



National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health

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(<https://ncceh.ca/>).

Improving Food Safety in Private Homes by Marketing Behaviour, not Information

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Describe what you did in a few sentences (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?).

Goal:

- To improve food safety practices in private homes
(a performance expectation of the provincial Food Safety Core Public Health Model Program)

Strategy:

- Information about food safety is already widely available and yet Canadians continue to experience food-borne illness. Therefore, providing more of the same type of information may increase educational awareness but is unlikely to change behaviours.
- We selected a “social marketing design” in order to influence a change in specific behaviours related to food safety practices in private homes.
- Social marketers focus on:

- Where people are in relation to a particular behaviour?
- What factors cause this positioning?
- How can they be moved in the desired direction?¹
- Good social marketing:
 - Sets behavioural goals.
 - Uses consumer research and pretesting.
 - Makes judicious use of theory.
 - Is insight driven.
 - Applies the principles of segmentation and targeting.
 - Thinks beyond communications.
 - Creates attractive motivational exchanges with the target group.
 - Pays careful attention to the competition faced by the desired behaviour.²

Partners:

- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Eat Smart BC
- BC Chicken Marketing Board
- BC Dairy Foundation
- BC Centre for Disease Control
- The Social Agency

Specific Behaviour:

- "Buy and use a food thermometer"

Target Audience:

- Women between the ages of 20 – 45 years in the lower mainland.
- Baseline study showed that women do the majority of cooking in households.
- Secondary audience is parents of young children since they prepare food for children.

¹ Social Marketing: Why should the Devil have all the best tunes. Gerard Hastings, 2007.

² Based on NSMC Social Marketing Benchmarks, <http://nsms.org.uk>

Why was this project/strategy significant? Or, What was the most significant change because of this project/strategy?

Our approach focused on improving food safety in private homes by marketing behaviour, not information. The project is designed upon a social marketing framework and is comprised of multiple activities, some of which involve social media (website, Twitter, Facebook, Quiz Game, YouTube Videos. Other activities include thermometer, magnet, and handouts distributed to low income women, and community outreach.

As an interim assessment, the social media components were evaluated to determine if the social media activities were reaching our target audience, delivering our key messages, and were likely to contribute toward our behaviour change goals.

We plan to evaluate whether there is a change in behaviour in comparison to our baseline survey.

Would you have changed anything?

- Increase our target audience's exposure by supplementing social media activities with more geographically targeted, community-based activities.
- Develop additional strategies to reduce the "cost" and "convenience" barriers to our behaviour change goals – through either social media or community-based activities.
- Develop and market test messaging which promotes maximizing food quality/taste and shelf-life or cold stored food as the benefits of using thermometers.

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