

SuperHEROs

Health Environmentalist Reaching Others

Kentucky Public Health Leadership Institute Scholars:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The SuperHEROs (Health Environmentalist Reaching Others), KPHLI team decided to implement this education piece for environmental health specialists (EHS). This idea arose from the concerns of the internal environmental staff they have brought to the forefront. The main concern is the lack of the public's knowledge for services provided by environmental health specialist. Through research and questionnaires, we developed a plan to assess the depth of the problem. These assessments help decide how we would approach these concerns and what deliverables would be the most benefit to solving the problem.

Many educational deliverables were developed including a public service announcement presented by Dr. Adewale Troutman, Director, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness. Posters, magnets, cards, and brochures were designed and produced to promote environmental health services awareness. Many of the deliverables will be displayed in local government buildings and will be readily available for staff to facilitate distribution to the public. In addition to the deliverables produced, Louisville Metro's Mayor, Jerry Abramson proclaimed an Environmental Health Specialist Awareness day. An environmental health week will be observed once a year in May continuing to promote service awareness.

This project was made possible through partnerships with University of Louisville graphic art design students, Metro TV, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness communications department, environmental staff and their supervisors.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

This project originated from the concerns of Environmental Health Specialist. Their concerns encompassed the fact that the public is not aware of the services an Environmental Health Specialist provides and there are many misconceptions in regards to the duties performed by the EHS.

There has never been an abundance of resources for education and awareness for the public. We do have a health educator on staff but she takes on many different roles in the department and is not solely dedicated to the environmental team. The Louisville Metro area, consisting of 800,000 residences, is great deal for any one person to educate. We have also lost funding for education due to the status of the economy; in addition there is a staff shortage due to retirement and hiring freeze. We believe all these factors have caused a reduction in education and the educator is simply not able to reach the stakeholders as a result of the lack of resources.

In constructing our project we set 3 main goals to accomplish:

1. Increase the awareness throughout the community of Louisville Metro about the services provided by the Environmental Health Specialist team.
2. Educate the community how to receive assistance with environmental health concerns.
3. Implement partnerships in the community for the common goal of a healthy community.

Our Team vision statement is stated as: “*Citizens will understand Environmental Health, the services provided and where to go for assistance.*”

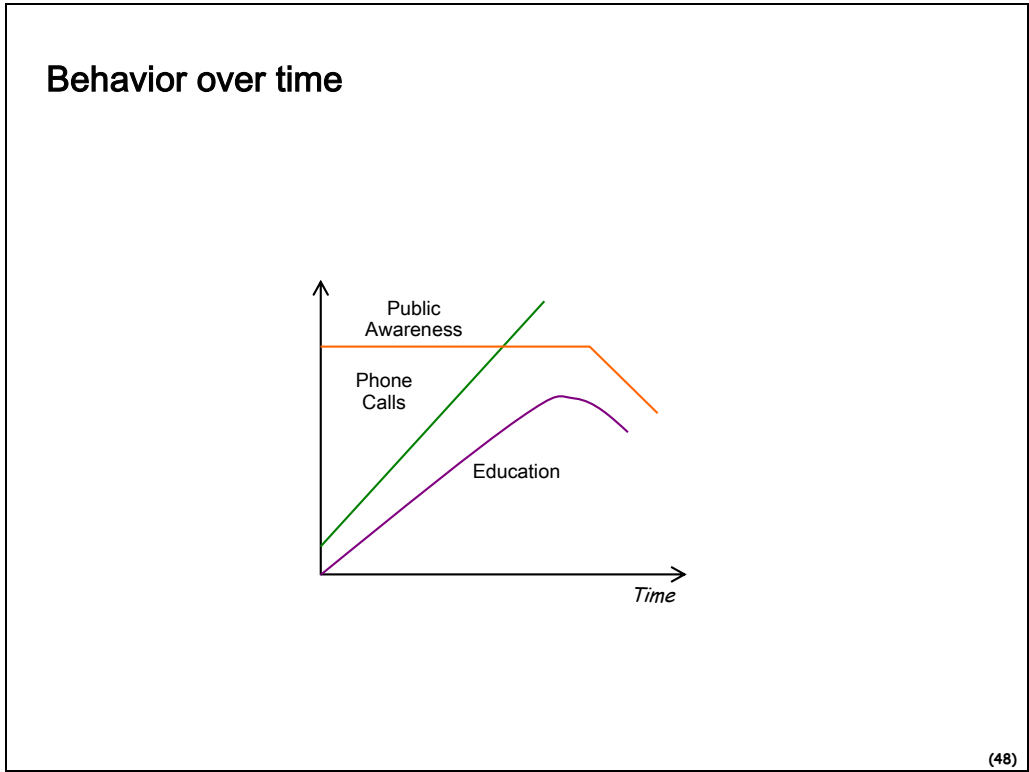
Problem Statement

Focusing question: Why *Environmental Health* is not understood in the community and why citizens do not know where to go for services?

One of the initial problems that our team faced was the lack of a budget for our project. There once was money set aside for KPHLI teams to work with but since budget restraints were initiated, our funding was lost.

Environmental Health awareness issues identified by the team include:

- Currently, there is a lack of awareness about what an environmentalist is and there are misconceptions about the job functions of an environmentalist.
- The community does not know specifically where to go or who to call to receive the service they need.
- Misconception of the policies and procedures followed by the environmentalist.
- An environmentalist holds a prevention position, the community does not know we are out there protecting them on a daily basis; the only time when an environmentalist is recognized is when something has gone wrong.
- What is the enforcement power of an environmentalist?
- Overall, the community holds a negative image of an environmentalist because they are regulators. More education is needed to inform the community that we are a preventative agency and we are there to help and educate.
- Residence not knowing where there tax dollars are spent.

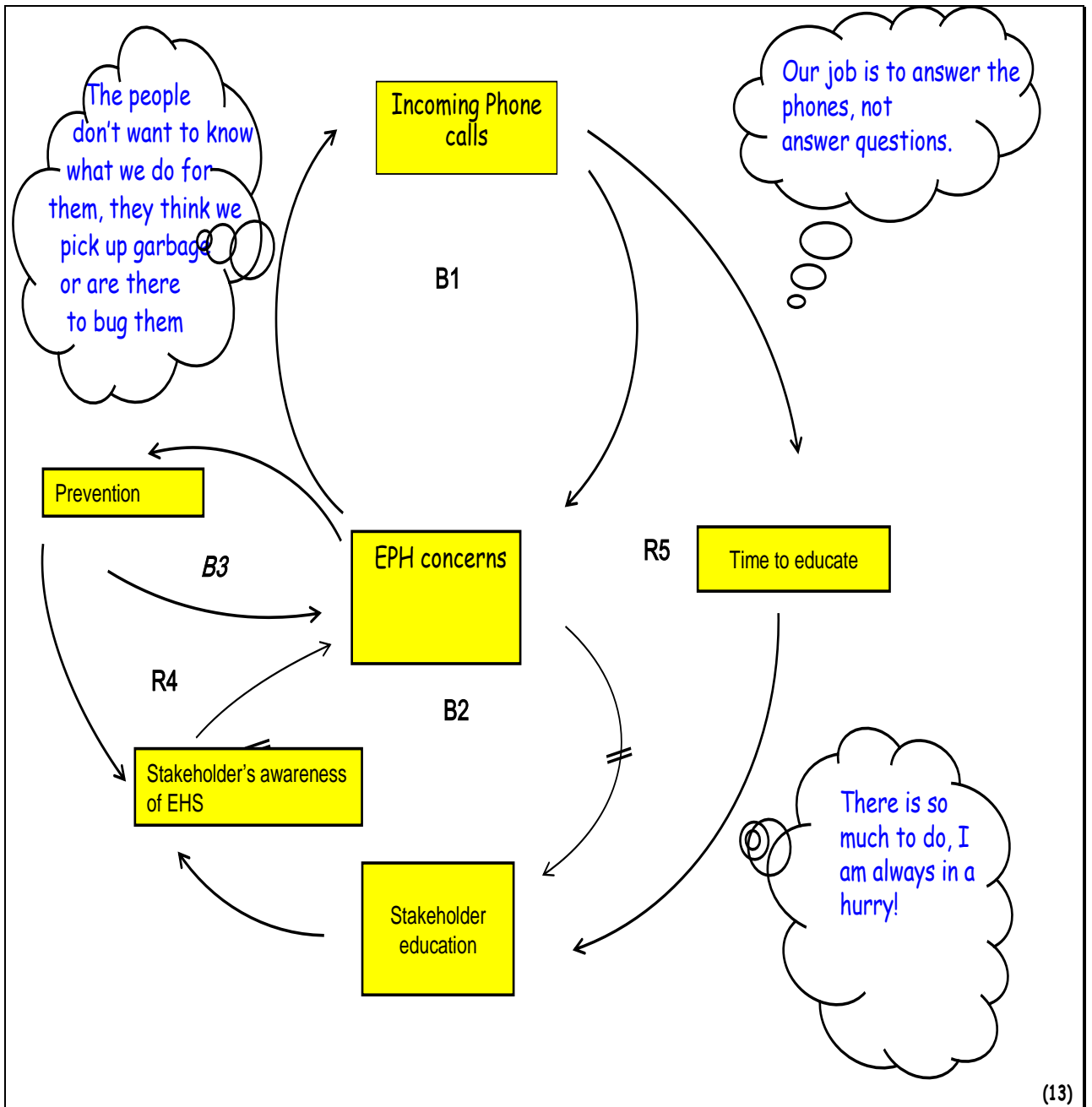


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Clerk Data

One week of calls were tallied by the 3 clerks and a receptionist on the Environmental floor of the Department of Public Health and Wellness. In one week they received a total of 831 phone calls, 68 (12.2%) of them were wrong numbers. We would like to be able to stream line customer phone calls by educating the public where to go for service, what kind of service we offer, and that we as EHS we are there to serve the public.

CAUSAL LOOP DIAGRAM:
Shifting the Burden



(13)

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES:

#3 Inform, Educate and Empower People about Health Issues

Our project relates to this essential service because it is promoting awareness and education of the public for empowerment. We are implementing numerous deliverables such as a Public Health Announcement, posters to be displayed in government agencies, and education brochures to hand out at health fairs.

#4 Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems.

This project will create partnerships with the community at large to enhance awareness of environmental health concerns. To reach the goal of a healthy community, this project will help identify the public's environmental health concern. A partnership was formed with U of L in the design of our posters to accomplish the goal of enhancing environmental health awareness.

#8 Assure a Competent Public and Personal Health Care Workforce

Our project corresponds to this essential service by addressing the concerns and needs of the Environmental Health Specialist. By doing so we hope to empower these individuals with the respect they deserve, resources they need and deliverables on hand to ensure a healthy community.

METHODOLOGY:

After extensive searching we discovered the lack of research on this issue. Because of Environmental Health Specialist concerns, the following are important factors we identified as significant to the environmental department.

- To provide efficient service to the community
- Better utilization of staff time.
- Improve relations and image with the community
- Better organization
- Reduce stress of employees
- Empower employees to increase efficiency and performance
- Create awareness in the community
- Create improved efficiency within the department
- We need to do this now because as the population and business increase, our work load will increase,
- We need to be able to maintain a level of service that meets the needs of the community without falling behind as Louisville Metro continues to expand.
- Ensuring Louisville is a pleasurable place to live and visit as we help our economy grow and stabilize.

Logic Model

KPHLI SuperHEROs

Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness

FY 08-09

Target Population	Inputs	Activities	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louisville Metro Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Adewale Troutman, MD, MPH • Mayor Jerry Abramson • Team Members • Team members supervisors & co-workers • Environmental Staff • Environmental Supervisors • Ann Wellington, Environmental Health Educator • People on the street • Kathy Harris & Dave Langdon, Media & Marketing with Health Department • Metro TV • U of L Graphic Artist Students • Health Department Print Shop • Health Dept 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly meetings on Thursdays • Attend three summits. • Complete assigned group homework • Develop casual loop diagram and behavior over time graph. • Research costs • Develop Budget • Secure funds • Design and request collection of Clerks data • Develop questionnaire for Environmental Specialists. • Participate in two systems thinking web conferences • Write proclamation, submit to the Mayor. • Analyze and tabulate Environmental Specialists questionnaire and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview 15-18 people on the street • Collect 25 completed informational sheets from environmental staff • Aired on Metro TV one Public Service Announcement • 6 Posters displayed in up to 52 Government Public Buildings • Procure one proclamation from the Mayors office for Environmental Public Health Awareness Day • Informational booth display at Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness for 5 days. • Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louisville Residents will increase knowledge of the skills and scope of the work performed by an Environmental Public Health Specialist • Individuals who need services or information provided by the Environmental Health Department will know what phone number to call. • Individuals who live in Louisville Metro will call the Environmental Health Dept to access services and information. • Louisville Metro residents will view in a positive manner and better utilize the services and expertise of the Environmental

	<p>computers, office supplies, phones, office space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations from co-workers • Proceeds from Bake Sale and Raffle • Camera • Space/site to film • Meeting room at Gray Street • KPHLI Advisors • Blackboard • KPHLI Instructors • KPHLI Fellows • KPHLI Books & materials 	<p>Clerk data collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design magnet, card, banner • Print magnets • Print cards, Banner, Brochures, and Posters. • Recruit U of L Students to design posters • Distribute Posters • Plan Faye walk • Conduct and film on the street interviews • Edit Faye Walk Video • Write Paper • Prepare Presentation • Presentation to KPHLI 	<p>available year round through regular office hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information available year round through 8 Health Fairs • Presentation on project to 150 KPHLI Fellows and Scholars • Presentations to at least 2 local staff trainings. 	<p>Health Specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPHLI Scholars & Fellows in attendance will increase knowledge of the skills and scope of the work performed by an Environmental Public Health Specialist
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Target Population: people, institutions, communities with which your project will work.

Inputs: resources – staff, funding, material, time, in-kind, physical space- what you have to put into your project to be able to reach your goal or provide services.

Activities: strategies describes the ways you will use inputs to achieve your goals – logical, intentional sequence – activities, services, interventions, supports you provide – education, coalition building.

Output: number of participants, number completed, measurement tool of the process, activities you said you would do – does not tell impact of activities.

Outcomes: measurable intended results, changes in target population beyond the point of service or intervention, impact, result, effect, or change resulting from your project.

Budget

Due to Louisville Metro Government economic shortfall, no funding was available for this KPHLI project. In order to finance our project deliverables we felt compelled to hold fundraisers to create revenue. We held a bake sale during the Department annual Holiday Bazaar, a chili lunch at one of the clinics and a split the pot raffle. We also received a few donations from co-workers towards our budget. We accomplished our goal and we are able to pay for necessary supplies to complete the project.

RESULTS:

Deliverables

Health Matters Public Services Announcements aired on Metro TV in March and will air periodically throughout the year. Mayor Jerry Abramson declared Environmental Health Awareness Day to be May 15, 2009. In conjunction with the proclamation an Environmental Health Awareness week has been scheduled at the Louisville Metro Department for Public Health and Wellness. U of L students designed a collection of Environmental Health Awareness posters to be displayed throughout Louisville Metro government buildings. The team developed a questionnaire and implemented a “person on the street” interview, the following questions were asked: 1. Do you know what an environmental health specialist is? 2. Name three things an environmental health specialist does? In order to capture the depth of the responses the process was video taped. This helped us determine the public’s issues concerning environmental health services. A magnet and a brochure were created by the team to hand out for the education of the public. Informational cards listing environmental service components were developed and distribute to the department staff for a quick reference to reduce confusion on who to call for what service.

CONCLUSION:

Public education is a long term process. The Department endorses our results of this project and plans to continue our journey of educating the public on environmental health services. This project will not have concrete results for several years because the behavior over time for public change is lengthy. It is recommended by this team, that the environmentalist survey be repeated in one year to assess the change in EHS’s perception.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To further promote our efforts this project could be used to educate metro call 311 employees, which is a reporting service provided for the public of Louisville Metro by Metro Government.
- Deliverables should be updated periodically.
- Environmental Health week should continue each year.
- Increasing the scope of publication to other agencies and departments.
- Implement partnerships with local business.
- Budget to include environmental health awareness funding.

REFERENCES:

www.ky.gov

www.louisvilleky.gov

www.trainingfinder.org/competencies/list_ephs.htm

www.appliedsystemsthinking.com/reading_diagrams.html

THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following for your contribution to the KPHLI SuperHERO's project:

Dr. Adewale Troutman

Mayor Jerry Abramson

U of L Graphic Art Students

Environmental Health Staff and Supervisors

Kathy Harrison

Dave Langdon

Ann Wethington

KPHLI Fellows

KPHLI Mentors and Instructors

Team Members Co-workers and Supervisors

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

Robert W. Thompson Jr.

It has been a year of learning about me (strengths, abilities, weaknesses); learning how to better communicate with others, team work and all around personal development. With that said, I found the last year very challenging in the since that I had to incorporate the whole KPHLI process in to my work schedule and daily living. We started out with six members and now we have four. Things have happened in all of our lives that would make most college students dropout. But, the four remaining members stuck together and we used each other's strengths and weaknesses to make it through. I do appreciate all that I have learned and the experience along the way and would not trade my learning experience for nothing else. The people I have met (to include my group members "Great Job", the KPHLI staff and everyone I came in contact with during the Orientation Session and Summits) have been a wonderful experience and I will never forget my time I had to share with them. In conclusion, I really do feel our project will make a big difference in how society views the importance of an Environmental health Specialist. What I have learned and experienced during the year I spent going through the KPHLI class already has made a difference in my life and will be of great use to me in the distant future. Once again, I want to thank everyone I have come in contact with for the great experience.

Gretchen Weisenburger

KPHLI has definitely been a challenge thought-out the course of this year but in the end the team's collaboration was quit amazing. I hope to continue my progress as a leader within the Department. The tools and knowledge I have gained through the KPHLI journey will be a tremendous asset for my career. I am ready for my team to see me as a knowledgeable, resourceful, credible, approachable leader that will work with them as a whole to make the department better. The biggest process I have learned is how to think ideas through to come up with the most beneficial, resourceful ideas possible before imitating action. I used to act before I thought things through but now I have learned to take a step back and think the idea through first. I have also learned all about my strengths and weakness, and will continue to work and improve my leadership skills. KPHLI has been a very positive experience and I am grateful the opportunity was given to me, thank you.

Faye Saleh

The KPHLI experience has exceeded my expectations. It has enabled me to work cohesively with our group, as well as enabled me individually to learn in depth about myself. Through systems thinking and our overall group experience with other scholars throughout Kentucky, I think my leadership capabilities have been enhanced. I have a special thank you to Cynthia, Erin and Lisa for their diligent, hard work, and well put together program.

Ginger Dereksen

This Year with KPHLI has been informative and educational; I have learned and applied, both to my professional life and personal life, the concepts of system thinking, strength finding, organization, assessment, planning and self management. Through the tools of self assessment, the recommended reading material, and the summit experience, I have expanded my understanding of others, my professional life, and my own skills. Even though this year has been very difficult for me personally – the death of my two year old grandson, two lengthy illness of asthma, and an increased work load due to staff vacancies - I have benefited greatly because the KPHLI experience has helped improve my leadership skills, manage my work load, and reduce stress. There are no words to express my gratitude and appreciation to Cynthia, Erin, and Lisa for their enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to make KPHLI a reality; I will continue to use the skills and knowledge to enhance my leadership skills. Thank you.