Framing Substance Use Messaging

Hilary Fannin, Program Manager - ADAP
FrameWorks Institute

Mission

- To advance the nonprofit sector's communications capacity by identifying, translating, and modeling relevant scholarly research to frame the public discourse on social problems.

Tools for RPP from FrameWorks

- FrameWorks Institute Academy Subscriptions
- 3 Webinars with a framing expert on requested subjects
- Training and TA hours for RPP organizations
Framing Youth Substance Use (SU) Prevention Messages

Road Map

- What is a frame?
- Why is framing important?
- Key framing strategies
- Activity
Framing Youth Substance Use (SU) Prevention Messages

What is a frame?

1. Determines the information central to the message
2. Determines how to effectively explain the information
3. Considers the message’s effect on the audience (cognitive priming)
Framing in three questions:

- How can communications help to change the conversation on social problems that seem to be “stuck” in misconceptions and outdated thinking?
- What ways of talking about issues can backfire? What are the alternatives that research shows can change opinions and open up new thinking?
- Why should we think about every communication as a chance to reframe the issue? How does this help to build momentum for social change?

https://vimeo.com/fragew/review/288594724/58b4b23696
Explanatory chains help the public connect underlying factors to visible symptoms to larger consequences.
FrameWorks Institute
@FrameWorksInst

Our kids are our greatest gift--and we all benefit when they have the support they need to thrive, from #earlychildhood to #adolescence. New research shows how advocates can make a stronger case for policies that promote their healthy development: bit.ly/2EozvAh
Communication Traps

Watch out for communications ‘traps’

Traps are entirely plausible ways of framing the issue that, upon investigation, turn out to be ineffective or perhaps even do more harm than good.

https://vimeo.com/framew/review/288594724/58b4b23696

Vermont Department of Health
Communication Traps

The “Truth” Trap

**Flu Vaccine Facts & Myths**

**MYTH** “The flu isn’t a serious disease.”
**FACTS** Influenza (flu) is a serious disease of the nose, throat, and lungs, and it can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 38,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are 65 years and older. But small children less than 2 years old are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

**MYTH** “The flu shot can cause the flu.”
**FACTS** The flu shot cannot cause the flu. Some people get a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. It goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.

**MYTH** “The flu shot does not work.”
**FACTS** Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies of the effectiveness of the flu shot, it has ranged from 70% to 90% when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.

**MYTH** “The side effects are worse than the flu.”
**FACTS** The worst side effect you’re likely to get from a flu shot is a sore arm. The nasal mist flu vaccine might cause nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The risk of a severe allergic reaction is less than 1 in 1 million.

**MYTH** “Only older people need a flu vaccine.”
**FACTS** Adults and children with conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease need to get a flu shot. Doctors also recommend children 6 months and older get a flu shot every year until their 5th birthday.

**MYTH** “You must get the flu vaccine before December.”
**FACTS** Flu vaccine can be given before or during the flu season. The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. But you can get vaccinated in December or later.

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**Study of myth-fact structure found:**

- People misremembered the myths as true.
- Got worse over time.
- Attributed false information to the CDC.


https://vimeo.com/151594724/58b4b23696

Vermont Department of Health
Communication Traps

The “Worthiness” Trap

Utah America's addiction epidemic
'It's beyond pain': how Mormons are left vulnerable in Utah's opiate crisis

Mormons, who shun drugs and alcohol, have fallen prey to addiction in Utah, where one-third of adults were prescribed an opioid pain medication in 2014

https://vimeo.com/framew/review/288594724/58b4b23696
Vermont Department of Health
Communication Traps

The “Crisis” Trap

https://vimeo.com/framew/review/288594724/58b4b23696
Unframed numbers are open to interpretation

**Economic Well-Being**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children in poverty</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children whose parents lack secure employment</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children living in households with a high housing cost burden</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens not in school and not working</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to what?
Get a job, people!
So what?
That doesn’t sound so bad.

https://vimeo.com/293639364

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Emphasizing what we know is effective

- How can we start with what’s at stake?
- Are there any leaps (connections that need to be built for non-experts)?
- Are the underlying causes to be made visible?
- Can we offer solutions? How about showing the public benefit of solving the problem(s)?
Emphasizing what we know is effective

- Communicate about a common goal or value
- Use easy to understand language
- Keep messages focused on the issue and how the audience can help
DESCRIPTION

Teens who spent the most unsupervised time with peers were 39 percent more likely to smoke cigarettes, 47 percent more likely to drink alcohol and 71 percent more likely to smoke marijuana than average. Those with the most paid employment were 46 percent more likely to use tobacco and 28 percent more likely to drink. Organized time, such as arts classes at school, religious activities outside school, and community volunteer work, had a very modest protective effect. Kids with the most time in these activities showed a 7 percent to 18 percent lower than average risk of drinking or smoking.
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WHAT’S MISSING?
• Jumps into argument without an explanation of why this matters.
• Declarative statements are not explicitly linked to each other to connect cause and effect.
• The public outcome of this problem is implied, rather than stated.
• No solution is proposed, or public benefit explained.
WHAT’S CHANGED?

• Opens with an orientation to what’s at stake -- starts a few steps back.
• Uses language cues to connect the flow of the argument for the reader.
• Introduces the solution and its benefit after explaining the problem.
• Spells out the underlying causes of a visible problem.

REFRAMED WITH EXPLANATION

If we want to prevent addictions in the future, we should prevent substance use in the teenage years. We know that one important risk factor for teen substance use is lack of adult involvement: for example, teens who spend the most unsupervised time with peers are 39 percent more likely to smoke cigarettes, 47 percent more likely to drink alcohol, and 71 percent more likely to smoke marijuana. That is why activities that build strong protective relationships, like art classes at school, religious activities outside school, and community volunteer work can decrease the likelihood that a child drinks or smokes. In fact, kids with the most time in these activities showed a 7 percent to 18 percent lower than average risk of drinking or smoking.
Activity

☐ Each table has an example of a substance use prevention message to be workshopped. Spend 7 minutes breaking down the message and determining its strengths and areas that could be improved. If time allows, attempt to rewrite the message using Strategic Frame Analysis techniques.

☐ Please identify a note-taker and a spokesperson before getting started.

Questions?

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# Table Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Table</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Note: Images and resources are not included in the text representation.
Existing marijuana messaging for stakeholders

- ParentUpVT.org
- Grantees and Contractors Page - Grantee-Developed Marijuana Information for Communities
- Coming soon: 2019 ADAP Prevention Grantee Media toolkit
- SAMHSA, CDC, and other national sources
Questions?
Resources

- **Frameworks Webinars (all passwords are ‘vermont’)**
  - [https://vimeo.com/framew/review/288594724/58b4b23696](https://vimeo.com/framew/review/288594724/58b4b23696)
  - [https://vimeo.com/293639364](https://vimeo.com/293639364)
  - [https://vimeo.com/298249485](https://vimeo.com/298249485)