

# Frames & Messaging

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*Reducing Stigma, Increasing Participation, Closing the Meals Gap through Strategic Communications*

November 14, 2018 - Second Harvest Heartland Staff Workshop

# Introductions

# Today's Goals

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- Explore how values-based frames shape perceptions of target audiences and the rationale for CHEx frames
- Recap target audiences and communications goals CHEx has as part of its campaign (state level policy change; general public awareness; school district and local policy and programs change; increase in usage by those in need)
- Learn how CHEx frames and related messaging reduce self-stigmatization and stigmatization of those in need
- Practice with employing key messages in various ways to communicate with target audiences

# How Today Works

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*Step #1* - Conversation and Connection

*Step #2* - Presentation and Exploration

*Step #3* - Small Group Practice

*Step #4* - Large Group Reflection

# Reflection Round Robin

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“What do people say when you tell them what you do for a living/where you work?”

“What frustrates you the most when you talk about child hunger?”

# What is Strategic Communications?

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Based on research (*formal and informal*)

Contains cues designed to trigger certain patterns of thinking

Uses widely shared and understood values, and metaphors to explain causality

Is intentional, practiced, and effective

# Why Do We Need To Frame Messages?

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People reason from the what they already have in their minds: views, opinions, beliefs, experience

For public policy issues, this has been shaped by the media and political environments around them

If we don't address their existing frames, they can't take in what we have to say



# Existing Frames About Child Hunger

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Health Individualism

Self-Making

Crisis





# Existing Messaging About Child Hunger

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Emphasizes individual behavior and choices

“ All people deserve to eat, regardless of the choices they’ve made or the hand they were dealt in life. No one can grow, maintain good health, or reach their full potential if they are hungry. A surprising number of our neighbors are doing something they never imagined - visiting one of our agency partner’s food shelves for the first time in their lives

# Existing Messaging About Child Hunger

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Uses unframed  
data

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**\$1.6 billion/year** = The amount of money that the effects of hunger cost the state of Minnesota each year in healthcare, hospitalization, medication, education and other costs, including lost productivity and work and in school.

# Why reframe?

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We want to  
reframe messaging,  
so that the public...

Understands the problem

Knows that there are  
solutions

Takes action to support those  
solutions

Doesn't get stuck in their  
unhelpful thinking

# New Frame: Child Health

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## VALUES

Prosperity &  
Future  
*(Collective)*



## CAUSALITY

Simplifying  
Models of Brain  
Architecture &  
Toxic Stress



## SOLUTION

Yours goes here!!

# Values of ‘Prosperity’ and ‘Future’

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Gives people the “why they should care”

Shown through research to increase support for policies that improve child well-being, including low-income programs

Brings responsibility to all of us, rather than the “bad parent”

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Healthy child development is a foundation for community and economic development.”

“

Our future economic prosperity depends on children growing up to be healthy, productive adults.”

# Causality and Simplifying Models

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Help people understand WHY it's important that children have healthy, nutritious diets

Shows the ways that hunger impacts healthy growth and development

Addresses the belief that “adversity makes you stronger”

## Brain Architecture Key Points

- It's a sequential process,
- Brains are built in childhood,
- Experiences and environments affect developing brains

## Toxic Stress Key Point

- Highly stressful conditions like hunger activate chronic stress responses that damage children's bodies and brains and affect them well into adulthood

# Solutions

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Often, advocates bury policy solutions after paragraphs (or pages) discussing the problem. Solutions should be embedded early and often.

Important to impart the information that social problems have solutions

Want to avoid sense of inevitability (“The poor are always with us”)

Should fit into the new engagement (*from the value*) and understanding (*from the models*)

# Re-Frames and Stigma

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Stigma is the natural results of the widely-held frames of *Health Individualism* and *Self-Making*

CHEX frames address stigma in three ways:

- Including environments (*built, policy, legal, social*)
- Explaining causality
- Invoking shared values



**What questions do I have about what I just heard?**

# Let's Practice!

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Step #1 - Find a partner

Step #2 - Grab a lovely marker and a piece of flip chart paper

Step #3 - Review your assignment with your partner

Step #4 - Grab your frames & talking points cheat sheet

Step #5 - Complete the Assignment

**Mix | Max**

# Final Reflection

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- What was challenging about undertaking this assignment?
- What questions arose for you?
- What felt new?