Harnessing Our Work To Create Change

Kelly D. Brownell

How Good Are We, Really, At Creating Change?

Creating Impact From Knowledge

Knowledge Produced To Serve Society --> Society Being Served

A Key Purpose

The Frustration

Academic work = small audiences
Research misses key audiences
Poor links of scholarship & policy
Typical Attribution
Policy makers are antagonistic
They don’t care
They care but are uninformed
We do not get the word out
Anti-science spin

Slow Movement in a Fast World
Slow
Poorly communicated
Unresponsive
Programmatic only
Conflicted
Indecipherable jargon

Linking Scholarship To Public Policy
How We Addressed A Fundamental Problem

Making Our Work Matter
Research → ???
  Social Change
  Policy Change

Hopeful (Wishful) Thinking
Research
  Scholars
  Social Change
  Policy Change

Legislators
Regulators
Courts
Press
Public
NGOs
Industry

Social Change
Policy Change
Strategic Science and Policy Change

- Menu labeling
- Food marketing
- Soda taxes
- An Attorney General

Can We Create a Virtuous Cycle of Solutions?

Identify Change Agents

Develop Strategic Questions

Scholarship

Communications

Case 1

The Issue:

Industry reaction to labeling law
Case 2

The Issue:

Children’s Food Marketing

The Best Dozen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cereal Brand</th>
<th>TV Advertising</th>
<th>Adver-gaming</th>
<th>Other Youth Websites</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bunnies</td>
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<tr>
<td>EnviroKids Organic</td>
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<td>Kix</td>
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<td>Life</td>
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<td>Hannah Montana</td>
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<td>Clifford Crunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mighty Bites</td>
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<td>Honey Sunshine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Wild Puffs</td>
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<td>Mini Wheats</td>
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None

The Worst Dozen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cereal Brand</th>
<th>TV Advertising</th>
<th>Adver-gaming</th>
<th>Other Youth Websites</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reese’s Puffs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corn Pops</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucky Charms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Grahams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cinnamon Toast Crunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cap’n Crunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Count Chocula</td>
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<td>Trix</td>
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<td>Smorz</td>
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http://www.cerealfacts.org/
Predicted Defense

“Food does not become nutrition until it is eaten.”

“Children like the taste of ready-to-eat cereals and are therefore more likely to eat breakfast.”

Celeste Clark, Ph.D., Kellogg Company
Susan J. Ciocectt, Ph.D., R.D., General Mills
— J Amer Dietetic Assn, 2008

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Effects of Serving High-Sugar Cereals on Children’s Breakfast-Eating Behavior

Research

Legislation

Regulation

Legal Action

Press

Public Opinion

NGOs

Industry

Social Change

Policy Change

Case 3

The Issue:

High consumption of SSBs

Why Sugared Beverages?

• Single greatest source of added sugar
• Completely empty calories
• Poor calorie compensation
• Addictive properties of sugar
• Gratuitous addition of caffeine
• Clear proof of harm
Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

Sugar

Sweetened Beverages

Liquid Calories

Fructose

Glycemic Load

Weight Gain

Insulin Resistance

B-cell Dysfunction

Metabolic Syndrome

Diabetes

Metabolic Syndrome

Syndrome

Hypertension

Visceral Fat

Atherogenic Dyslipidemia

CVD Risk

from obesity and diabetes, the strongest effects are seen in studies with the best methods (e.g., longitudinal and randomized trials) and the conclusion of studies show that...
Revenues for California

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Super-Sweetened Beverages*</th>
<th>Gallons per year</th>
<th>Tax Revenues per year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft drinks</td>
<td>390,873,537</td>
<td>$487,518,127</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fruit drinks</td>
<td>152,049,221</td>
<td>$194,623,003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports drinks</td>
<td>113,340,710</td>
<td>$145,976,308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ready to drink tea</td>
<td>76,180,751</td>
<td>$101,351,156</td>
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<td>Energy drinks</td>
<td>109,222,669</td>
<td>$130,805,016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flavored water</td>
<td>12,378,707</td>
<td>$15,716,348</td>
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<td>Ready to drink coffee</td>
<td>12,630,275</td>
<td>$16,782,151</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>859,798,710</td>
<td>$1,166,467,384</td>
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http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/sodatax.aspx

Case 4

The Issue:
Misleading labeling

Richard Blumenthal
Senator from Connecticut
Former CT Attorney General
Key Dates

Critical NY Times article Sept 4, 2009
Conn. Atty General Investigation Oct 14, 2009
FDA Call Oct 20, 2009
Smart Choices Closed Down Oct 23, 2009

A Stunning Public Health Victory

Should Academics Be Doing This?

Multiple Effects of Malnutrition

Overall
* weight loss
* muscle mass depletion
* weakness & apathy
* depression
* inability to work

Symptoms
* malabsorption
* indigestion
* skin lesions
* anemia
* neurologic issues
* immune compromise

Body Systems
* gastrointestinal
* blood cells
* skin
* nervous system
* immune function

Health Impacts
* pellagra
* rickets
* beriberi
* scurvy
* death

One Micronutrient Deficiency

Vitamin A deficiency - weakens immune systems of children, increasing vulnerability to disease. Vitamin A deficiency increases the risk of dying from diarrhea, measles and malaria by 20-24%. Highly elevated risk for blindness.

http://www.wfp.org/sites/default/files/introduction/hunger_web.asp?sectionfiltered=1&sub_sectionfiltered=1
Alfred Sommer
School of Public Health
Johns Hopkins

1970s - documented that vitamin A deficiency linked to:
- measles
- diarrhea
- blindness

Conducted small trials of supplementation

Sommer Then Connected
Science with Policy

- 23-34% drop in deaths from illnesses like measles & diarrhea
- Prevented 400,000 cases of blindness/yr
- Saved as many as 1,000,000 deaths/yr
- Annual cost - $0.50 /child/yr (age 6 mo – 5 yr)
- Every dollar invested returns $100

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Soda, and USDA Policy
Who Benefits?
JAMA, 2011

The Trans-Fat Ban — Food Regulation and Long-Term Health