bottom of the pyramid*).
The ‘Strategic Health communication Campaign Model’

• “It is a synthesis of models, principles, and theories that represent the best of health communications ideas.”

• The model involves five major stages’
The ‘Strategic Health communication Campaign Model’

1st • Planning (Campaign objectives, Consumer orientation)

2nd • Use of Theory (Behavioral theory)

3rd • Communications Analysis (Audience analysis, Formative research)

4th • Implementation (Marketing, Evaluation, Institutionalization)

5th • Evaluation and Reorientation (Formative evaluation, Summative Evaluation)
1st Stage of the ‘Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model’: Planning

- Collect data to identify the consumers’ needs
- Identify and define the health threat
- Influence the way the audience thinks about the problem
- Set clear and realistic campaign objectives
- Establish clear consumer orientation to make sure the campaign reflects the target audience’s specific concerns and unique cultural perspectives
- Introduce different health promotion programs
- Examine strategies

*Involve audience members as much as possible in the planning of the campaign.*
2nd Stage of the ‘Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model’ : Theory

- Use a wide range of relevant theories
- Address the different stages of readiness to change
3rd Stage of the ‘Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model’ : Communication Analysis

- Audience analysis to identify a primary target audience

  “Health education efforts that routinely include audience analysis are generally more likely to develop interventions that ring true with consumers”

- Segmentation of audience based on:
  - Demographics (age, race, education)
  - Geographics (residence, place of work)
  - Psychographics (attitudes, opinions, beliefs, values)

*Use surveys, interviews, polls, focus groups and case studies*
3rd Stage of the ‘Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model’ : Communication Analysis

- Market analysis with the 4 P’s (product, price, place, and promotion)
  - **Product**
    - *A service desired for a target audience i.e. mammogram*
  - **Price**
    - *The time, energy a consumer must ‘pay’ to adopt the new behavior*
  - **Place**
    - *Where the product is accessible i.e. classroom, internet*
  - **Promotion**
    - *Method used to communicate with the target audience*
Use social marketing principles and intervention strategies (strategies = general plans of action that encompass several activities and considers the characteristics of the focus population)

- Create messages
- Select settings (schools, health care centers, worksites, neighborhoods, homes, organizations)
- Select channels [interpersonal (provider-to-patient), small groups, organizational, mass media, technology, community]
- Communication media (press releases, conferences, presentations, counseling, Web pages, print material, films)
4th Stage of the ‘Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model’ - Implementation

**Characteristics of the Health Communication Message**

- **Quality**
  - Source of message (celebrity, government officials, religious leader, physician)
  - Internal factors (attitudes, knowledge, values, behavioral intentions, literacy level, skills, perceived susceptibility)
  - External factors (social support, friends, family, institutional support, social norms, political climate, laws, policies, access to services)
Step 5: Evaluation and Reorientation

- **Summative evaluation*** (determine the overall effects of the campaign)

*Formative focuses on improvement while summative focuses on judgment

- **Process evaluation** (track and assess campaign activities to fine-tune the communication efforts)
QW: Describe the five stages of a successful Health Communication Campaign Model
Communication: Practical Applications

- Health communication as a **primary** strategy (examples: “Ready. Set. It’s Everywhere You Go!” or the Great American Smoke out) – generally used to increase awareness or knowledge about a particular issue

- Health communication **supports** other strategies (examples: Walk Our Children to School Day or 5 a Day for Better Health)
Primary Strategy - Ready, set, it's everywhere you go developed

Setting = home
Channel = Mass media
Methods = TV ads, Radio spots

CDC's guide to promoting moderate physical activity

- Kit: 1 videocassette, 1 sound cassette, 1 letter, 1 poster, 1 pamphlet, and flyers. Radio & Television PSAs feature Dan Jansen.

- Summary: A marketing and media kit for promoting the CDC's physical activity campaign...

- … to increase awareness of the new physical activity guidelines from the Surgeon General: “physical activity did not have to be planned, structured exercise, but could be part of a person’s daily routine, since opportunities for physical activity are all around”
Get Active! Launch of physical activity campaign with UEFA

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXn7HnmFU80](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXn7HnmFU80)
Primary Strategy – Great American Smoke out
launched by the American Cancer Society November 1977

The Great American Smoke out has helped to spotlight the dangers of tobacco use and the challenges of quitting, but more importantly, it has set the stage for the cultural revolution in tobacco control that has occurred over this period.

Annual event held the 3rd Thursday of November. It urges smokers to quit for just one day.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYpPPTz1LhQ
It is such a pleasure to send my warmest greetings to all those participating in International Walk to School Day. By walking or biking to school, students, parents, teachers, and administrators all across America are getting active.

As you know, Let's Move! aims to end childhood obesity within a generation, and encouraging our children to be more physically active is a cornerstone of this ambitious goal. Walking or biking to school also helps kids get a head start on being active for 60 minutes each day, the goal set by the Presidential Active Lifestyle program.

I know that by getting students moving, we can help ensure they will live full and healthy lives, and that is why I am so encouraged by all the events going on across our country this month.

To stay connected to our efforts, and share your success stories, please visit www.LetsMove.gov. I hope you know how much I appreciate your participation in this effort, and I wish you the best for a successful Walk to School Day!

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**Health Communication as a Support to Other Strategies: Walk Our Children To School Day**

- **Settings:** neighborhoods, schools, local organizations
- **Channels:** small group (PTA), One-on-one (friends talking to friends), mass media
- **Materials:** flyers, brochures, press releases

**A one-day-event used to support three strategies: community mobilization, policy, and engineering.**

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**THE WHITE HOUSE**

October 6, 2010
National Cancer Society:
“The 5 A Day for Better Health Program has emerged as the major population-based initiative for nutrition and cancer prevention. It is a national theory-based program that approaches Americans with a simple, positive message: eat five or more servings of fruit and vegetables daily as part of a low-fat, high-fiber diet.”

Background:
In 1981, Doll and Peto concluded that about 35 percent of all cancer deaths were related to nutrition, with a plausible range of 10 to 70 percent.26

In 1982, the National Research Council (NRC) published the seminal document, Diet, Nutrition and Cancer, which summarized the research literature on the relationship between various chronic diseases and dietary patterns.36 Other Federal documents followed such as Healthy People 2000,37 the first Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition,27 Dietary Guidelines for Americans,38 and the Food Guide Pyramid.39,b

Despite the strong evidence linking vegetable and fruit consumption with protection from surveys showed that vegetable and fruit consumption remained low.

Setting:
Organizational, homes, neighborhoods

Channels:
Community, small group, Website, One-on-one, Mass media, billboards, Posters on local busses

Materials:
5-a-day kits for the press and for lesson plans in schools
Make the intervention relevant to the audience:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqS6pJHZ-kw
Conclusion

- Health communication is rarely used as an independent strategy in community health because knowledge is not enough to improve the health of a community. Instead, health communication is an integral part of all health promotion strategies.

- Five Common Health Promoting Strategies:
  - Health communication
  - Policy
  - Engineering
  - Health services
  - Community mobilization
Conclusion

“By considering the unique health problems of a community, the most important health information needs of an audience can be identified and campaign goals can be established.

Campaign messages needed to reach and influence target audiences must be strategically developed from the audience perspective.

These strategies include strategic message design, selecting the settings where the audience can best be reached, and determining the best channels for reaching the intended audience.

Relevant theory and research are used to guide strategic health communication interventions as well as to evaluate their effectiveness and future directions for intervention.”
Turn to your neighbor and list the common strategies used in a successful campaign, other than health communication.
Health communication influences:
A. Health knowledge
B. Awareness
C. Norms
D. Values
E. Attitudes
F. All of the above

Success in health communication interventions begins with ____________.
A. Consumers
B. Changing behaviors
C. Effective planning
D. Theories

Health communication is effective at influencing behavior because it draws from
A. Social psychology
B. Health education and communication
C. Marketing
D. Medicine
E. A, B, and C
Features of health communication interventions include:
A. Analysis of problem and consumer characteristics
B. Strategic design based on consumers
C. Evaluation
D. All of the above

Health communication campaigns are designed to ________ awareness of health threats.
A. Increase
B. Decrease

The first step in the Strategic Health Communication Campaign Model is:
A. Developing effective health communication
B. Planning
C. Selecting an appropriate theory
D. Evaluating

The planning phase of the Health Communication Campaign Model includes all the following EXCEPT:
A. Examine strategies
B. Set clear and realistic goals
C. Identify and define health issues
D. Create summative evaluation criteria
Strategies for overcoming challenges to effective health communication include which of the following?
A. Securing audience input  
B. Audience feedback and pretesting  
C. Both A and B  
D. None of the above

Common strategies to address particular health issues within a community include:
A. Policy engineering  
B. Health communication and community mobilization  
C. Policy and engineering  
D. All of the above  
E. None of the above

**True/False**
- Channels are routes through which communication or message delivery occurs.
- Health communication played a primary or contributing role in the completion of 219 of the 300 objectives in *Healthy People 2010*.
- Pretesting evaluates the impact of communication strategies on focus audiences before implementing these strategies within health promotion campaigns.