

Understanding and Changing Public Littering Behavior

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Why do people litter?

Understanding the litterbug.

A Few Reasons People Litter

- Peer pressure
- Lack of easy access to garbage receptacles
- Anonymity
- No perceived punishment
- Anti-authority
- Someone else will take care of it
- Education (especially children)



Broken Windows Theory

- Signs of disorder (such as broken windows) cause more disorder
- When we observe the violation of a social norm we are more likely to violate that norm ourselves (herd mentality)
- Broken window = More broken windows
- Litter = More litter



Movie Theater Syndrome

- Why do some people leave their garbage in their seats after going to the movies?
 - Anonymous (dark)
 - Someone else's job
 - The movie theater is not their house



What can we do to change littering behavior in Pittsburgh?

Developing a comprehensive strategic anti-litter
campaign

Developing a Comprehensive and Strategic Behavior Change Campaign

- 1. Must not be top down - Involve the community from the start
- 2. Develop a comprehensive campaign
 - Public-Private-Government
 - Balance Prevention and Punitive Responses
- 3. Collect good data
- 4. Be creative



Audience and Pittsburgh's Unique Neighborhoods

- Must not be top down and hierarchical
 - Need to involve the community at the very start of any campaign
- Different motivations work for different groups
- Specifically target youth
- Power of competition
 - PRC – “Crying Steeler Fan” Anti-Litter Video Contest



Just Having a Campaign Helps

- States with slogans and a campaign to fight litter score better on the DOT American State Litter Scorecard

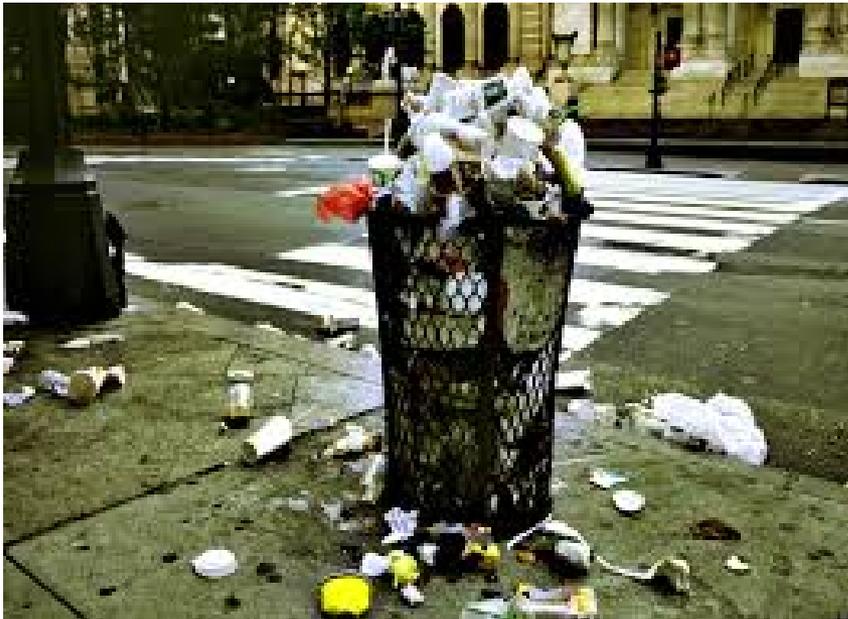


Public and Private Partnerships

- McDonalds in Sweden gave away free cheeseburgers, hamburgers, and Big Macs when you brought in a certain number of recyclable cans



Need Preventative and Punitive Responses

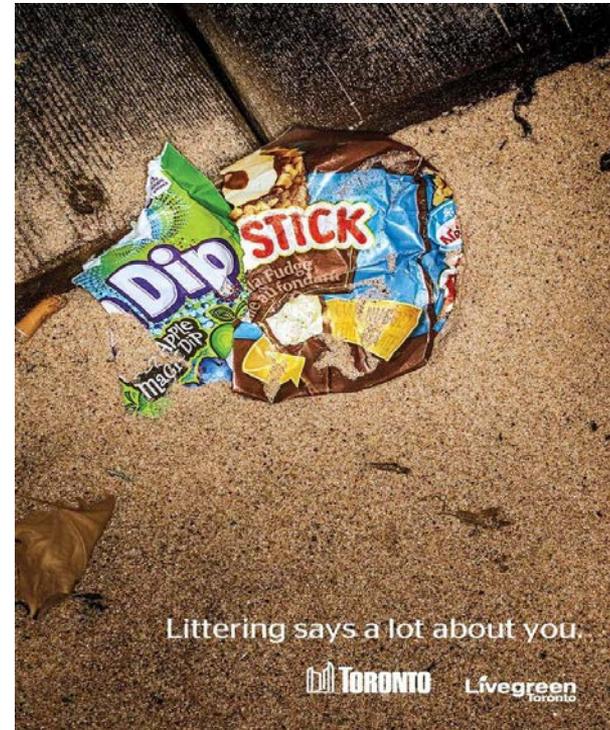


“ Knowledge is Power ”

- Data collection is really important
- Sometimes a problem is solved just by shifting a garbage can

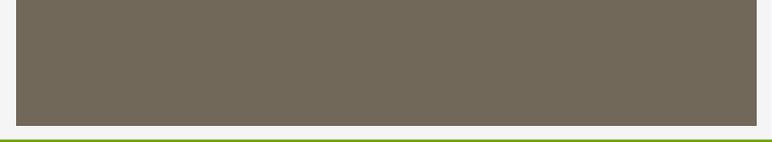


Creative Toronto Example



Hong Kong Example





Why bother with an anti-litter campaign?

Why This Matters

- Direct costs
- Connections to increase in crime
- Public health and safety
- Civic pride and community identity
- Ecological impact
- Future generations

