



RESCUE
The Behavior Change Agency

CELEBRATING

20 YEARS



OF MAKING HEALTHY
BEHAVIORS *EASIER* AND
MORE APPEALING

Certified



Corporation

IMPACT REPORT
2021

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

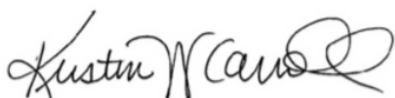
As we reflect on our impact in 2021, we recognize the heaviness we collectively feel in our second year of the global pandemic. At the same time, we're also experiencing a renewed understanding of the importance of our work in public health. We see unsettling headlines and witness difficult realities every day. Rising rates of food insecurity, substance and alcohol misuse, mental health challenges, learning loss and inequities that influence the health of our communities.

Our work in public health is a light in this darkness, revealing the road ahead for addressing both urgent and omnipresent health issues. Research we have conducted with distinct populations over the last several years has positioned us to support federal, state, and local public health organizations, nonprofits and health systems to immediately address complex behaviors with evidence-based campaigns built on a strong foundation.

Our team of change agents has shown incredible resilience over the past year. We've launched coaching and training programs, benchmarked and increased compensation packages, added additional time off, and continued our J.E.D.I. journey. Our J.E.D.I. Committee published quarterly newsletters to teach us. They spotlighted organizations to support through Rescue Takes Action and led agency-wide cultural celebrations helping us learn about each other's history, traditions, food and family. Through a deepened understanding of each other, we aim to create a more just, equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace. There is always more work to do.

This 2021 Impact Report is our continued effort to quantify and measure our collective impact across our clients, employees, and community in support of our mission to make healthy behaviors easier and more appealing for everyone.

Stay healthy,



KRISTIN CARROLL
CEO

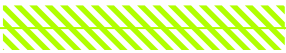


OUR IMPACT

Since our initial certification in 2014, we've worked hard to evolve and improve as the B Corp standards have evolved and strengthened accountability measures as well. Our next recertification will take place between 2022 - 2023.



Impact Area Scores	2019	2017	2014
Governance	18.5	16.7	6
Workers	30.0	25.3	23
Community	21.3	19.2	17
Environment	7.7	10.5	9
Customers	31.4	28.3	45
OVERALL SCORE	109.1	100	105



OUR NATIONAL IMPACT

Our work is live in communities nationwide as well as in **24 states** and **8 specific counties**. We don't just serve our clients; we harness their collective power to educate, empower and heal our communities.



Our campaigns address the most pressing health challenges of our time, spanning across the following key areas.



Early Childhood Development



Tobacco + Vaping



Marijuana



Nutrition



Maternal Health



Alcohol



Sexual Health



Physical Activity



Food Insecurity



Opioids



Mental Health



THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK

At Rescue, we're focused exclusively on making healthy behaviors easier and more appealing for everyone, everywhere. Our campaigns address the most urgent health topics facing our communities today and require a deep understanding of the state of public health, as well as addressing new health challenges as they continue to arise.

We've conducted hundreds of focus groups and thousands of interviews, developed insights and strategies to breakthrough health barriers, conceived of creative ways to authentically connect with different audience groups, and negotiated, planned and optimized billions of media impressions and engagements.

The core problems we've made a significant impact on this year include:

ADDRESSING THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC

DECREASING SMOKING RATES AMONG ADULTS

**CONTINUING DIALOGUE AND EDUCATION
AROUND OPIOIDS**

TACKLING THE INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF METH

**EDUCATING COMMUNITIES ABOUT FENTANYL-LACED
PILLS & POWDERS**

**NORMALIZING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND
REDUCING STIGMA**

**REDUCING FOOD INSECURITY THROUGH BENEFIT
COMMUNICATIONS**

ADDRESSING THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically disrupted the lives of youth across the country, and many turned to unhealthy behaviors like vaping as a way to cope. More than 2 million U.S. middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes in 2021. 43.6% of high school students and 17.2% of middle school students reported using e-cigarettes on 20 or more of the past 30 days in 2021.¹ Not only did we need to focus on preventing more teens from experimenting with vaping, but we needed to help millions of teens currently addicted to nicotine quit vaping successfully.

Our Impact in Youth Vaping Prevention

To prevent more teens from experimenting with vaping, we launched our ready-made teen vaping prevention campaign ***Behind the Haze*** in 16 states across the country. Several states including South Carolina, Kentucky, and Indiana have evaluated the campaign's impact using baseline and follow-up surveys conducted 6-12 months after campaign implementation. Results indicate:



Desire to reduce vape use was high at 60-70%, indicating that most vape users are starting to reconsider vaping and could benefit from additional cessation messaging or interventions.



Awareness of vape facts featured in campaign content was high among vape users, ranging from 54% to 80%. In some cases, knowledge was higher among vape users than non-users.

“

It sort of warned against vaping from a scientific perspective, you know based on what it does to your brain. And I did like that because it wasn't just, you know, fear mongering without evidence. – Virginia teen

”

“

I think the visual did a good job and the message was clear and concise and it didn't confuse me at all. It was clear and concise and honest and not confusing and gave me information I hadn't heard before. – Kansas Teen

”



Our Impact in Youth Vaping Cessation Education

Our ready-made **Quit the Hit** cessation education program helped teens learn quitting techniques through moderator-led peer support groups on Instagram. Our pilot programs in San Diego, South Carolina and Minnesota showed promising initial results:



Across all three programs, youth and young adults significantly increased their expectation to successfully quit vaping, or their quit confidence.



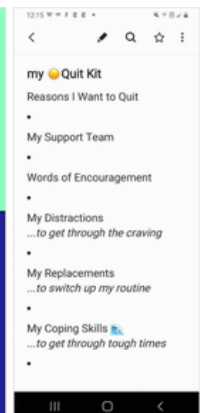
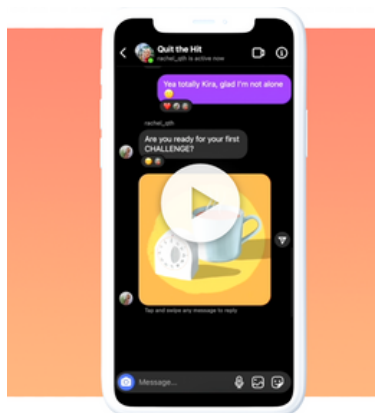
South Carolina pilot participants reported an 18% decrease in vaping use from baseline to follow-up survey.

“

This first week really helped me realize that quitting isn't as scary as it seems and that is actually possible for me to do...I felt safe enough to speak my mind to the group. But mostly the values made me feel like it was designed for me, simply because we are in control of when we want to quit, and this is a space designed to help you do that to the best of your ability with no judgment.

Who could ask for more? – Gloria, 19, Los Angeles, CA

”



DECREASING SMOKING RATES AMONG ADULTS



Though adult smoking rates have declined since 2005, an estimated 30.8 million adults in the United States currently smoke cigarettes, and more than 16 million Americans live with a smoking-related disease.⁷ While these sub-groups are aware of many hard-hitting health consequences, they continue to smoke. We needed to better understand the unique barriers these audiences face to provide effective campaign messaging.

OUR IMPACT

Rescue worked in four states to develop new adult cessation strategies and messages that increase quitline enrollment among priority populations who need the most support. We worked with the American Lung Association in Illinois and the Illinois Department of Public Health to increase sign-ups for the Illinois Tobacco Quitline, resulting in:



142% increase in overall enrollments.



11% increase in enrollments from people with mental health or substance use disorders.



Best thing I did for myself and my sons 🙌❤️

Like · Reply · Message · 3w



Author

Illinois Tobacco Quitline

Congratulations on quitting, [redacted]! 🎉 1



Can't believe how I feel in just 1 week cutting back!!

Like · Reply · Message · 8w



Author

Illinois Tobacco Quitline Hi [redacted], we're glad to hear that your body is already recovering! Quitting is always worth it. 🎉 1

CONTINUING EDUCATION AROUND OPIOIDS

In December 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released an emergency advisory stating that, from June 2019 to May 2020, more than 81,000 people died of a drug overdose in the United States driven by synthetic opioids. This was the largest number of drug overdoses for a 12-month period ever recorded. Our campaigns focused on continuing to educate audiences about the health harms of prescription and illicit opioids, as well as destigmatize treatment options for those facing opioid use disorder.

OUR IMPACT

We launched work in Vermont, Illinois, San Diego, and many more locations to help educate audiences about what opioids are, how they can be harmful, and how to access important recovery services. These efforts impacted:



In San Diego, our fentanyl awareness and education campaign ***Instant Death*** garnered 2,453,675 exploratory engagements, including video and GIF completions, clicks, reactions, photo views, and web sessions.



Our ***Addiction as a Disease*** campaign in Vermont drove over 856K video completions providing educational messages about the safe use and self-regulation of prescription opioids.



In Illinois, our ***Rethink Recovery*** campaign delivered 27M impressions of messages promoting recovery services.



I was given an Oxycontin and Morphine prescription after having a limb surgically reconstructed. By day three I recognized that taking them any longer was going to cause problems, so I stopped taking them. They never ameliorated the pain, which was beyond description, but I had the most wonderful, vivid, ecstatic hallucinations. It felt like being in love. But again, I was able to just not take them. It makes me question how well people research their prescriptions, or know themselves. It makes me question peoples self discipline.

Like Reply Message 8w



Author

Vermont Department of Health

Hi [redacted], we're glad to hear you were aware of the risks and able to limit your use. It's important to note, however, that it's not always about self-discipline. Prescription opioids are so strong that anyone has the potential to become addicted and it can happen very quickly. If you're interested in learning more, feel free to check out our site: <http://bit.ly/3aojhGT>



YES I know , I was addicted 15 1/2 years . I was snorting them . I couldn't take it anymore. I called my DR. , I turned myself in . I'm now on 16 mg of Suboxone daily. I now feel like myself again!!! Just amazing ! 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

Like · Reply · Message · 8w



Author

Vermont Department of Health

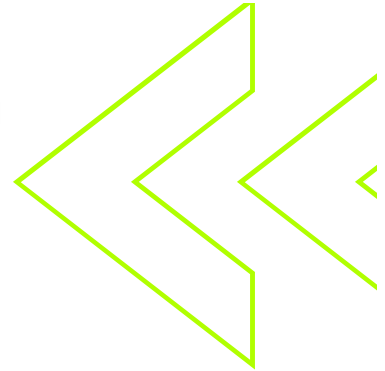
██████████ We're so glad to hear you are doing well!

Like · Reply · Commented on by Sprout Social 🌱 · 7w



Thank you sooo much 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

Like · Reply · Message · 7w



We were able to support smaller communities with ready-made campaign materials from our **People's Opioid Project** to educate audiences about opioid misuse and promote treatment.

TACKLING THE INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF METHAMPHETAMINE



The use of stimulant methamphetamine has risen dramatically over the past few years. From November 2019 - November 2021, drug overdose deaths involving psychostimulants (largely methamphetamine) increased by 35.9% YOY.³ Driven in part by increased availability of meth, many more adults are experimenting with this drug, not aware that even the first hit can start to damage their bodies from the inside.

OUR IMPACT

In Los Angeles County, we developed a new wave of **MethFree LA County** ads and an educational website to prevent and reduce meth use. Our evaluation data show:



84% of respondents were aware of the campaign, with rates even higher among people experiencing homelessness (91%) and MSM (95%).



84% said MethFree LA County made them feel like there might be help out there for people who use meth.



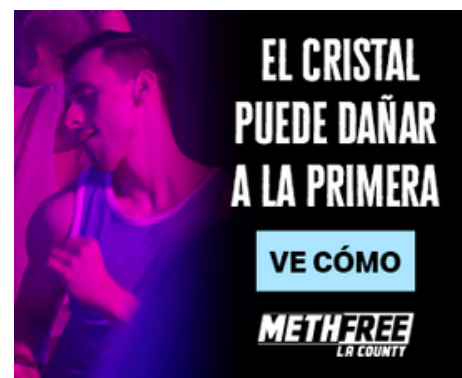
People aware of the campaign engaged in more discussions about the signs of meth use with others increasing collective knowledge around use.

“

Seeing a guy partying, that was super relatable. And he's just a young guy having fun, you know? And that's how it [meth use] starts for pretty much for everybody... And then to know what's happening physically in the moment was interesting because I didn't know that about your skin. And to see him aged and weathered, the images were really simple, caught my eye.

- LA County Female Meth Experimenter

”



EDUCATING COMMUNITIES ABOUT FENTANYL-LACED PILLS & POWDERS

From January to December 2021, nearly 108,000 people died from drug overdoses, with more than 71,000 deaths involving illegally manufactured fentanyl.² This virtually undetectable and incredibly potent substance has flooded the U.S. drug supply, leaving unsuspecting users at an extremely high risk for a fatal overdose. Unfortunately, many people don't know they're at-risk for an accidental fentanyl overdose or know just how emerging and urgent the problem is.

OUR IMPACT

We've worked with hard-hit communities across the country to increase awareness of the dangers of fentanyl. In King County Washington, our **Laced & Lethal** campaign resulted in:



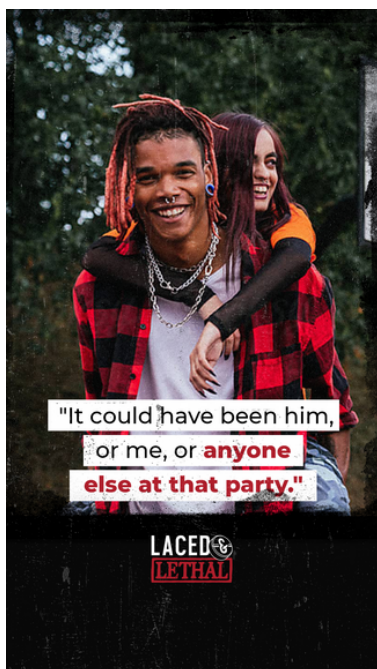
2,615 boxes of Narcan distributed to teens located in King County, reducing overdoses.



Almost 15,000 (or 14,873) sessions on the educational **Laced & Lethal** website.



Ads drove 6.1K sessions on the website where users spent an average of 50 seconds learning about fentanyl and overdose prevention strategies including naloxone.



Thank you for posting this, it is really important for people to know. This kind of stuff has happened to kids at my school, it's really sad

6w 3 likes Reply

Hide replies



lacedandlethal

Of course! We're working hard to teach people how to take life-saving steps so it doesn't happen to more people <3

5w 1 like Reply

NORMALIZING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES & REDUCING STIGMA

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, frontline workers faced a high prevalence of mental health problems, such as burnout, insomnia, anxiety, depression, illness anxiety, PTSD, and more related to the intense challenges of the pandemic.⁴ Alcohol and substance use disorders increased among frontline workers due to the pandemic—including those with no prior history of disorders.⁵ Despite this, the mental health issues of frontline workers are often overlooked.

OUR IMPACT AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS

In San Diego, we developed the campaign *It's Up to Us San Diego* to provide healthcare workers with healthy ways to cope and resources to get help for mental health challenges.



It's Up to Us San Diego resulted in 1 million impressions from health care workers in the month of December 2021.



The educational website created for healthcare workers gained 5.7k web sessions.



yes Thank you 🙏 as This 🙏

4w 1 like Reply



🙏🙏🙏🙏

4w 1 like Reply



🙏 -best help is to listen. Offer support of a coworker just by truly hearing their thoughts, help happens just letting one talk.



Yes, been waiting for 21 months for this to end. I'm tired of feeling the need to wash my hands a lot. I really want things to go back to the way it was before Covid 19. I've been very good at avoid touching my face unless my hands are clean. I'm also tired of when I come home from buying stuff from the store, I feel a need to disinfect the items. Yes been having anxiety and contamination phobia over this.

Like Reply 5w



Author
It's Up to Us

Hi [redacted] It's understandable that you feel this way. It's a uniquely challenging time for many in our community. Make sure that you take some to take care of your mental health in addition to your physical health. We have great tips and resources on our site:

<https://bit.ly/3y1rf2W>

Like Reply 5w





OUR IMPACT AMONG ADULTS

An online survey was conducted with 576 participants in English and Spanish to evaluate the impact of our ***It's Up to Us San Diego*** campaign among adult residents:



96% of those aware of the campaign reported it prompted them to take an action to find out more about mental health concerns.



Evaluation participants reported the lowest levels of mental health stigma to date, since the survey began in 2010.



Those aware of the campaign had significantly higher knowledge about the signs of suicide, significantly higher knowledge about how to access resources, and were significantly more willing to talk about their mental health compared to those who were not aware of the campaign.

“

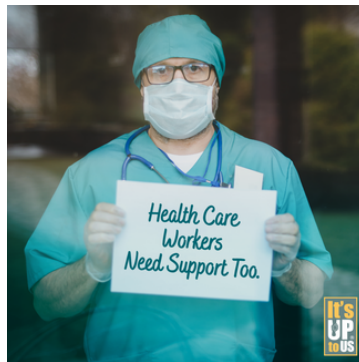
Comfort. I felt less alone after watching the video, especially after knowing others feel the same way I do. - San Diego resident

”

“

I like it. It definitely speaks to me as someone who has been struggling with mental health challenges throughout the pandemic. - San Diego resident

”



REDUCING FOOD INSECURITY THROUGH BENEFIT COMMUNICATIONS



As a direct result of the pandemic, many adults and children faced food insecurity, as youth no longer had access to school meals and many adults experienced workplace hardships. Nearly 43 million people relied on SNAP support to meet their nutritional needs.⁶ The most vulnerable populations are those most impacted by this crisis.

OUR IMPACT

We implemented the **CalFresh Food Benefits** campaign in California to deliver messaging that dispelled misconceptions about food benefits. Our campaign helped Californians better understand who qualifies for benefits and how to access them. We're proud to report key findings from our evaluation survey:



77% of survey participants were aware of the **CalFresh Food Benefits** campaign.



43% of those aware of the campaign had started an application for CalFresh in the last 6 months. In contrast, significantly fewer (28%) of those not aware of the campaign had started an application.

“

Many times we have the wrong information that we have to be super, super, super low income or not have any income to be able to qualify for those programs... even though she had income, she still qualified to get help. That made me call to see if we did in fact qualify or not. I could also see that it was a family like us. - Latino Female, 34 years old, Los Angeles

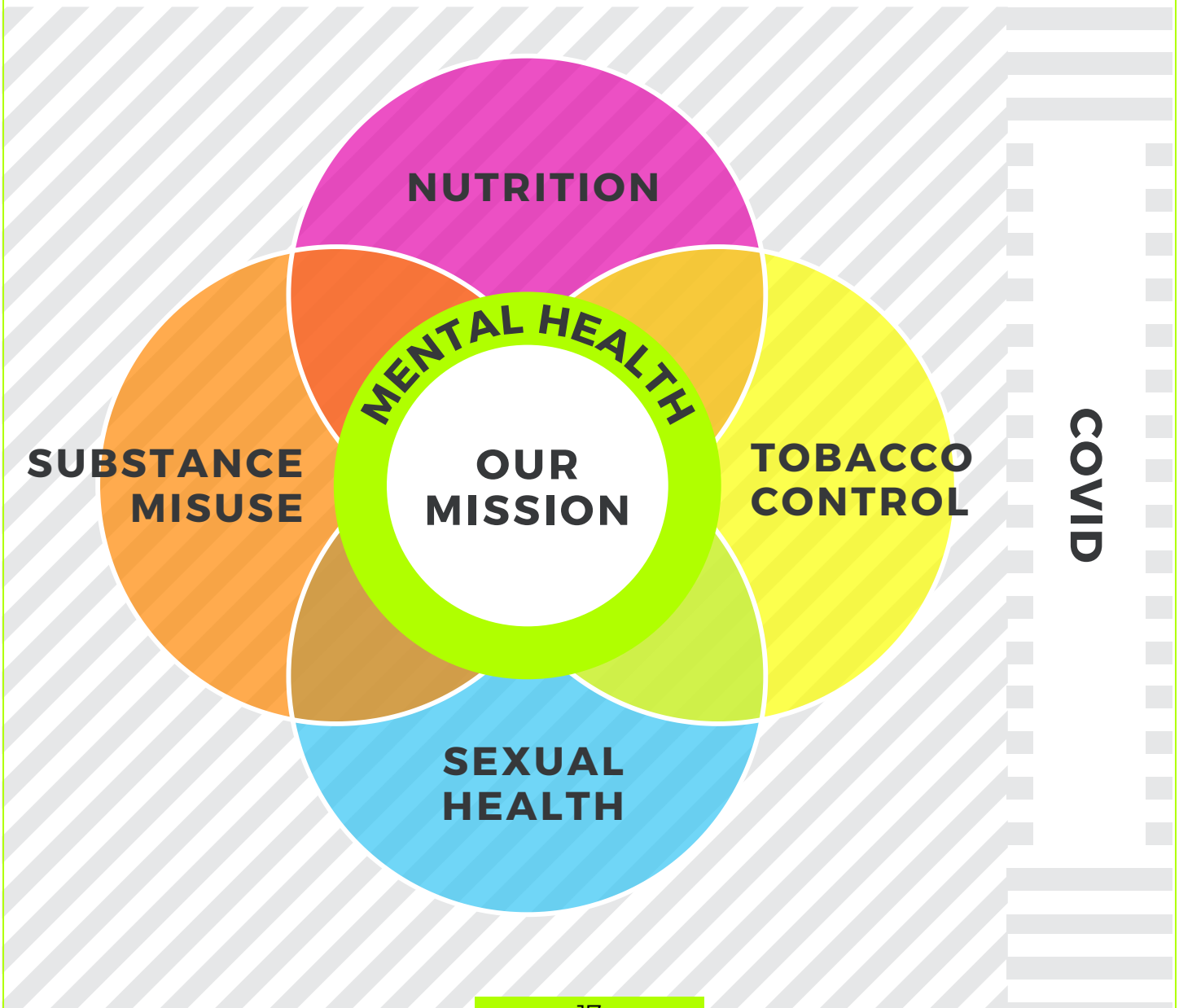
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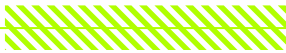


INCREASING OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Through our work tackling a broad range of health issues, we've gained deep insights about the intersectionality of health and the ways we can create the most impact in our communities. We're committed to sharing our knowledge broadly across the public health community so we can break down silos and build on our unique perspectives.

This visual shows how all of the most urgent health topics are inextricably linked.





SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH COMPLIMENTARY WEBINARS

To continue breaking down silos and sharing our research into these crucial public health topics, we developed a new educational webinar series. Throughout 2021, nearly **10,000 public health leaders across 50 organizations participated** in nationwide conversations during our webinar trainings where we shared best practices, key learnings, and evaluation data. Topics included:

- How to Use Marketing to Change Health Behaviors
- Communications to Address Food Insecurity and Promote Healthy Living
- Ending Vaping the Way It Starts: A Social Cessation Solution for Teens
- Fighting COVID-19 Vaccine Resistance and Other Health Conspiracies
- Fentanyl & Opioid Use Disorder: Communications to Promote Treatment and Reduce Misuse & Overdose
- Vaccine Hesitancy: How to Change Minds to Change Behaviors
- Adult Cessation: Creating Equitable Campaigns for Priority Populations

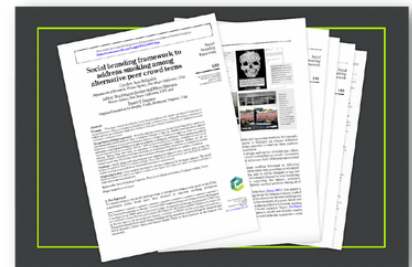
PUBLISHING KEY FINDINGS IN RESEARCH JOURNALS

We also published new research on our findings in teen tobacco use and peer crowd segmentation to increase understanding of how to best address this crisis:



The FDA's diverse and dynamic activities in the social and behavioral sciences: advancing and supporting health equity. Journal of Primary Care & Community Health.

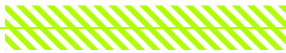
Social Branding framework to address smoking among Alternative peer crowd teens. Journal of Social Marketing.



Final evaluation findings for This Free Life, a 3-year, multi-market tobacco public education campaign for gender and sexual minority young adults in the United States. Nicotine & Tobacco Research.

Reactions to targeted tobacco control messaging: Transgender and gender diverse young adult perspectives. Drug and Alcohol Dependence.





THE IMPACT OF OUR TEAM

ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY IMPACT THROUGH RESCUE TAKES ACTION (RTA)

2021 marks Rescue Takes Action's (RTA) fifth year of making a difference together. This program was inspired by our team's passion for making a positive impact in their communities through community engagement, volunteerism, and giving back. For employees who choose to donate money, Rescue matches all contributions \$2 to \$1. We contributed over \$75,000 to non-profit organizations and foundations in 2021 and have contributed over \$315,000 in funds since the program's inception in addition to offering all full-time employees Rescue Takes Action Day to volunteer for an organization of their choice. 75 total organizations received donations through RTA including:

<p> AAAJC AALDEF Action Tulsa africActive American Kidney Fund Asian American Federation Bird Rock Foundation Black Girl Ventures Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Anaheim Campaign Zero Casa Ruby Charity Water Chinmaya Mission San Diego Clean Air Task Force DC Central Kitchen Family Promise Friendly Hands Food Bank Fostering Opportunities Scholarships Gifts of Love Hamilton-Madison House Home LA Fund Hope for Haiti Inch x Inch Internal Family Services International Rescue Committee International Women's Media Foundation Los Compadres de Escuela Longfellow McElroy House Meals of Gratitude Military Benefit Foundation National Advocates for Pregnant Woman National Black Trans Advocacy Coalition National Black Women's Justice Institute </p>	<p> Oceana Okra Project PATH PAWS Plan USA Planned Parenthood Pinac News Rainbow Labs Rainbow Railroad Readers 2 Leaders Regenerative Organic Reliance Road Runner Food Bank Sacramento Food Bank SLC6A1 Connect Soham Dance Space South Peoria Neighborhood Connection Foundation Starts With Arts Foundation Stop AAPI Hate Susan G Komen Team Rubicon The Jacob & Cushman San Diego Food Bank The Okra Project The Sarcoma Foundation of America The Trevor Project Tulsa Habitat for Humanity United Farm Workers Vedanta Society of Southern California Victory Institute Voice of San Diego Walk to End Alzheimer's Wikipedia World Central Project World Central Kitchen </p>
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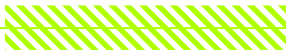


INCREASING DIVERSITY IN OUR HIRING

We worked directly with our employee-led Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (J.E.D.I.) to provide inclusive hiring practices and opportunities for our current team members. We're proud of the successes we've accomplished together over the past year:

- **Remote work:** Almost 90% of our job openings are remote, allowing us to reach candidates in more locations, opening up a more diverse talent pool.
- **Reaching broader pool candidates:** We are making connections with historically black universities and colleges on Handshake, a recruitment platform, to reach a broader pool of candidates.
- **Recruiting diverse agency partners:** Requested by industry partners, we seek to find BIPOC, women, service veterans, LGBTQIA+, and other underrepresented groups, as well as candidates with diverse backgrounds that represent the lived experiences of our target audiences.
- **Diversity certification:** Our internal recruitment team completed a Certified Diversity Recruitment certification.





CREATING A CULTURE OF IMPACT & EQUITY

Our employee-led Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (J.E.D.I.) ensures that we apply intentional equity in our hiring practices at Rescue. They also provide educational and professional development opportunities to help our employees learn more about the lived experiences of many different populations.

J.E.D.I. serves as a resource to establish, collect ideas and promote a more diverse Rescue, as well as diversity within our communities. J.E.D.I.'s three subcommittees help us achieve this goal:

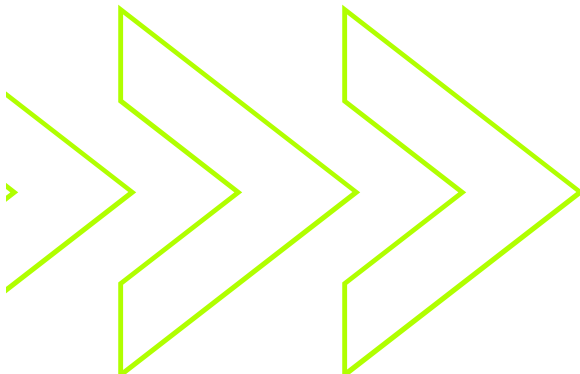
- 1. Listen, Learn, and Share:** Provide opportunities for learning, discussion, and feedback around important social issues and events
- 2. Diversity, Equity, & Culture (DEC):** Diversify hiring practices, support ongoing DEC related trainings, and create/share Rescue policies to support diversity efforts
- 3. Increase Impact of Rescue Takes Action (RTA):** Improve visibility of RTA, opportunities for staff engagement, and increase broader community impact of resources

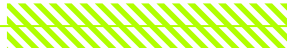


CHAMPIONING IMPACT LOCALLY

In addition to fundraising, volunteering and advocating for justice, equity diversity and inclusion across our workforce and campaigns, Rescue is at the heart of growing local business for good movements. In 2021, we were a founding partner in establishing B Local San Diego, a collective of over 25 certified B Corps in the region focused on addressing issues across climate change, responsible supply chain sourcing, impact investing, sustainability, ocean restoration, education and, of course, health.

With Rescue's CEO at the helm as B Local San Diego's chair, their purpose is to 1) Foster connections among local organizations who share our purpose 2) Increase the positive impact and grow the B Corp Community and 3) Raise awareness of the local and global B Economy.





CONTRIBUTORS

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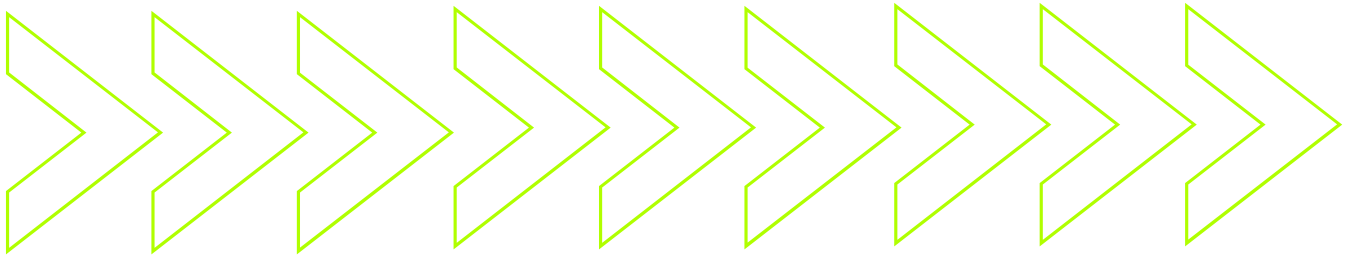
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REFERENCES

¹ [2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey \(NYTS\)](#)

² [Overdose deaths continued to rise in 2021, reaching historic high](#)

³ [ONDCP Plan to Address Methamphetamine Supply and Use](#)

⁴ [Pandemic and prevalence of mental health in frontline workers](#)

⁵ [PTSD: National Center for PTSD](#)

⁶ [Why Hunger: Just the Facts](#)

⁷ [Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults in the United States](#)