

Beyond Education: Using Social Science to Motivate Behavior Change



Kaitlin Phelps, Action Research

Clean Ocean Action Conference
Why do people litter?
November 11th, 2015

changing behavior

for the public good by applying marketing and social science research to outreach programs that promote **clean, healthy, + sustainable communities.**



clean	healthy	sustainable
community	workplace	environment
research	implement	evaluate

Behavior Matters

- ❑ Environmental Issues have Origins in Human Behavior
 - ❑ Pollution + Waste
 - ❑ Climate Change
- ❑ Technology + Policy Solutions
 - ❑ Barriers: technical, institutional, societal
 - ❑ Time to penetrate market
 - ❑ Time to implement policy
- ❑ Behavioral Solutions
 - ❑ Voluntary action
 - ❑ Guidance from social sciences



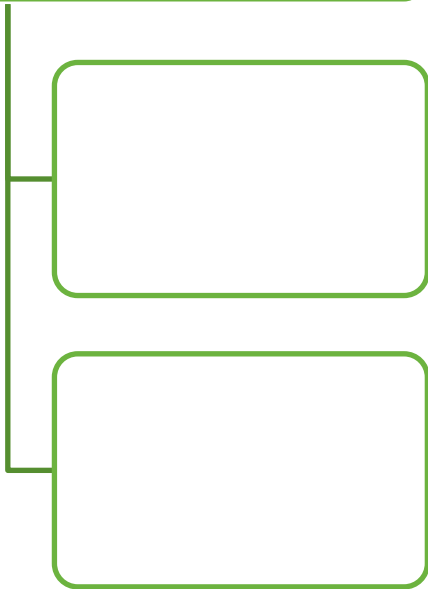
THE Behavior Matters

- ❑ **One-Time**
 - ❑ (e.g., install public recycling bin)
- ❑ **Repetitive**
 - ❑ (e.g., properly dispose of cigarettes)
- ❑ **Diverse Barriers**
 - ❑ Cost
 - ❑ Difficulty
 - ❑ Other Obstacles

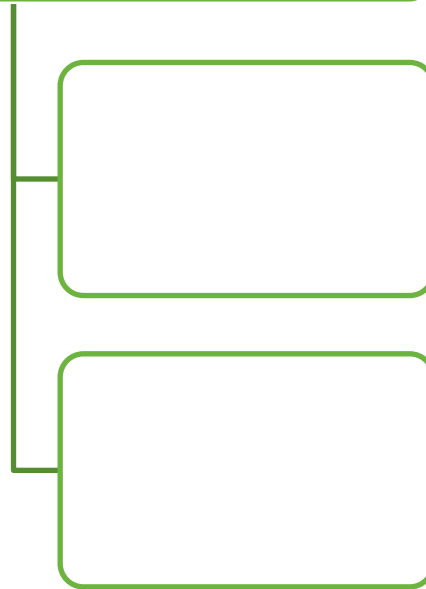


Traditional Approaches

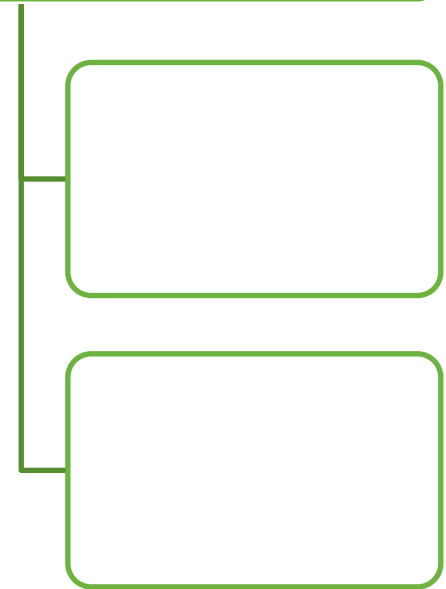
Knowledge



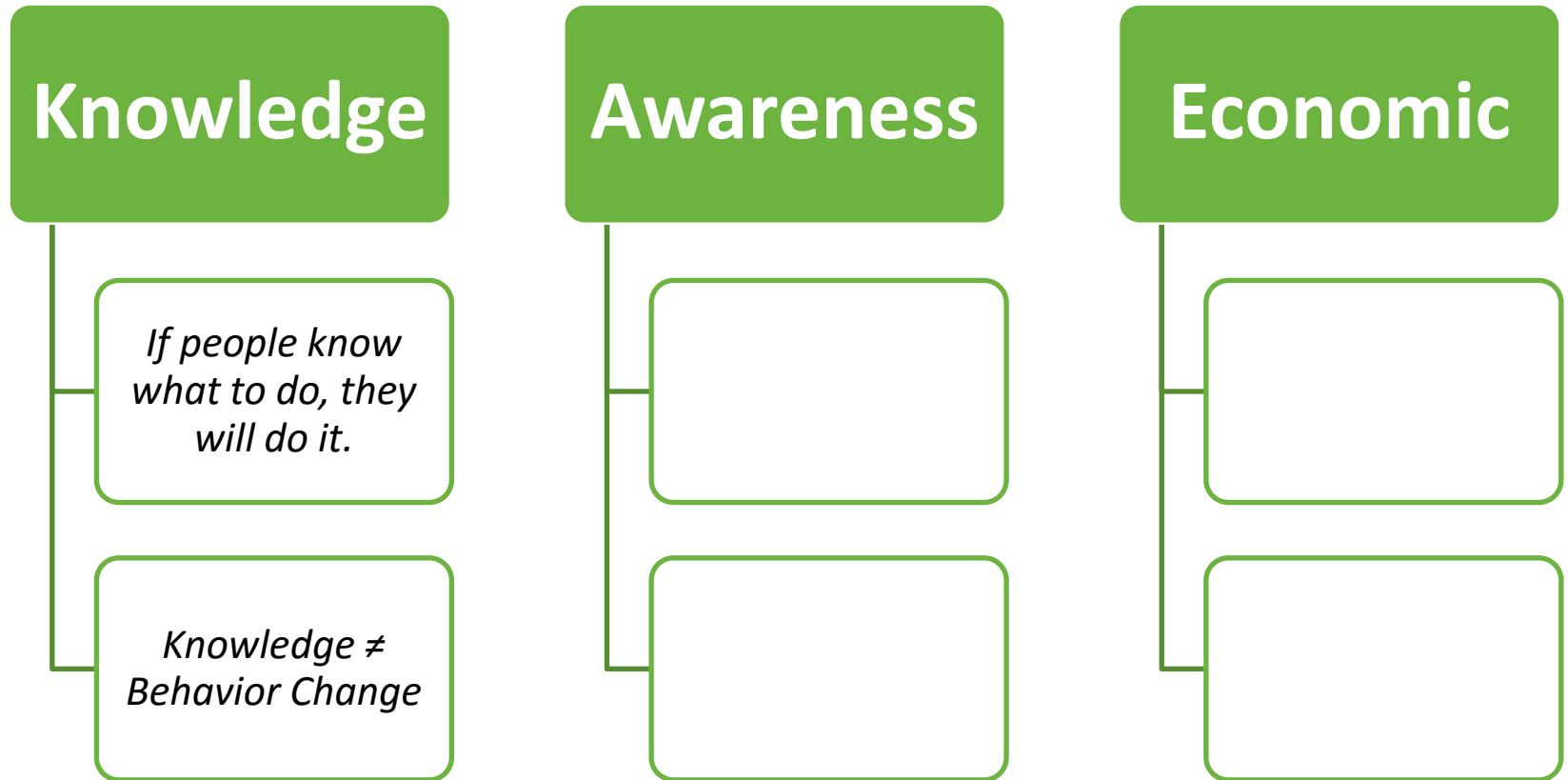
Awareness



Economic



Traditional Approaches



Traditional Approaches

Knowledge

*If people know
what to do, they
will do it.*

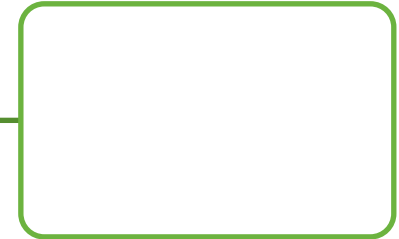
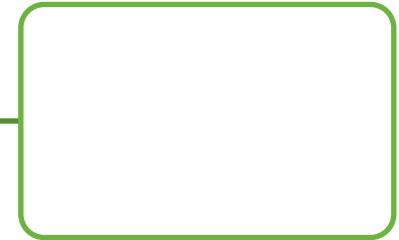
*Knowledge ≠
Behavior Change*

Awareness

*If people know the
severity of it, they
will change.*

*Attitude ≠
Behavior Change*

Economic



Traditional Approaches

Knowledge

If people know what to do, they will do it.

Knowledge ≠ Behavior Change

Awareness

If people know the severity of it, they will change.

Attitude ≠ Behavior Change

Economic

If it is in their financial best interest, they will do it

Self-Interest ≠ Behavior Change

State and National Campaign Effects



- National effort in Canada to reduce CO2
- Heavy media advertising
- 51% knew program
- Few changed behavior



- 2001-2010
- \$200 million advertising campaign
- One-time and repetitive actions
- Little impact behavior change

Community-Based Social Marketing

- ❑ origins in 100 years of social science
 - ❑ psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc.
- ❑ community-based
 - ❑ delivered at local-level
- ❑ removes barriers to action
 - ❑ motivational and structural
- ❑ behavior-based
 - ❑ outcomes (behavior change) not outputs (# of impressions)



Community-Based Social Marketing

Select Behavior



```
graph TD; A[Select Behavior] --> B[Barriers & Benefits]; B --> C[Develop Strategy]; C --> D[Pilot Test]; D --> E[Implement Broadly & Evaluate];
```

The diagram illustrates a five-step process for Community-Based Social Marketing. Each step is contained within a colored rectangular box, and the boxes are arranged in a descending staircase pattern from top-left to bottom-right. Downward-pointing arrows connect the bottom-right corner of one box to the top-left corner of the next box below it. The steps are: 1. Select Behavior (green box), 2. Barriers & Benefits (brown box), 3. Develop Strategy (gold box), 4. Pilot Test (grey box), and 5. Implement Broadly & Evaluate (black box).

Barriers & Benefits

Develop Strategy

Pilot Test

Implement Broadly & Evaluate

McKenzie-Mohr, D. (1999, 2011). Fostering sustainable behavior. Canada: New Society Publishers. See also www.cbsm.com

Step 1: Selecting Behaviors

- ❑ Strategic selection
 - ❑ Desired outcome?
 - ❑ Sectors? Audiences?
 - ❑ Behavior linked to outcome?
- ❑ Informed choices
 - ❑ Hunches often disconfirmed
 - ❑ Technical and survey data



Create a List of Behaviors

End State

- **Action Causes the Outcome**
 - *Use reusable shopping bags at the grocery store*
 - *Proper disposal of cigarette butts*

Non-divisible

- **Cannot be Broken Down into Smaller Actions**
 - *Properly dispose of all waste*
 - *Many actions embedded*

Avoid Strategies

- **Not Directly Linked to Outcome**
 - *Sign a pledge*
 - *Attend a workshop*

Prioritize Behaviors

Impact

- **How much is change linked to outcome?**
 - Technical review (rigorous)
 - Survey experts (less rigorous)

Probability

- **How difficult is change?**
 - Review cases (rigorous)
 - Survey audience (less rigorous)

Penetration

- **How many already engaged?**
 - Inspections (rigorous)
 - Survey audience (less rigorous)

Applicability

- **For whom is the behavior relevant?**
 - Proportion
 - Census

Step 2: Identify Barriers and Benefits

- ❑ Why aren't people engaging in the desired behavior?
 - ❑ Internal: motivation, knowledge, convenience, attitudes, time
 - ❑ Structural: program changes, convenience, difficulty, access
- ❑ Multiple barriers can exist simultaneously
 - ❑ Prioritize
 - ❑ Multivariate statistics
- ❑ Barriers can vary by:
 - ❑ Behavior
 - ❑ Audience
 - ❑ Season

Step 2: Identify Barriers and Benefits

- ❑ NOT based on a hunch!

- ❑ Find target population

- ❑ Starting point

- ❑ Literature Reviews
 - ❑ Observations
 - ❑ Focus Groups

- ❑ Surveys

- ❑ In-person
 - ❑ Telephone
 - ❑ Mail
 - ❑ Web-based



Step 2: Identify Barriers and Benefits

- ❑ 2009 Litter Research
 - ❑ Keep America Beautiful
- ❑ Internal barriers
 - ❑ Lack of personal responsibility
 - ❑ Negative normative influence of existing litter
- ❑ Structural barriers
 - ❑ Lack of receptacles
 - ❑ Littered environments
 - ❑ Distance from bins



Step 3: Develop Strategy



Policy Change

- Circumscribe choice
- Hard to go right there



Voluntary

- Support policy
- Can't enforce

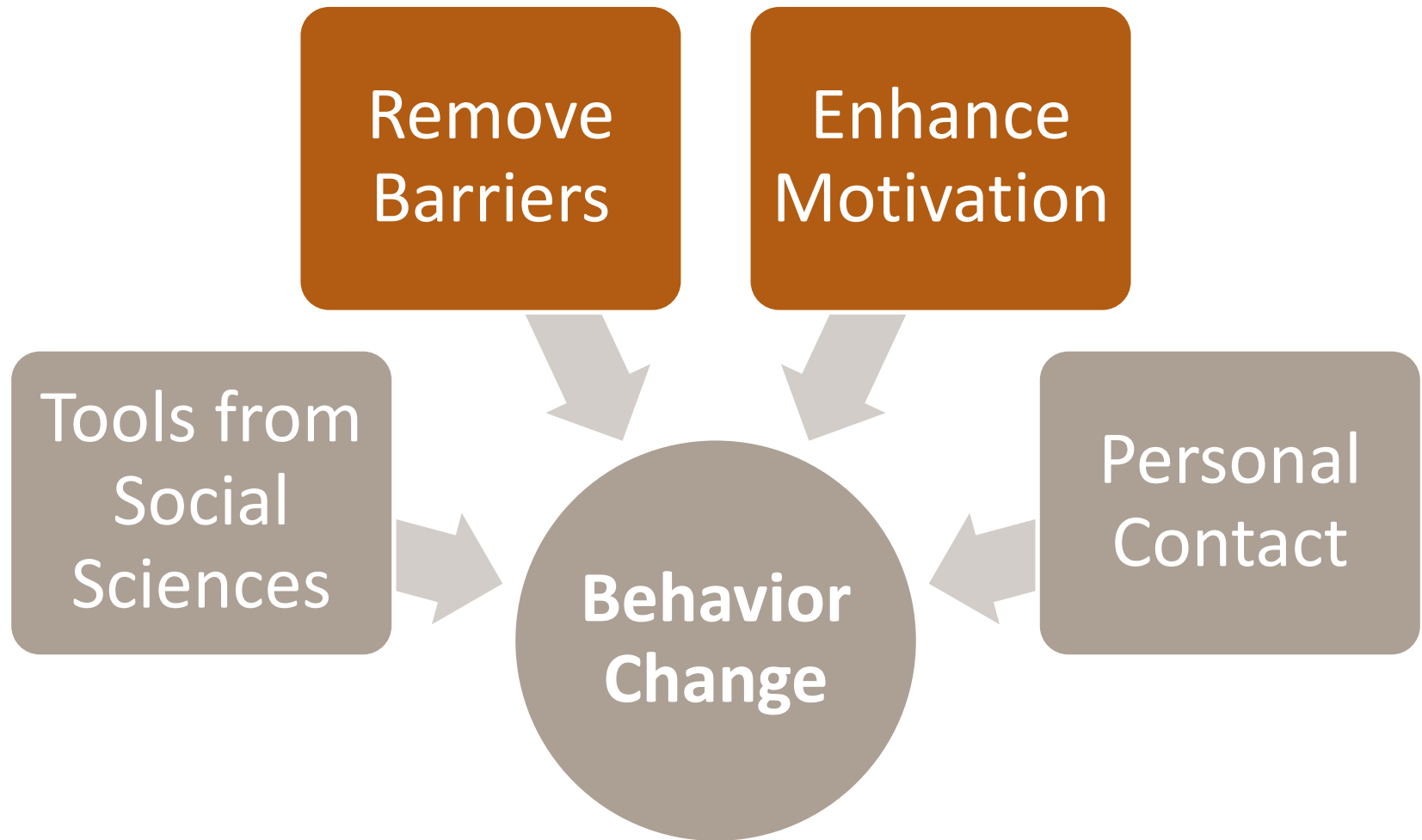


Regulatory

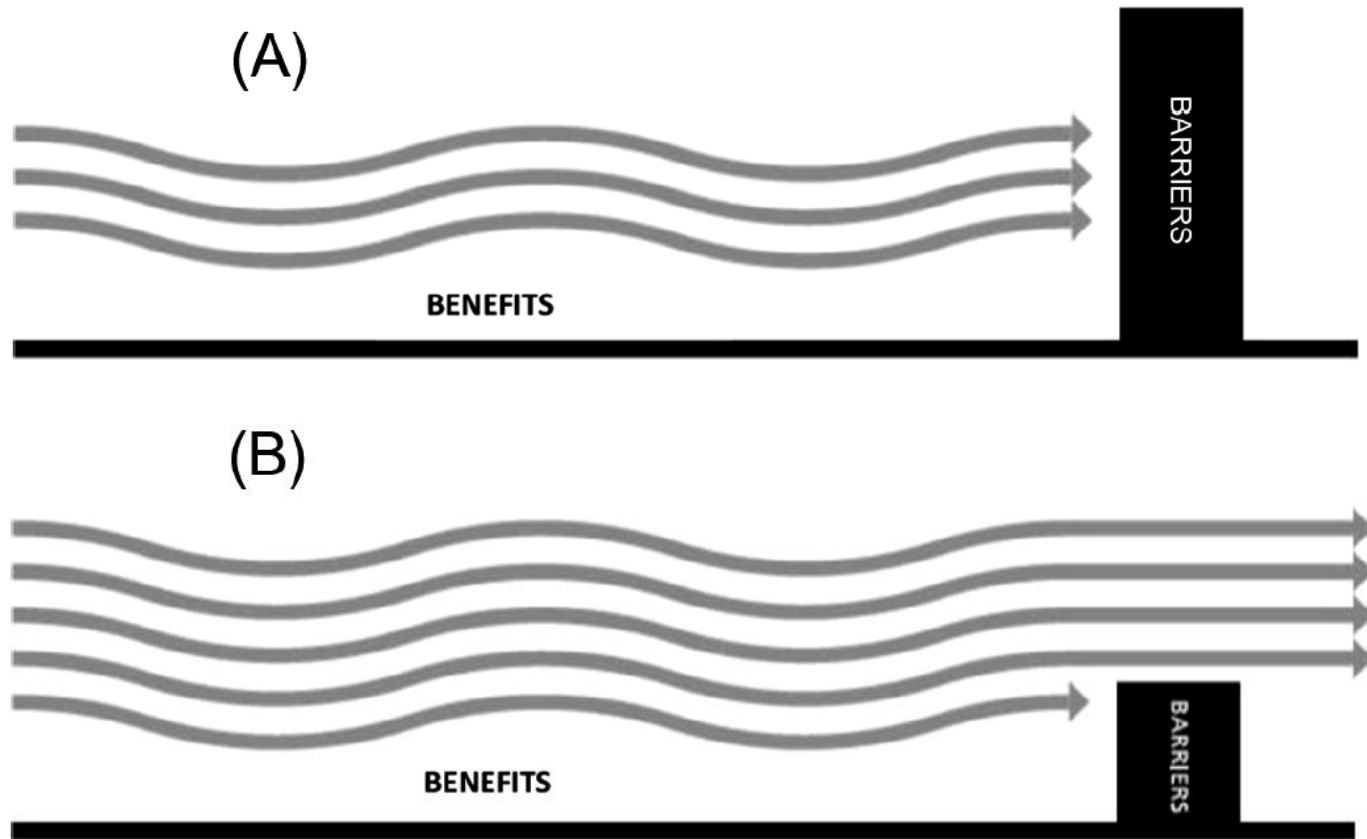
- Need enforcement
- Resources



Step 3: Develop Strategy

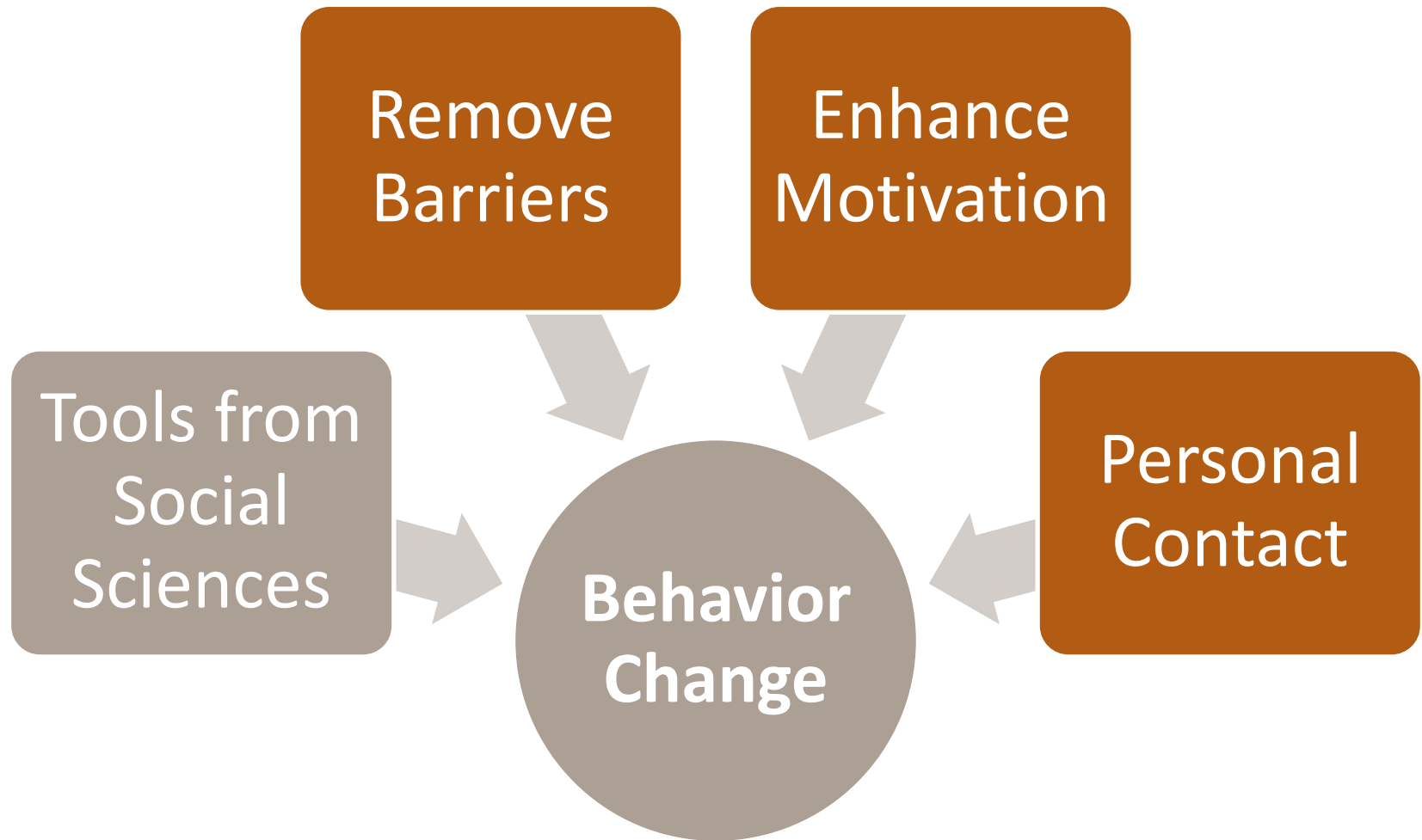


Remove Barriers & Enhance Benefits

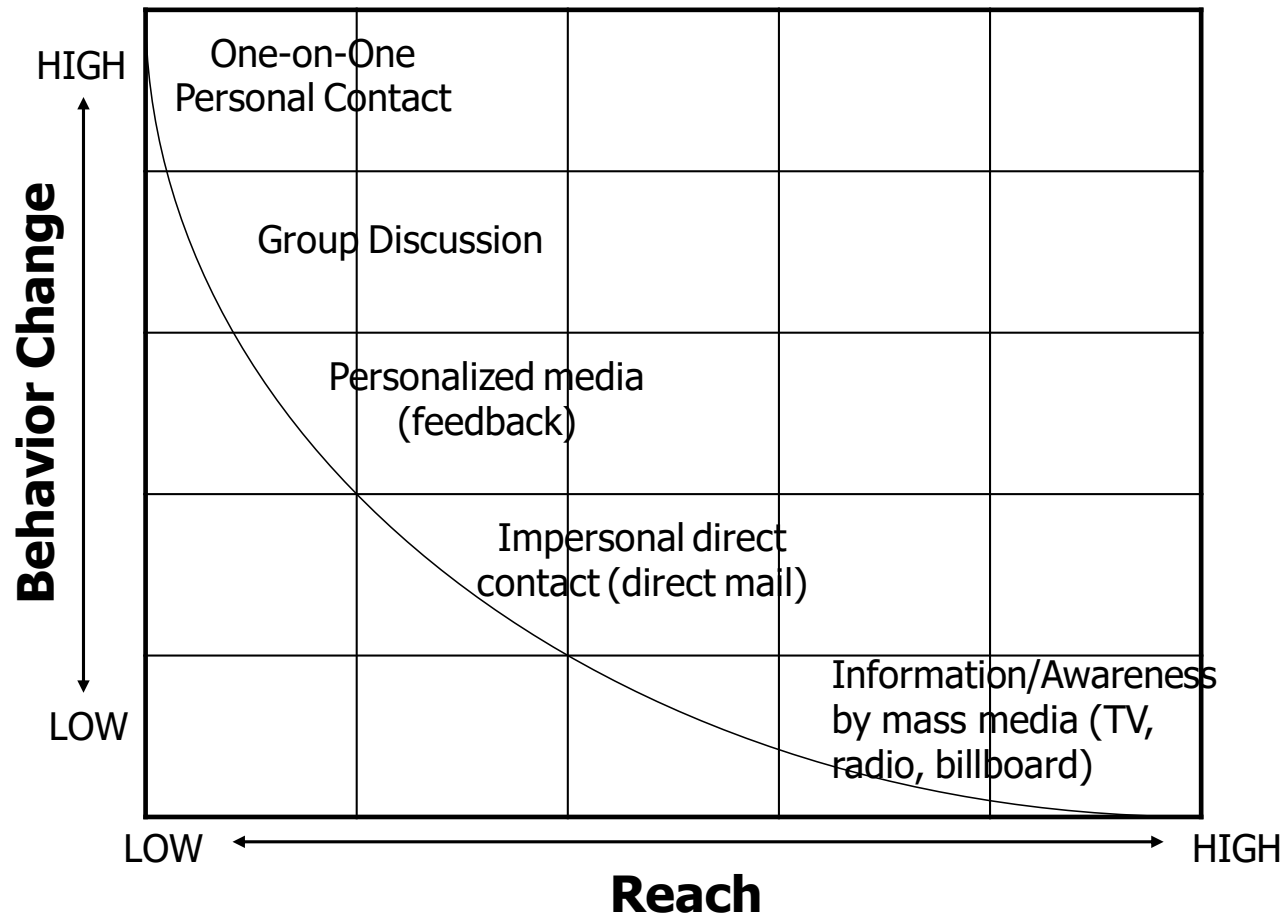


Graphic From: Schultz, P. W. (2013). Strategies for promoting proenvironmental behavior: Lots of tools but few instructions. *European Psychologist*.

Step 3: Develop Strategy

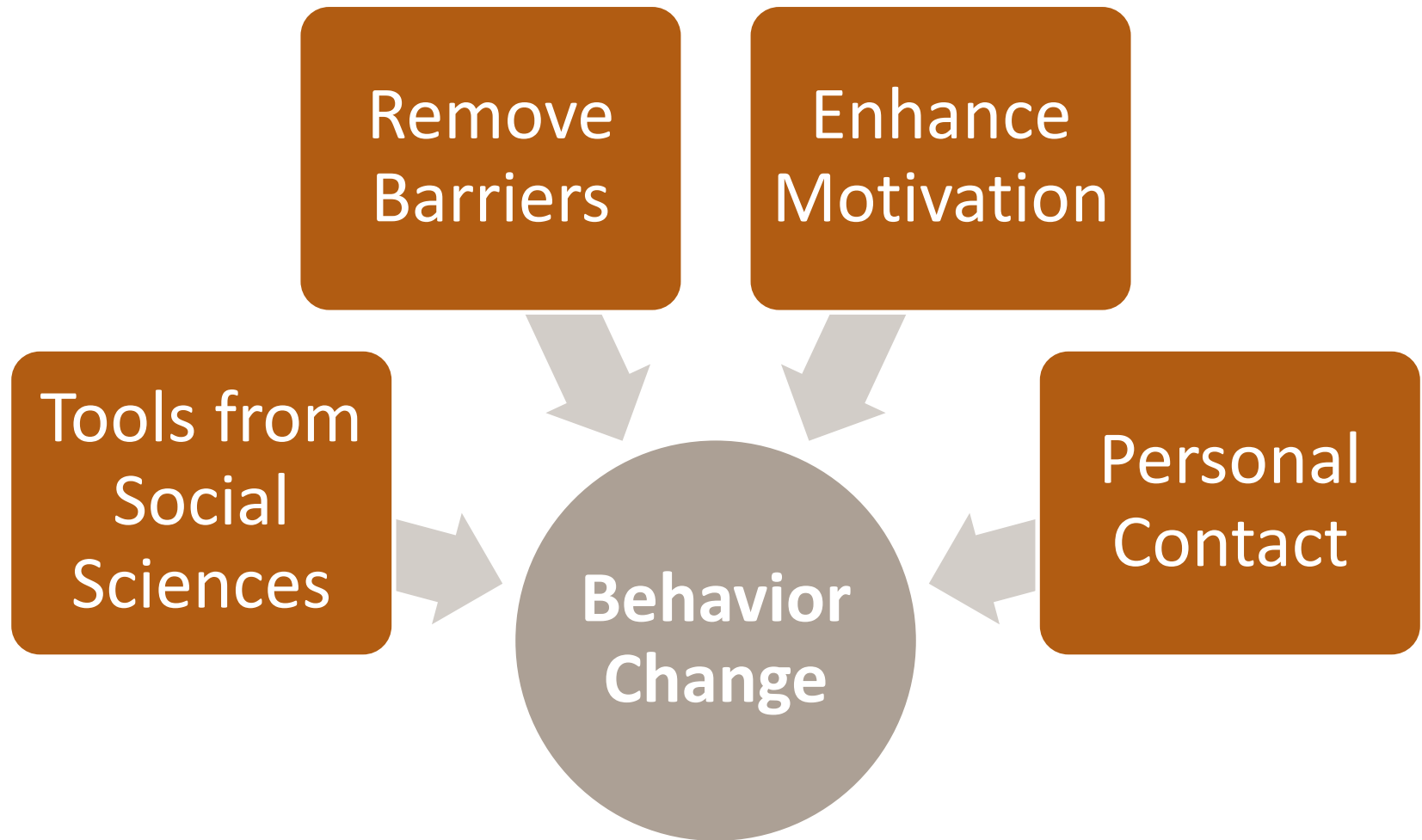


Personal Contact: Reach vs. Impact

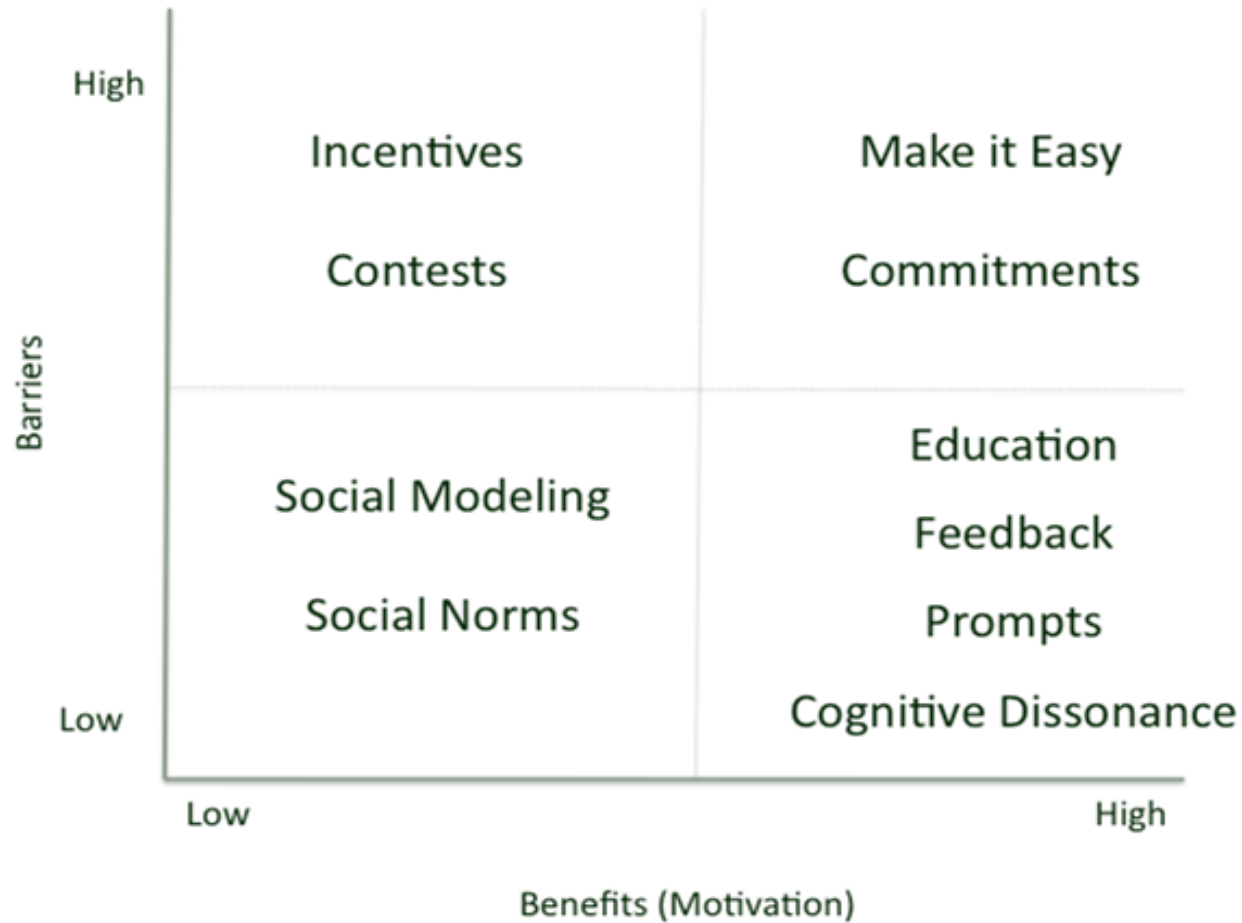


Graphic from: Schultz, P.W., & Tabanico, J. (2007). Community-based social marketing and behavior change. In A. Cabaniss (Ed.), *Handbook on Household Hazardous Waste*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.

Step 3: Develop Strategy



Social Science Tools



Graphic From: Schultz, P. W. (2013). Strategies for promoting proenvironmental behavior: Lots of tools but few instructions. *European Psychologist*.

Tools: Commitment



REGISTER YOUR EVENT

ORGANIZE AN EVENT

ATTEND AN EVENT

TAKE THE PLEDGE

FIND RECYCLING

The national recycling rate has increased every year for the past 30 years.

The current recycling rate is 34.5%.

JOIN US IN RECYCLING MORE.

For America Recycles Day 2015, 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.

Share. In the next month, I will encourage one family member or one friend to take the pledge.

Post. Take and post a photo of you recycling and enter the #Iwillrecycle sweepstakes.

Versión en Español

64,358 people have signed this pledge. Be the 64,359th!

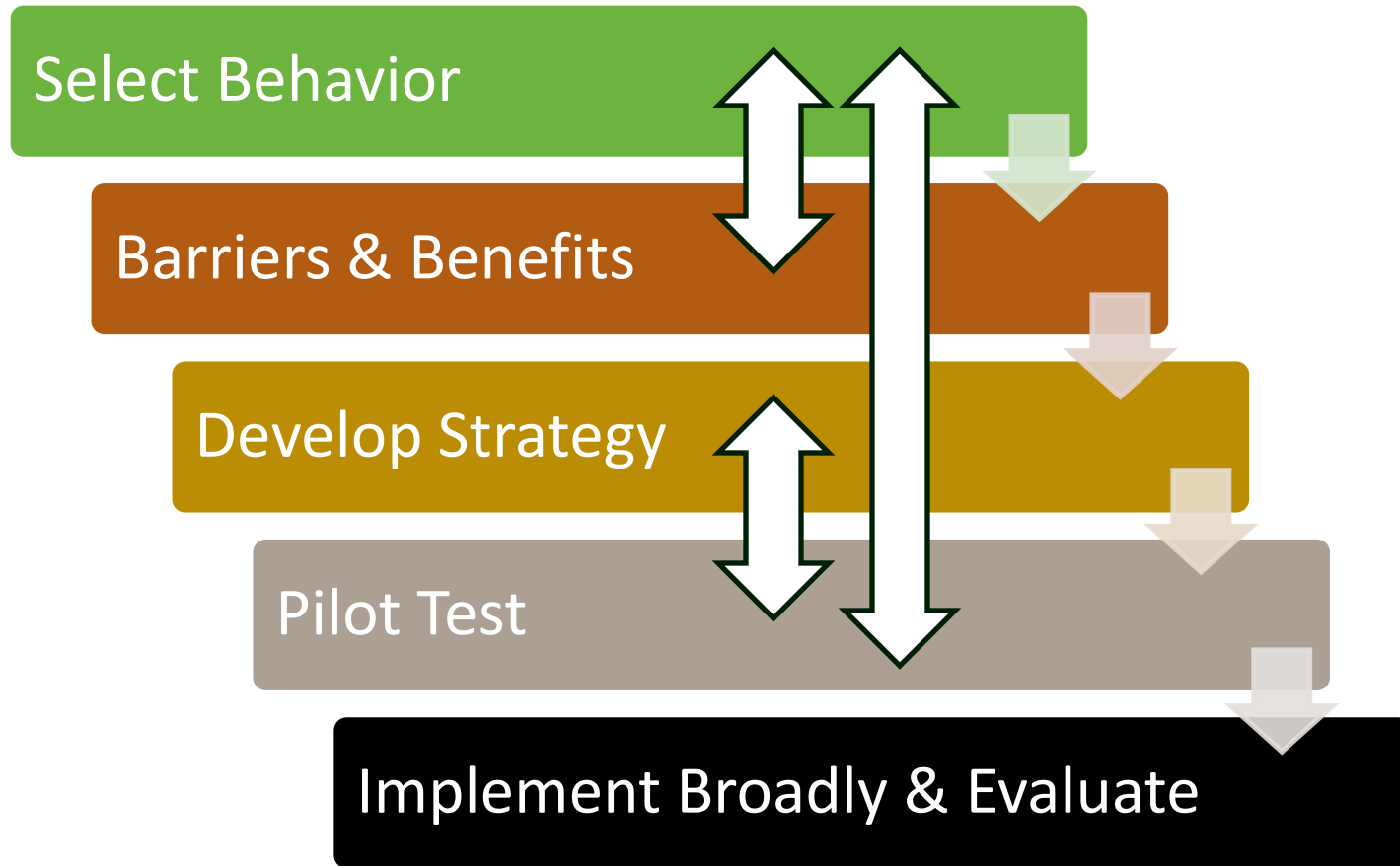
Tools: Convenience (Make it Easy)



Tools: Social Norms



Step 4: Pilot Testing



case study

Oceanside, California, U.S.A. Pet Waste Pick Up on Trail

Audience

Community surrounding trail

Barrier/Benefit Survey (Mail)

Forgot a bag/No trash can
Didn't care about law
Personal Responsibility

Strategies (Overcoming Barriers)

Signage
Bag Dispensers
Trash cans



SCOOP THE POOP



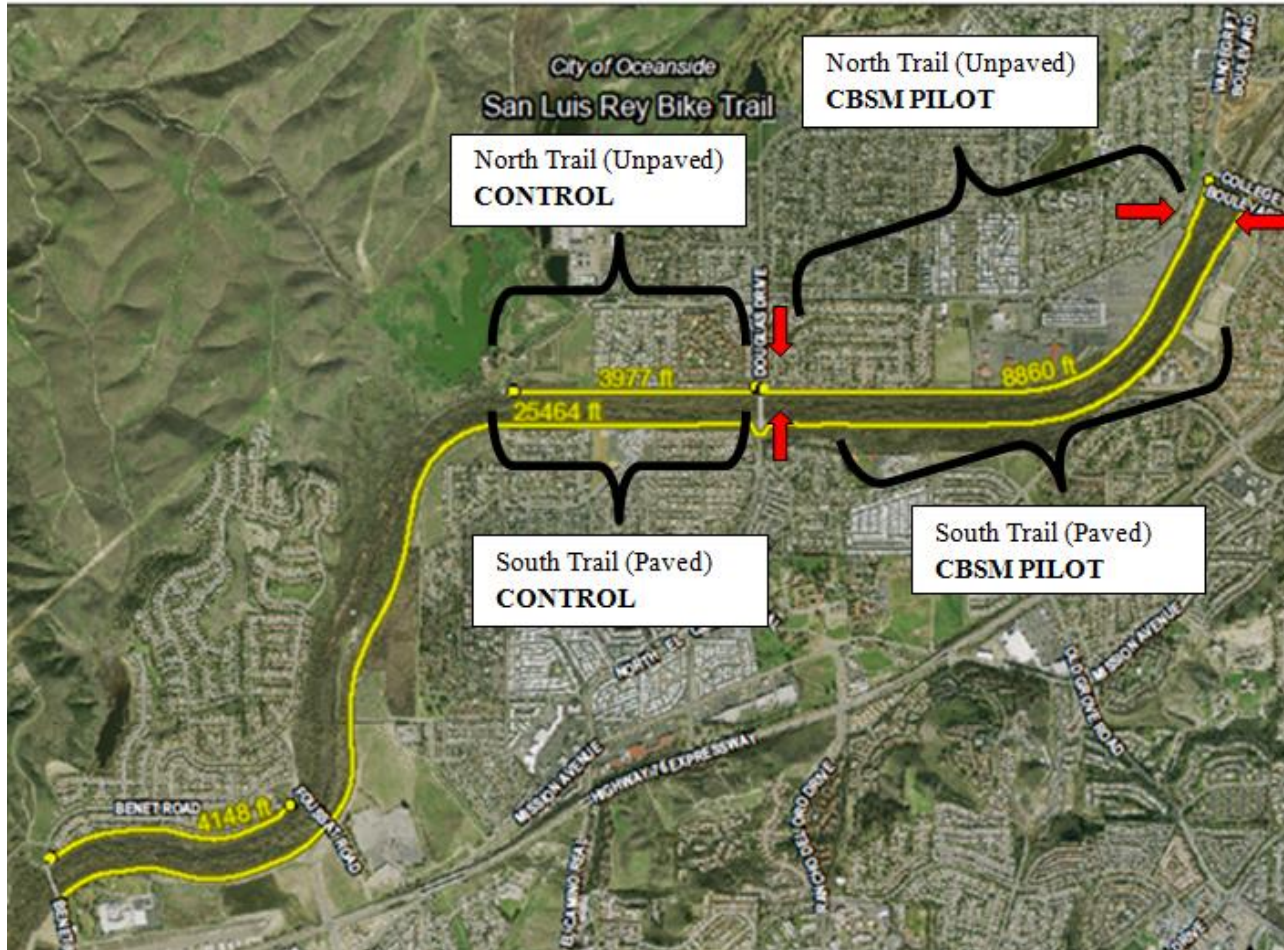
IT'S YOUR DOODY

Do your part to prevent water pollution.

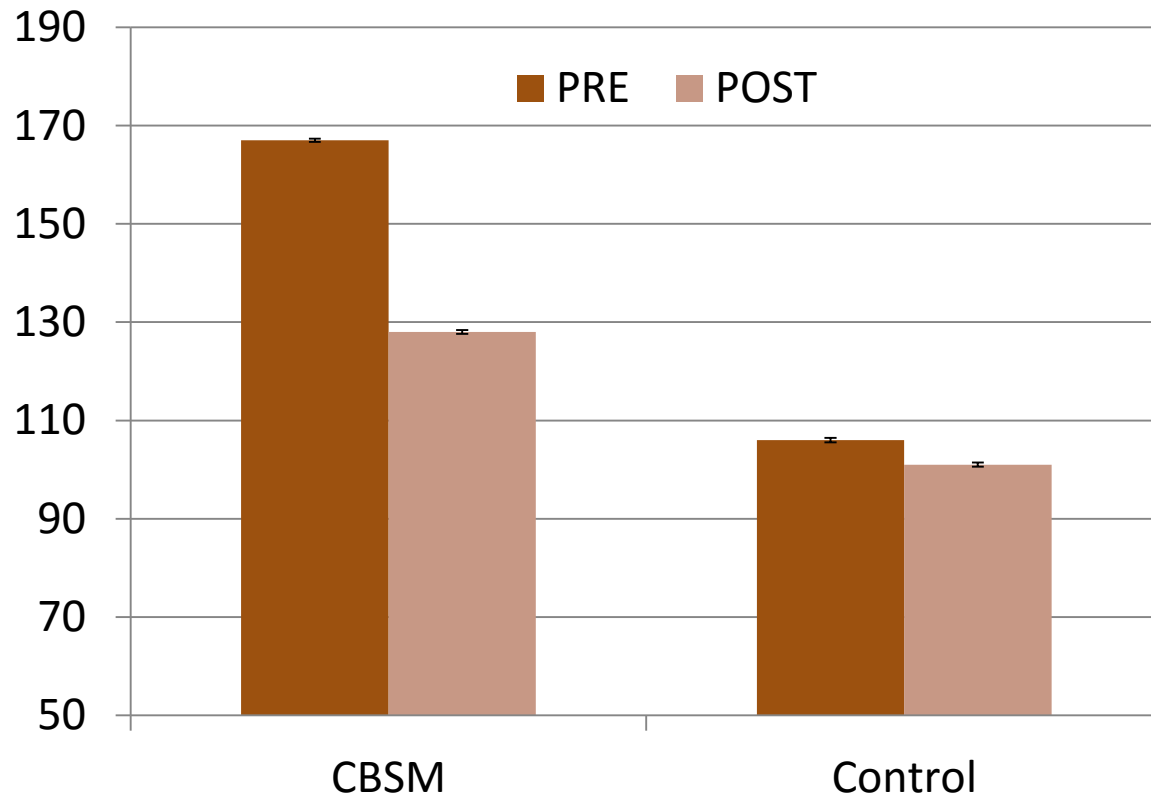
OCC 4.14, 4.16.2 & 40.2.1



Step 4: Pilot Test



- **23 %** reduction in piles of pet waste left behind on trail



Additional Resources

❑ Websites

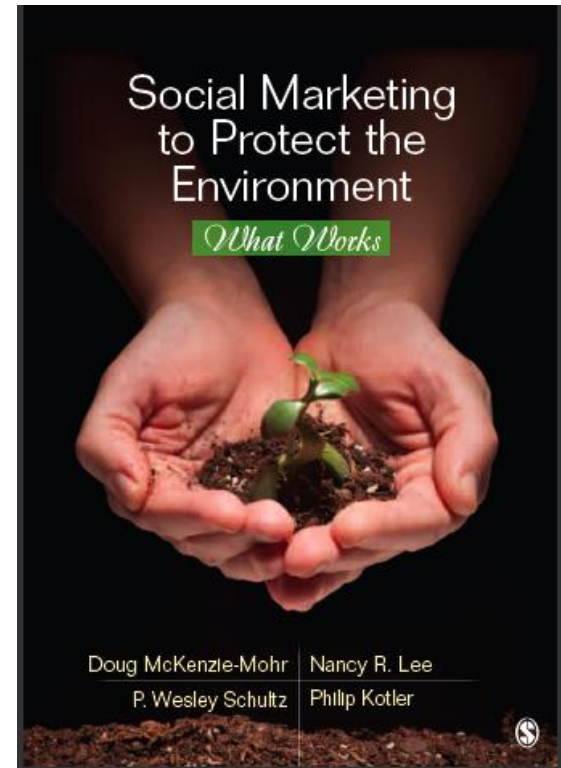
- ❑ www.cbsm.com
- ❑ www.toolsofchange.com

❑ Discussion Forums/List Serves

- ❑ Fostering Sustainable Behavior (www.cbsm.com)
- ❑ Georgetown Social Marketing Listserv

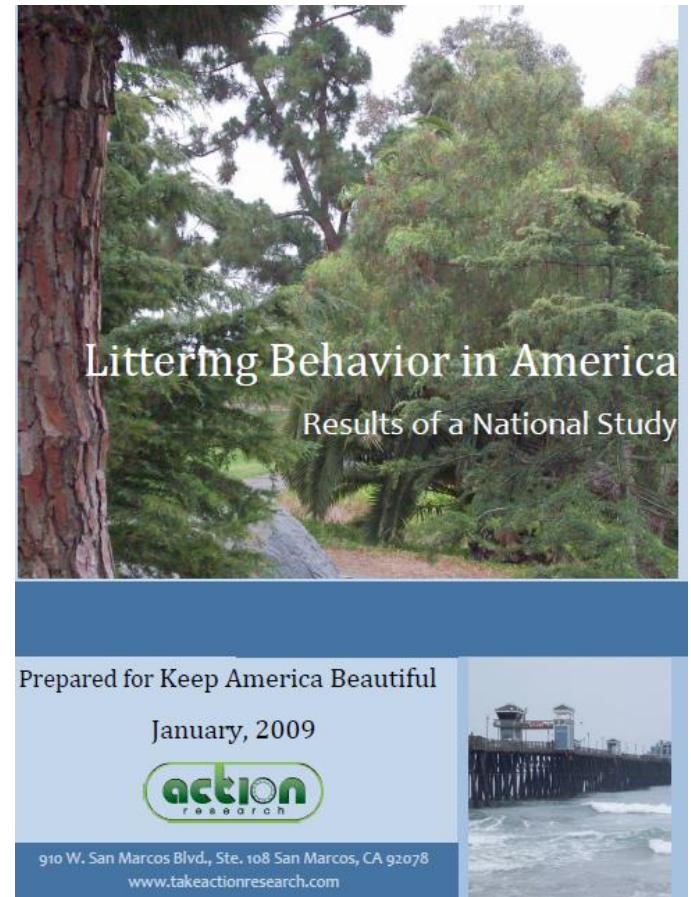
❑ Books

- ❑ Fostering Sustainable Behavior
- ❑ Social Marketing to Protect the Environment



Additional Resources

- ❑ Litter Research
 - ❑ Executive summary and full report
- ❑ Data collection
 - ❑ Observational Research
 - ❑ Intercept Interviews
 - ❑ Telephone Interviews
- ❑ www.kab.org/research09



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2009 Litter Research

Keep America Beautiful

Conclusions

- ❑ **Individuals are the primary source of litter**
 - ❑ 81% of observed littering was intentional
 - ❑ 90% of characterized litter could be traced back to individual's actions
 - ❑ 85% of littering behavior can be traced back to differences in individuals
- ❑ **Focus on younger individuals**
 - ❑ Actively involve youth in clean up and beautification activities
 - ❑ Employ commitment to increase personal responsibility to not litter
- ❑ **Improve context**
 - ❑ Decrease litter (litter begets litter)
 - ❑ Increase availability of trash bin and ashtrays
 - ❑ Increase public recycling bins

Conclusions

- ❑ No gender difference in littering
- ❑ Avoid messages that convey littering as the norm
- ❑ Messages should focus on:
 - ❑ Available and convenient receptacles
 - ❑ On-going community clean ups and beautification
 - ❑ Clean communities
 - ❑ Social disapproval of littering
 - ❑ Personal obligation not to litter
- ❑ Continued monitoring
 - ❑ Monitor litter types and disposal actions to evaluate programs