



Community Health Toolkit: Values, Domains and Models Memory Aid

The Importance of Values

Research from the cognitive sciences strongly suggests that people reason about unfamiliar or complex public policies on the basis of deeply held values. In American society, the dominant value of Individualism often crowds out considerations of how communities can work together for the common good. But these latter values can be evoked with the right frame cues. When we approach people as citizens, parents and stewards of the community, we tap into powerful models that guide their thinking about themselves and their political responsibilities. We do this reminding them of the widely shared values they already incorporate into their thinking about how to make important choices for their communities and for the world. In our food and fitness research, we found three values – Fairness, Ingenuity, and Prevention– which served to increase support for food and fitness promoting policies when combined with specific domains and models.

Fairness Between Places: Some communities are struggling because they are not given a fair chance to be healthy.

Ingenuity: Smart states and communities have been able to implement effective policies and programs that would get American communities in good shape.

Prevention: We should prevent further damage to our nation's quality of life by helping American communities get in good shape, saving money and lives in the long run.

Selecting the Correct Domain

Another important consideration is how an issue is categorized in people's minds, which is critical to informing their thinking about abstract policies. When we choose to frame an issue as being about the economy or the environment, for example, we associate that issue with habits of thinking about economic or environmental policies. Questions of how much a policy costs or whether it is sustainable might be likely to arise from each of these respective domain choices. In this way, invigorating a different domain for an issue will lead “naturally” to different policy options. Although it seems natural to assume that discussions about food and fitness policies are about health, they could just as naturally be about the environment or about children. In fact, all of these ways of framing food and fitness in terms of domains tested well when combined with specific values and models.

Health: The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our future health. Promoting and maintaining individual health requires attention to community health.

Children: Being healthy and fit in adulthood is largely determined by the communities that we live in as children. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our children’s development.

Environment: The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect the viability of these environments.

Purpose of Simplifying Models

The aim of the simplifying model is to provide a *conceptual focus* that is more productive than the ones people usually default to – including the ones that advocates often choose to evoke. The public’s thinking about food and fitness (such as it is) is guided by understandings that often work against productive, big-picture thinking – e.g. fitness as a hobby, food as an individual consumer

choice, etc. The goal of the simplifying model is to introduce a new, user-friendly conceptual picture that guides and organizes reasoning in more constructive ways than the current ones. FrameWorks found two simplifying models – Food and Fitness Environment, and Public Structures – that increased policy support when combined with particular values and domains.

Food and Fitness Environment: Where we live or work, or what might be called our “food and fitness environment,” is one of the most important things determining whether we end up fit and healthy or not. When people do not have access to a healthy environment or opportunities to make healthier choices, it undermines their health and lowers their quality of life. When we improve these food and fitness environments, the health of the people who live and work there improves as well.

Public Structures: The health and strength of communities is dependent on its public structures, including adequate transportation, markets with healthy foods, and schools with physical fitness requirements. Without these structures, however, community success is undermined. When they are well maintained, they form a kind of machinery that makes it possible for Americans to maintain their health and quality of life. When we improve the public structures in a place, the health of the people who live and work there improves as well.

Formulas for Communications Success About Food and Fitness

Based on our research, we would recommend that communicators use the following values, domains and models in the suggested combinations. This creates the strongest possible frames for increasing public support of food and fitness policy change.

How do you choose which combination of value+domain+model to use? This decision can be driven by the particular policy on which you are working.

Fairness Between Places + Environment + Food and Fitness Environment

Some communities are struggling because they are not given a fair chance to be healthy. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect the viability of these environments. Where we live or work, or our food and fitness environment, is one of the most important things determining whether we end up fit and healthy or not. When people do not have access to a healthy environment or opportunities to make healthier choices, they have worse health and a lower quality of life. When we improve these food and fitness environments, the health of the people who live and work there improves as well.

Fairness Between Places + Children + Food and Fitness Environment

Some communities are struggling because they are not given a fair chance to be healthy. Being healthy and fit in adulthood is largely determined by the communities that we live in as children. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our children's development. Where children live, play and go to school, or their food and fitness environment, is one of the most important things determining whether they end up fit and healthy or not. When children do not have access to a healthy environment, they have worse health and a lower quality of life. When we improve the food and fitness environment, the health of the children who live there improves as well.

Prevention + Health + Food and Fitness Environment

We should prevent further damage to our nation's quality of life by helping American communities get in good shape, saving money and lives in the long run. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our future health. Promoting and maintaining individual health requires attention to community health. Where we live or work, or our food and fitness environment, is one of the most important things determining whether we end up fit and healthy or not. When people do not have access to a healthy environment or opportunities to make healthier choices, they have worse health and a lower quality of life. When we improve

these food and fitness environments, the health of the people who live and work there improves as well.

Prevention + Children + Food and Fitness Environment

We should prevent further damage to our nation's quality of life by helping American communities get in good shape, saving money and lives in the long run. Being healthy and fit in adulthood is largely determined by the communities that we live in as children. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our children's development. Where children live, play and go to school, or their food and fitness environment, is one of the most important things determining whether they end up fit and healthy or not. When children do not have access to a healthy environment, they have worse health and a lower quality of life. When we improve the food and fitness environment, the health of the children who live there improves as well.

Ingenuity + Health + Public Structures

Smart states and communities have been able to implement effective policies and programs that would get American communities in good shape. The decisions made in our neighborhoods and municipalities about whether and where to site a supermarket, create mass transit options or maintain a neighborhood park affect our future health. Promoting and maintaining individual health requires attention to community health. The health and strength of communities is dependent on their public structures, including adequate transportation, markets with healthy foods, and schools with physical fitness requirements. Without these structures, however, community success is undermined. When they are well maintained, they form a kind of machinery that makes it possible for Americans to maintain their health and quality of life. When we improve the public structures in a place, the health of the people who live and work there improves as well.