

Brown School

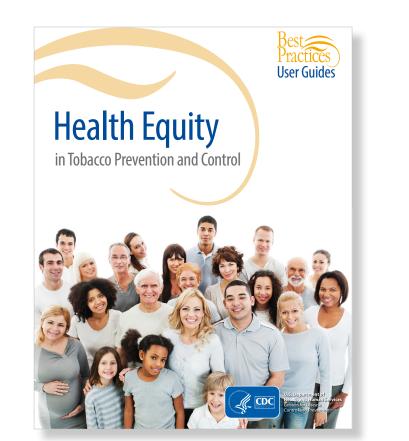
Design principles for translating evidence into practice: Lessons learned from the Best Practices User Guides

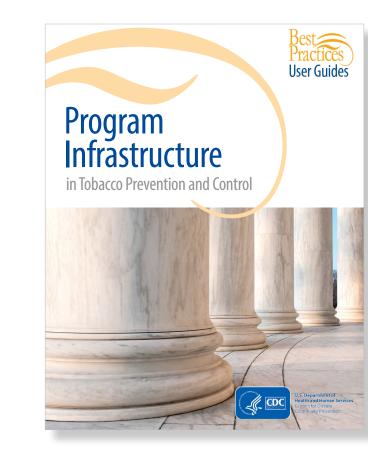
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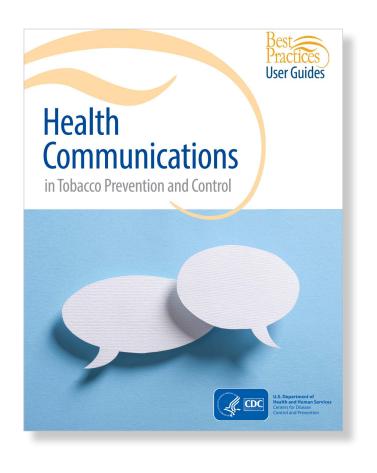
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BACKGROUND

The Center for Public Health Systems Science (CPHSS) at Washington University in St. Louis is developing a set of user guides funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the 2014 Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs. The purpose of the User Guides is to help tobacco control staff and partners implement evidence-based best practices by translating research into practical guidance.







Guide Audience

- State and local tobacco control program managers
- National, state, and local networks, foundations, and other groups in tobacco control

Designing for Dissemination

Public health research findings are unlikely to be put into practice automatically. There is a growing need to design research with dissemination in mind. The Designing for Dissemination framework proposes activities across three domains:1

- Systems (e.g., shifting funder priorities)
- Processes (e.g., engaging stakeholders)
- Products (e.g., tailoring how information is shared)

The User Guides illustrate how researchers can design tailored products to disseminate findings. By focusing on four key design principles: evidencebased, actionable, modular, and readable, researchers can create userfriendly documents that bridge the gap from evidence to practice.

1 Brownson RC, Jacobs JA, Tabak RG, Hoehner CM, Stamatakis KA. Designing for dissemination among public health researchers: findings from a national survey in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2013;103(9):1693-1699.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The User Guides use four design principles to translate research evidence into practical guidance. Guides are designed to be:



EVIDENCE-BASED: Based on interviews with topic area experts, an extensive literature review, and review by practice and research experts

ACTIONABLE: Relevant to the audience and providing steps and resources to get



MODULAR: Composed of stand-alone sections that can be used for different practitioners' needs



READABLE: Written in plain language, available in print and online, and designed to be accessible by people with disabilities



EVIDENCE-BASED

Key Features

- Involves consultation with topic experts during planning stage
- Synthesizes findings from scientific and practice literature
- Incorporates review from funder and users

Importance

- practical and political aspects of the topic
- Identifies best practices and gaps in implementation guidance
- Ensures guides address key issues and reflect latest CDC guidance



ACTIONABLE

- the guide audience
 - best practices
 - to additional resources

- Provides insight on
 - Breaks down strategies Directs audience to tools

Key Features

- Includes up-to-date information relevant to
- Gives beginning steps to get started implementing
- Includes interactive links

Importance

- Assists with program planning and implementation
- into manageable steps
- and resources to help them get started

MODULAR

Key Features

Repeats the same sections in each guide:

- Making the Case
- Brief History How to
- Providing Support
- Case Studies Case for Investment
- Resources

Importance

- Helps busy staff quickly access information most relevant to their needs
- Creates familiarity that encourages use of additional guides
- Facilitates sharing sections with partners based on their role

READABLE

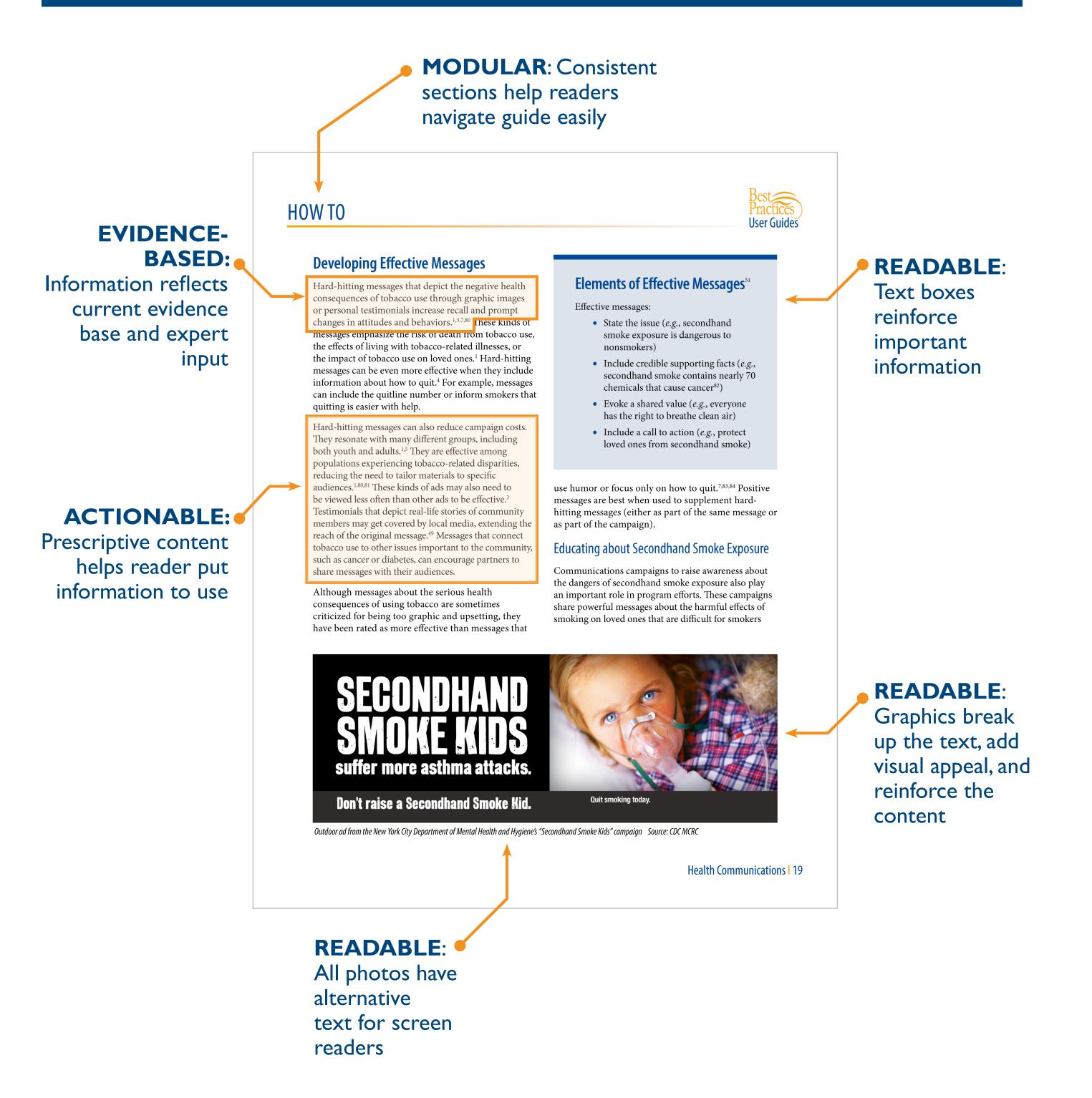
Key Features

- Uses clear, concise language
- Incorporates graphics and text boxes to highlight key information
- Publishes in multiple formats for reading in print, online, or via a screen reader

Importance

- Accommodates a wide range of reading levels
- Quickly highlights key information
- Meets federal Section 508 accessibility requirements for people with disabilities

Design Principles in Action



RECOMMENDATIONS

State and local public health practitioners continue to request guidance on prioritizing interventions and selecting the best implementation strategies. They often have limited time and access to review research and may have varying levels of expertise in the topic area. Using dissemination-focused design principles, researchers can help practitioners with different skill levels and time constraints learn about and implement evidence-based recommendations.

Researchers can incorporate the four *User Guide* design principles to effectively translate evidence into practical guidance by taking these steps:

- Define the audience Identify relevant messages, communications channels, and potential barriers to use
- Involve practitioners Engage stakeholders throughout the design process to inform key issues and identify topics for future research
- Support action Identify areas where practitioners may need more resources, provide action steps or links to supporting materials, and update materials to keep content relevant
- Standardize document sections Break down information into standalone sections that are repeated across resources
- Ensure accessibility Use plain language writing principles and learn about standards for accessible documents
- Evaluate products Include questions about product use and accessibility in evaluations

NEXT STEPS

CPHSS has published five Best Practices User Guides on topics of importance to state and local tobacco control practitioners: Coalitions, Youth Engagement, Health Equity, Program Infrastructure, and Health Communications. Four additional guides are currently in development. A survey is also planned to better understand how state tobacco control programs use the guides and how they can be improved. Data will be available for presentation in 2019.

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