



CREATING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER IN MINNEAPOLIS

When it comes to creating healthy and active communities, small efforts can add up to big results. In Minneapolis, the tide of change is already rolling through neighborhoods like Keewaydin, Phillips and Near North. Thanks to the good works of citizen leaders who are taking steps to improve the health of the community, everyone benefits, wherever they live, work, learn or play.

Neighbors at Glendale Townhomes in southeast Minneapolis are harvesting fresh vegetables from their new community garden to feed residents and supplement their on-site food shelf. Moms in the Keewaydin neighborhood are applying their knowledge of nutrition to create a cross-cultural healthy cooking club. Local employer The Sartell Group is stocking its company kitchen with healthy ingredients for breakfast and lunch.

Lyndale Community School kids and parents are leading a "walking school bus." A North Minneapolis convenience store owner is stocking more fresh produce along with recipes to inspire healthy eating.

These are among the many success stories from everyday heroes who are working to improve access to healthier food choices and opportunities for physical activity in their neighborhoods, schools, and businesses. These stories represent the true essence of community building – hands-on solutions that are implemented close to home, bringing people together to make positive, long-lasting and healthy changes. The City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support and its partners recognized the power of these success stories to inspire others and developed a media campaign to highlight them.

BACKGROUND

Obesity is a growing epidemic, and in Minnesota, it is estimated that more than 60 percent of residents are overweight or obese, 31 percent do not meet federal guidelines for physical activity, and 85 percent do not meet the federal dietary guidelines for fruit and vegetable intake.¹

Despite this, there is great opportunity to affect positive change in policy, systems, environments and attitudes regarding healthy activity and nutrition among Minnesotans. As part of the national Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) program, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Minneapolis Department of Health and

Family Support (MDHFS), and Olmsted County Public Health Services (OCPHS) were asked to develop, implement, and evaluate a media campaign to support community efforts related to obesity prevention. By launching a media campaign that motivates residents to take action and advocate for these systemic changes, lasting impact can be created and positively affect the health of residents for years to come. Media campaigns, based on market research and targeted to priority audiences, are an affordable and effective method for changing behaviors and motivating people into action. Research has found that mass media campaigns can, by themselves, change health behavior and that the most successful health behavior change movements feature a mass media component along with community interventions.



¹ "Physical Activity and Healthy Eating in Minnesota: Addressing Root Causes of Obesity," May 2010. Minnesota Department of Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota.

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

The Minnesota CPPW media team, consisting of the three health departments and Haberman, a Minneapolis-based strategic communications firm, worked closely together to develop, implement, and evaluate the "Making it Better" media campaign, including all of the creative work, guided by the firm's 'storytelling' approach to communicating value and encouraging participation in the campaign. The Making it Better campaign, which took place concurrently in Minneapolis and Olmsted County, was a community initiative that brought people together to discover, share and celebrate stories of people taking action to provide others with greater access to healthier foods and new opportunities for physical activity. The campaign demonstrated how schools, neighborhoods and workplaces are driving community change and making healthy choices the easy choices.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Everyone can play a part in creating places and practices that support healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic health problems such as diabetes and heart disease. The Making it Better campaign set out to increase awareness and support for a movement of sustainable, systemic change in the areas of increased physical activity and healthy eating (or food). Specifically, the campaign looked to support successful community efforts encompassing policy and environmental interventions for reducing chronic disease and improving the health of residents.

The campaign sought to:

- Increase the belief that eating healthy foods and increasing physical activity are important health issues requiring community action.
- Build support for and demonstrate the importance of community initiatives which support eating healthy foods and engaging in physical activity.
- Provide ways for people to get involved and take action to support healthy living.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In creating the Making it Better campaign, there was a conscious effort to keep it community-centric, connective and affirmative in order to inspire the audience and drive positive, sustainable change. The campaign intentionally avoided individually

focused communications and negative, fear-based messaging. The campaign leveraged the presence of "signs of progress" that are evident throughout Minneapolis, signs ranging from positive changes at specific locations to community-wide practices that promote health. Initiatives improving the health of the community deserve a seal of approval because they are badges of progress and milestones on the journey towards greater access and choices for healthier living.

Based on these ideas, three strategic campaign drivers emerged:

1. **INSPIRE** target audiences and raise awareness for people supporting access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities.
2. **CONNECT** healthy food and physical activity efforts in order to build a deeper understanding of their relationship and impact in creating a healthy community.
3. Motivate **ACTION** by encouraging people to identify and participate in healthy food and physical activity efforts.

AUDIENCES

While the Making it Better campaign was designed to appeal to a wide cross-section of individuals, including business owners, educators and decision-makers, the target audience was local activists known as "community connectors." These highly influential individuals are key gatekeepers and disseminators of information on a community level, and they are vocal and visible catalysts for local change. Additionally, this group is more populous among the community than community leaders – 1 in 5 – giving the campaign a larger target audience.

A secondary audience included residents of specific low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Communications were tailored to engage the secondary audience in a variety of ways, including visual imagery and translating materials into several languages.

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS: A PROFILE

- Active in their neighborhood, community or school organizations.
- Gather in public forums, where they share interests with other community members.
- Passionate about local and neighborhood news.
- Highly social and influential among peers.
- Educated and interested in community activities and events.
- Representative of approximately 1 in 5 of all adults.

Creating a brand identity

With the audience and campaign drivers in mind, the campaign development started with a branding and naming exploration to create the core visual and verbal identity.

Key considerations for naming/branding included:

- Focus on "community" rather than corporate branding.
- Must be easy to say and remember.
- Must have broad elasticity and adaptability to encompass a wide range of activities.
- Must be positive in tone.
- Must work to signal progress or change.

After careful consideration, the team narrowed down 18 initial possibilities for campaign names to just two finalists. Unfortunately, initial testing and research revealed challenges with both options. Haberman developed four additional options that were tested with local community members, including representatives from communities of color and members of the local Community Leadership Team. The top choice was "Making it Better: Creating a healthier community together," for its ability to demonstrate a continuation of progress, to initiate a challenge such as "you can do this" or "you can make a difference," and to allow for the sharing/telling of stories of those who are "making it better."

Phase 1: Launching the campaign

Following name approval, the team gathered information and resources while preparing for the campaign's launch. In Minneapolis, Haberman worked with MDHFS to identify three "charter" stories that featured local heroes making their communities healthier, documenting the stories through photography and narrative writing. Telling the stories of people who are doing great things in their communities was selected as a tactic to achieve the first two strategic campaign drivers – inspiring our audience and raising awareness of those making changes, while connecting healthy food and physical activity efforts to demonstrate their impact on communities. The team used these charter stories to create the initial print and radio advertising concepts, as well as featuring them on the campaign website. Haberman and MDHFS selected stories that best represented diverse communities, illustrated tangible actions that could be replicated by others, and that supported policy, systems and environmental change strategies.

The first phase of the campaign launched in August 2011, with the focus on introducing the campaign and brand, while also beginning to educate the

public about ways to make their communities healthier. Media elements included a press release and active outreach to local reporters, print ads in local community newspapers, poster ads at 50 bus shelter locations across Minneapolis, and radio underwriting sponsorships on local radio stations KFAI and KMOJ. These mediums were selected for their ability to reach our audiences, specifically communities of color, in a highly targeted manner. For example, print ads were translated for La Prensa, a Latino and Hispanic newspaper. As well, KFAI is a volunteer-based radio station that shares community information and programming for those of diverse racial, social and economic backgrounds, and KMOJ serves as a key information source for the African-American community and utilizes community members to host its broadcast. Including advertising in these local outlets helped build community pride among those featured and those who know them.



A campaign website – makingitbettermn.org – was created to house more detailed stories of those featured in the paid ads, provide more information about the Making it Better campaign and serve as a one-stop-shop for those who were inspired and looking to get involved. The website offered local community resources for those looking to take action in their community, a page to share ideas for making their community healthier, and other ideas of simple things residents could do in their neighborhood, school or workplace.

Phase 2: The Making it Better Challenge

The second phase of the campaign launched October 1, 2011, with the Making it Better Challenge, activating

the third strategic campaign driver – motivate action by encouraging people to identify and participate in healthy food and physical activity efforts. Haberman and the team chose a “challenge” approach because it would activate and inspire target audiences, while helping identify and highlight additional success stories to share in a later phase of the campaign. This phase shifted the messaging from telling the stories of others to “tell us how you are making your community healthier.”

To drive story collection and entries in the Challenge, new print and radio ads were created with a call-to-action that encouraged community members to share their story. These ads ran throughout the month, along with targeted online advertising. In addition, a direct mail piece was sent to more than 25,000 small businesses, churches, nonprofits, health and nutrition directors at schools, and organizations. Through these channels, the Challenge invited Minneapolis and Olmsted County residents to share how they were “making it better” by providing access to healthy foods or opportunities for physical activity in their neighborhood, school or workplace. Entries were submitted online via the Making it Better campaign website, which had been updated to include an online entry form and page to feature all of the entries received.

“It’s important to me to take care of my employees. Companies will find that being able to promote a healthier environment is going to pay off ten-fold. Employee retention is the biggest key you will find. Being in a healthy work environment increase job satisfaction and improves morale – people want to come to work here.”

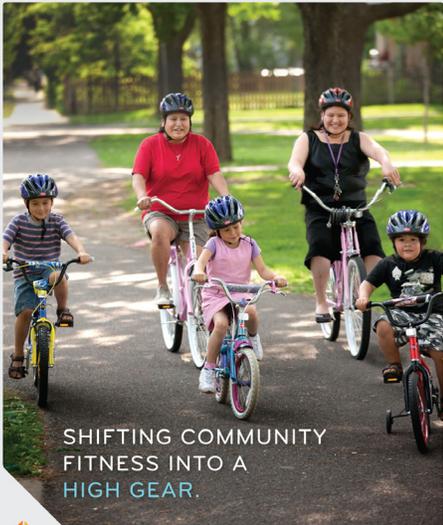
- Pam Sartell, CEO and owner, The Sartell Group

To supplement these efforts, the team partnered with Grassroots Solutions, Inc., an organizing consultancy specializing in community engagement and mobilization. Engaging with the target audiences using a one-to-one “grassroots” approach was essential to the success of the Making it Better campaign, as motivating individual action on a hyper-local level is extremely difficult through mass communication. Grassroots Solutions provided a Making it Better presence at local events, collecting stories of community members on site that were later added to the campaign website. This presence was critical in helping community members learn about the campaign in a simplified manner and connect their own actions with creating healthier communities. This introspection allowed community members to gain a deeper understanding of the campaign’s messaging than if they were simply told or informed about the campaign.

All qualified entrants were featured on the Making it Better website and entered into a weekly drawing to win a prize valued up to \$500. Prizes included both experiential and physical options that tied into the campaign’s key messages of healthy eating and physical activity, such as ski/snowboard passes, cookbooks and farmers market gift certificates. Three winners were drawn weekly in each community for four weeks. Entrants were also encouraged to share their entries via Facebook and Twitter with those in their social networks to collect votes for a chance to win the grand prize – their story featured as part of a new set of ads that debuted in January 2012. The grand prizewinner was chosen from both Minneapolis and Olmsted County submissions.

Phase 3: Spotighting healthy change

The final phase of the campaign returned to the first two strategic campaign drivers and featured three new campaign ads of local heroes identified through the Making it Better Challenge. Campaign messaging re-emphasized the power of local efforts driving healthy changes in Minneapolis communities, demonstrating signs of progress and inspiring others to take action. Ads ran in the media outlets featured at the beginning of the campaign to create a continuous stream of messaging and inspiration.



SHIFTING COMMUNITY FITNESS INTO A HIGH GEAR.



Making it Better
CREATING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY TOGETHER

It's not just a bicycle. It's a library shuttle, park explorer and delivery vehicle. For the moms at Little Earth of United Tribes, the new bike sharing program is also an opportunity to spend more quality time with their kids and increase physical activity. Take a look around your community. Are there ways you can help drive change? Share your ideas at makingitbettermn.org.

Made possible by funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

RESULTS

Advertising

The Making it Better paid media campaign generated more than 13.7 million impressions among Minneapolis residents through print, radio and out-of-home advertising, which are indexed high as information resources among community connectors. The paid advertising campaign also yielded more than 4,600 visits to the Making it Better website; the average time spent on the site was nearly two minutes.

Earned media

Making it Better garnered more than 390,000 earned media impressions, with news stories appearing in MinnPost.com, on Kare 11 morning news and on community sites such as Meet Minneapolis.

Social media

Facebook and Twitter pages were active throughout the campaign, generating 694 followers in Minneapolis.

The Making it Better Challenge

The Challenge resulted in 80 submissions from Minneapolis community members. The most popular submission – HUGE Theater, which rewards volunteers and patrons for biking to the theater – received 550 votes. Online ads during this time generated more than 17 million impressions and nearly 3,000 clicks.

THE MAKING IT BETTER CHALLENGE IS NOW UNDERWAY.
ENTER FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN WEEKLY PRIZES.

If you're involved in efforts that improve the health of your community, share your story today. It's your chance to win one of 24 prize packages. Prizes include:

- Hiking gear for you and five friends
- Day pass to ski, skate or snowboard
- Gift certificates to farmers markets

ENTER THE CHALLENGE

Focus groups

Campaign evaluation proved complex given the highly targeted efforts implemented and the time and cost associated with measurement tools, such as surveys, to reach our specific audiences. Given this, two focus groups were conducted to gauge community reaction and assess the campaign's perceived value among Latino and African-American community members. The results indicated that while the print ads did not fully resonate and the campaign messaging was difficult to grasp, two of the print ads were visually communicative and effective – a family biking in the Little Earth Community and healthy, fresh foods in the kitchen at The Sartell Group. These ads clearly communicated tangible actions that could easily be taken to create healthier communities.

Additional key findings included:

- The Latino group was clearly dealing with immigrant issues and stress around finances, time constraints, language barriers and school-age children.
- The African American group was more informed about healthy habits and interested in helping solve issues around poor health, including using health and nutrition as an agent for getting young people more involved in their community.
- Imagery and communication messages are best received by both groups when placed in a cultural context and using imagery that is reflective of their community.
- Both groups identified a need to overcome cultural barriers that impact how they view and approach healthy behaviors.
- Communications for both groups should be inspirational and provide clear, educational how-to information versus being directive.

While the focus groups provided valuable insights regarding how to best reach and engage communities of color, the sample size was not significant enough to extrapolate to the broader audience. In addition, anecdotal insights revealed positive impact on those that did encounter the print advertising. For example, Lowery Food Market owner Bassem Kablaoui reported an increase in traffic to his store and received several comments from patrons on having seen him in the ads at bus stops. As well, The Sartell Group received interest from local media regarding their efforts to promote employee wellness after a reporter saw the ad in a community newspaper.

LESSONS LEARNED

One of the key lessons learned from the Making it Better campaign was the power of identifying and developing real life stories that can be shared. The ripple effect of simple, compelling stories that pass from one person to another is evident through tangible and anecdotal results. Stories proved to be a very successful tool for communicating with target audiences and for presenting a complex topic – community change – with simple, tangible examples.

"We are very excited to be the winner of [one of the weekly prizes]... the gift certificate to Gopher Sport will enhance physical activity for the community and that has been one of our primary goals. Thank you!"
- Jenny Bradt, community member



**A HEALTHY NEW TAKE ON
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.**

Making it Better
CREATING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY TOGETHER

First she founded a business. Then Pam Sartell found a way to make it better. Employee retention? Fewer sick days? Group camaraderie? Pam stocks the fridge with healthy ingredients for breakfast and lunch. And she makes sure employees enjoy ergonomic workspaces and breaks for fitness. It's working. Learn more and get inspired at makingitbettermn.org.

Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Additional learnings include:

- Story collection efforts were successful, but required a large amount of time and resources.
- Featuring local community members in real settings in advertisements proved effective, helping turn ad participants into ambassadors for the campaign.
- Collecting stories at events was successful and an important element in the Making it Better Challenge.
- Earned media was challenging to secure because community papers often wanted pre-produced content.
- Utilizing Facebook ads had a large impact in generating awareness about the campaign as well as participation in the Challenge. Given the opportunity, we would recommend starting these ads earlier in the campaign.
- Challenge prizes were enticing and well chosen, helping to drive interest and also providing rewards that allowed entrants to further their efforts to make their community healthier.
- Social media was effective in reaching community members and for supporting the Challenge, but did not produce the level of interaction and conversation desired.
- Evaluating and measuring the media campaign posed a challenge as there was not an efficient tool for capturing impressions of the campaign and the actions taken as a result. However, specific tactics such as the Making it Better Challenge and social media sites provided areas for measuring campaign actions and engagement.

"Thank you so much and thanks for the Making it Better [campaign] itself. There are already some great stories shared!" - Tim Massaro, community member

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.makingitbettermn.org to learn more, or email health.familysupport@minneapolisismn.gov to learn more about how your workplace, school or neighborhood can support healthier lifestyles.