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LESSONS LEARNED FROM PAST BEHAVIORAL CHANGE INITIATIVES: A VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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Challenge what is. Imagine what could be.

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Importance of Behavioral Change
- Past Case Studies
 - Anti Spitting – early 1900s
 - Non Smokers Rights – 70' s *
 - Impaired Driving – ongoing
 - Curb Side Recycling – 80' s *
 - Race to Reduce – 2015 *
- Summary of Lessons Learned
- Areas for Further Research

* Includes personal reflections



1. IMPORTANCE OF BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

- Most cost effective way to reduce energy consumption
 - Typically using existing technology so no purchase
- Particularly important when whole population needs to be engaged
 - Ozone depletion & acid rain could be addressed using regulations covering few mfgs/emitters
- Less “heavy handed” than regulations
- Changes made at home can influence work place and visa versa

2. ANTI-SPITTING CAMPAIGN



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- Only one of 5 issues analyzed in Masters thesis that were easily found (Patrick O'Connor, U Montana, 2015)
- Habit proliferated with use of chewing tobacco
- Early medical reformers successfully argued right to “bodily integrity” & well being superseded right to spit”
- Transition from ordinances to education proved critical
- Also sought to transform meaning of individual liberty in public sphere



3. NON-SMOKERS RIGHTS

- Early leadership by American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation & US Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop
- In Canada, led by Gar Mahood and Non Smokers Rights Association
- Legislation re packaging, display & promotion played critical role in empowering non smokers
- Social acceptance of smoking in public places changed dramatically in 90's in most areas on North America



4. IMPAIRED DRIVING

- Leadership on issue by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) since 1980
- Extensive advertising campaigns
- In recent years, major drop in social acceptability of drinking/driving major drop
- Research on road safety campaigns indicates importance of personal communication and road side media



5. CURB SIDE RECYCLING

- Started with drive to depots but by 80's many municipalities began curb side pick up
- In Toronto, pressure put on politicians forced reluctant bureaucracy to try with hopes it would fail
- Unlike energy, waste very sensory (see, touch, smell) so peer pressure to match neighbours key
- Hugely successful programs in schools which were brought home
- Indirect, if any, financial benefits yet high participation rates in some communities

6. TORONTO RACE TO REDUCE



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- Voluntary competition to reduce energy consumption by 10% 2010-2014.
- 42 % office space signed up (69 mil ft²)
- Achieved 12.1%, mostly from large owners/tenants
- 64 of 196 registered > 10%
- Almost all savings electricity, no natural gas
- Likely mainly from lighting retrofits & plug load
- “Unprecedented collaboration”
- Awards/friendly competition key components

7. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED



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- Charismatic Leadership – from organizations, individuals and politicians
- Irrefutable evidence
- Clear, simple, compelling, consistent messaging and supportive media
- Leave compromising to government (this is their role)
- Focus on the issue
 - “Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it” Saul Alinski Rules For Radicals # 13 (of 13)
- Don't be afraid to start small
 - “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has” Margret Mead

8. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH



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- Important lessons can be learned from past campaigns to change behavior
 - Behavioral economists & behavior insight groups currently focus on recent or planned campaigns
 - “Those who cannot remember the past are condoned to repeat it”, George Santayana
 - Important lessons can be learned from 4 of the 5 campaigns as well as many others

CULTURE OF CONSERVATION



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DISCUSSION

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