

EXPANDING THE REACH OF HARM REDUCTION

Communicating Beyond the Bubble with Values-Based Messaging

To achieve real change, people and communities need power, and communication is key to redistributing that power. Harm reduction workers can use values-based messaging to connect with broader audiences, including policymakers, community sectors, and the general public.

Research shows that messages framed around values of universalism and benevolence generate greater support than those appealing to cost-saving or individualism.

What is Values-Based Messaging?

A strategy that frames harm reduction through prioritising shared human values such as:

- Safety
- Dignity
- Equity
- Community
- Care

Crafting messages through values often shared by people beyond the bubble will help to shift hearts, minds, and systems!

Say

Needle and Syringe Programs

"NSPs are places of community care where people find support, connection, and access to healthcare."

This primes values of health equity, inclusivity and empathy.

"Yes, I want people to be looked after and have access to support when they need it."

Drug Law Reform

"Legalising and regulating drugs will improve the wellbeing, health and safety of our communities."

This primes values of togetherness, community care and safety.

"Yes, I want my community to be healthier, happier and safer."

Instead of

"Every \$1 spent on NSPs saves more than \$27 in healthcare and other costs!"

This primes values of money and individualism.

"No, I don't want us to loose money and I work hard for my money."

"We have to decriminalise drugs to stop the deaths and harm!"

This primes values of moral standing and individualism as well.

"No, I don't want people to die or get hurt, but I, personally, don't do drugs and make better choices."

Why it Matters:

By framing harm reduction through value-based messaging that resonate beyond our immediate networks instead of facts and figures alone, we can nurture empathy and openness to reduce stigma, grow support, and reframe policy conversations.