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Effectively Communicating Program Success



National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments



Safe Supportive Learning

Engagement | Safety | Environment



Our Time Today

- 1 Highlight the value of effective communications.
- 2 Learn how people respond to data—and stories.
- 3 Explore the components of a data-driven success story.
- 4 Examine an array of methods for conveying data.

Part 1: Highlight the value of effective communications.



What Audiences Need to Know

- **How your grant work positively impacts:**
 - Academic outcomes
 - Students' ability to learn
 - Teachers' ability to teach
 - Systems
 - Physical and emotional safety for all
 - Human relationships

Before they can *act* (change), they may need to *know* (raise awareness).

Challenges to Change



“If you tell us to change how we do things, are you saying that we’ve been doing things wrong?”

The “Expert” Approach to Communication

- **Experts tend to:**
 - Tell others what to do because they “know what’s best.”
 - Become baffled when people ignore their advice.
 - Ask “*What’s WRONG with those people?!*”





The “Marketing Mindset”

- **Instead of asking what’s wrong with our audience, we ask:**
 - What’s wrong with what we’re offering?
 - What’s wrong with our message or delivery?
 - How can we solve a problem for them?
 - How can we better demonstrate our benefits?
 - How can we better offset their costs?
 - What are our audience’s beliefs, values, and priorities—and how can we align with those things?

**It’s not what we want them to hear.
It’s what they’re ready to hear.**

Today's Focus

Whom do you need to reach?

- What do you know about the audience's priorities, needs, beliefs, values?
- How do they like to receive information?
- What data do they want/need?

How should you display your data?

- Traditional charts, graphs, tables
- Social math
- Word clouds
- Images/graphics
- Descriptive/explanatory text

How should you communicate your data?

- Descriptive narrative success stories
- Infographics
- Fact sheets
- Public testimony
- One-on-one meetings
- Media
- Video

Remember:

“I am not my intended audience.”



Use the “Participant Chat” pod to list some of the audiences who need to hear about your work.



POLLING QUESTION

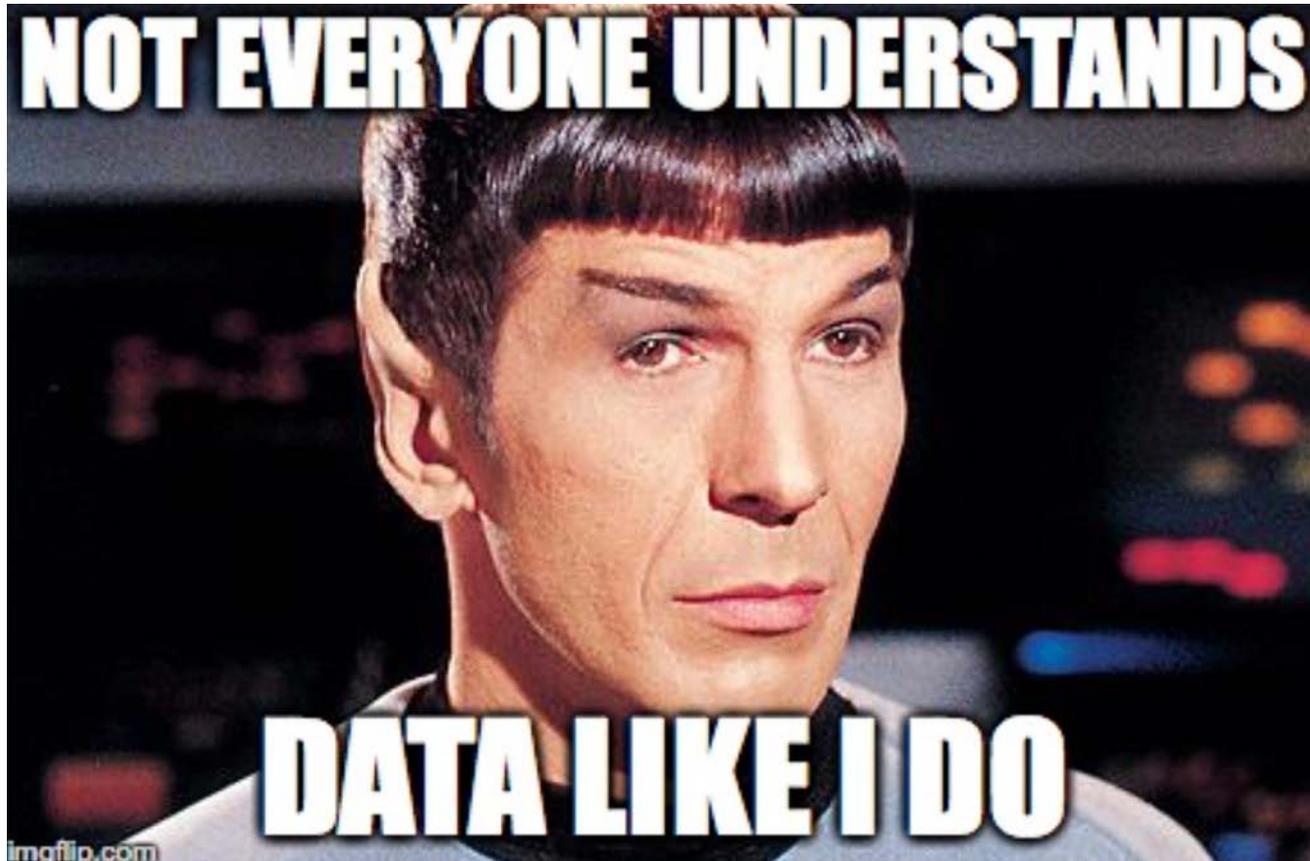
Thinking about the most critical audience you need to reach, what do you believe they are most interesting in seeing?

- A. Only data
- B. Mostly data
- C. An equal amount of data and stories
- D. Mostly stories
- E. Only stories

PART 2: LEARN HOW PEOPLE RESPOND TO DATA—AND STORIES.

Unfortunately...

Data are not easily understood by people.





What Do You See?

T NTAB CP BSN
BCE SPNC B SMTV



What can you recall?





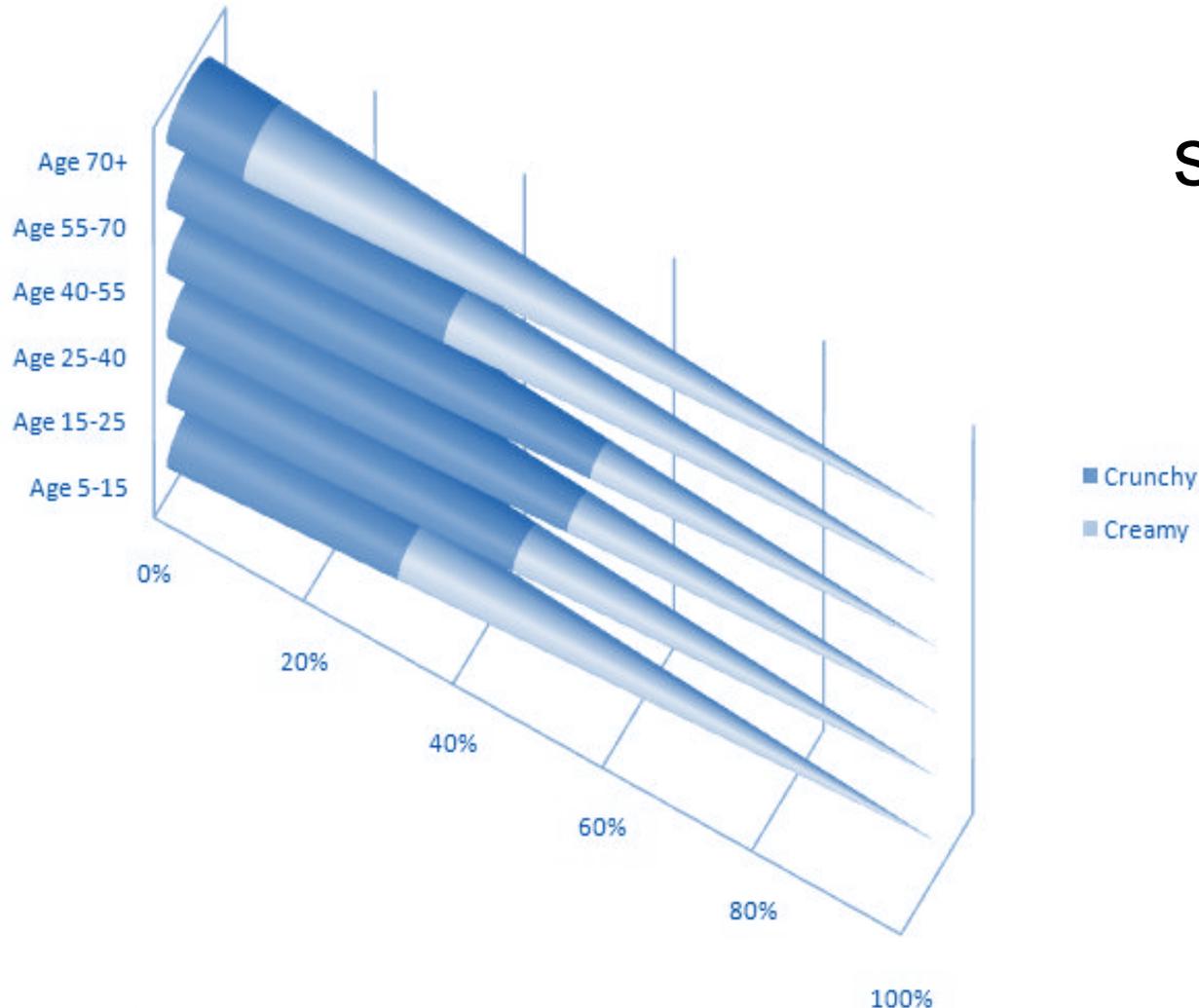
Now, What Do You See?

TNT ABC PBS NBC
ESPN CBS MTV

Context makes all the difference.



Peanut Butter Preferences Over Time



Data without stories (human context) leave audiences with an abstraction that does not move them to action.



Stories without data
(credibility) may leave
audiences moved, but
without a sense of
direction.



**Maybe you've
heard this:**

**“Just show
me the data.”**



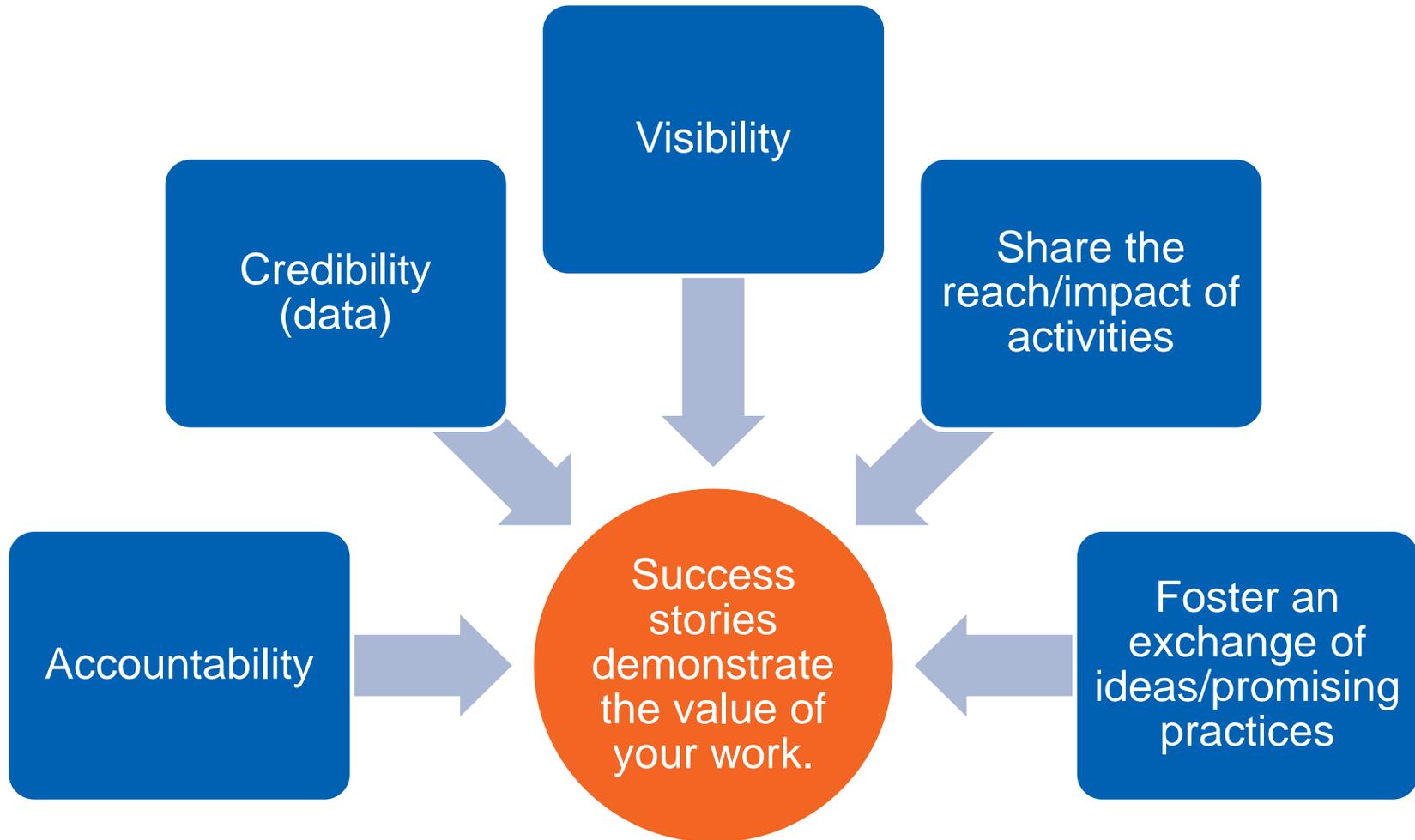
PART 3: EXPLORE THE COMPONENTS OF A DATA-DRIVEN SUCCESS STORY.



Success Stories



Why Success Stories Work





Think of a Fairy Tale

Beginning

- Once upon a time...

Middle

- This happened...
- Then this happened...

End

- And they lived happily ever after.

How Data Help Tell Your Story

Once Upon a Time

Raise or maintain awareness of a problem or need.

We had (or still have) a problem...

And Then...

Predict positive outcomes through action.

We took these steps (or are still taking them)...

Happily Ever After

Demonstrate successful outcomes.

Things are better now...

Process Stories

Outcome Stories

Apply It to Your Stories

Challenge
(Beginning)

- We had a problem...

Solution
(Middle)

- We addressed it by doing this... and this...

Results
(End)

- And now, we are healthy and happy.

Next...

- Here's how we can grow...

For Example...

Challenge (Beginning)

Tommy* was an outgoing, successful student in elementary school, but all that changed in 7th grade. He withdrew and began skipping classes. His teachers grew concerned as his grades dropped, and his classmates steered clear of his bullying behavior. Tommy's story is not unique.

In our district, **it is estimated that 1 in 5 students will experience a mental health issue before graduating high school.** Students with mental health problems often struggle with academics, have difficulty interacting with their teachers and peers, and can be disruptive in the classroom, affecting other students' ability to focus and learn.

Although our district recognized student mental health as a priority, we did not have the staff or the expertise needed to adequately address the needs of students who faced mental health issues.

**Tommy's name has been changed to protect privacy.*

For Example...

Solution (Middle)

Through our XX grant, we first assessed our needs all of our middle schools, looking at discipline rates, absenteeism, and the availability and use of mental health services.

Two years ago, we implemented the XX program in our district's middle schools which provides a mental health curriculum for students along with tools and training to help teachers and staff identify and address mental health issues. **To date, 56 of the district's 68 middle school teachers have completed initial training.**

We also partnered with XX, a community mental health provider, to bring counseling directly to students just like Tommy in a school-based setting. **In just 18 months, 114 students have received direct counseling, helping them build the skills they need to succeed in school and life.**

For Example...

Results (End)

Tommy is in high school now, and once again his teachers describe him as an enthusiastic, happy student. His success is just one of many.

In fact, our middle school teachers and staff see successes like these frequently now. **Four out of five teachers who have received training report calmer classrooms with significantly fewer disciplinary referrals. They also report feeling more confident in identifying and helping students who need more intensive services.**

Our school district recognizes the need to expand mental health programs and services to our elementary and high schools, and our school board has recently identified student mental health as a priority in every grade.



**No outcomes yet?
That's okay!**



Powerful
stories are
everywhere
around us.

Are we
listening for
them?

What Story Do Your Data Tell?

▪ **Did your grant work...**

- Save time or money?
- Save/improve lives?
- Change behaviors or outcomes?
- Impact a large number of people?
- Solve a problem?
- Accomplish something that hasn't been done before?
- Improve systems/reduce silos?

Beyond the data,
these questions
can help you
identify the
personal stories
worth telling.



Questions?

Part 4: Examine an array of methods for conveying data.



Multiple Ways to Represent Data

- **The challenge:**

- Encourage healthier snack choices at movie theaters.

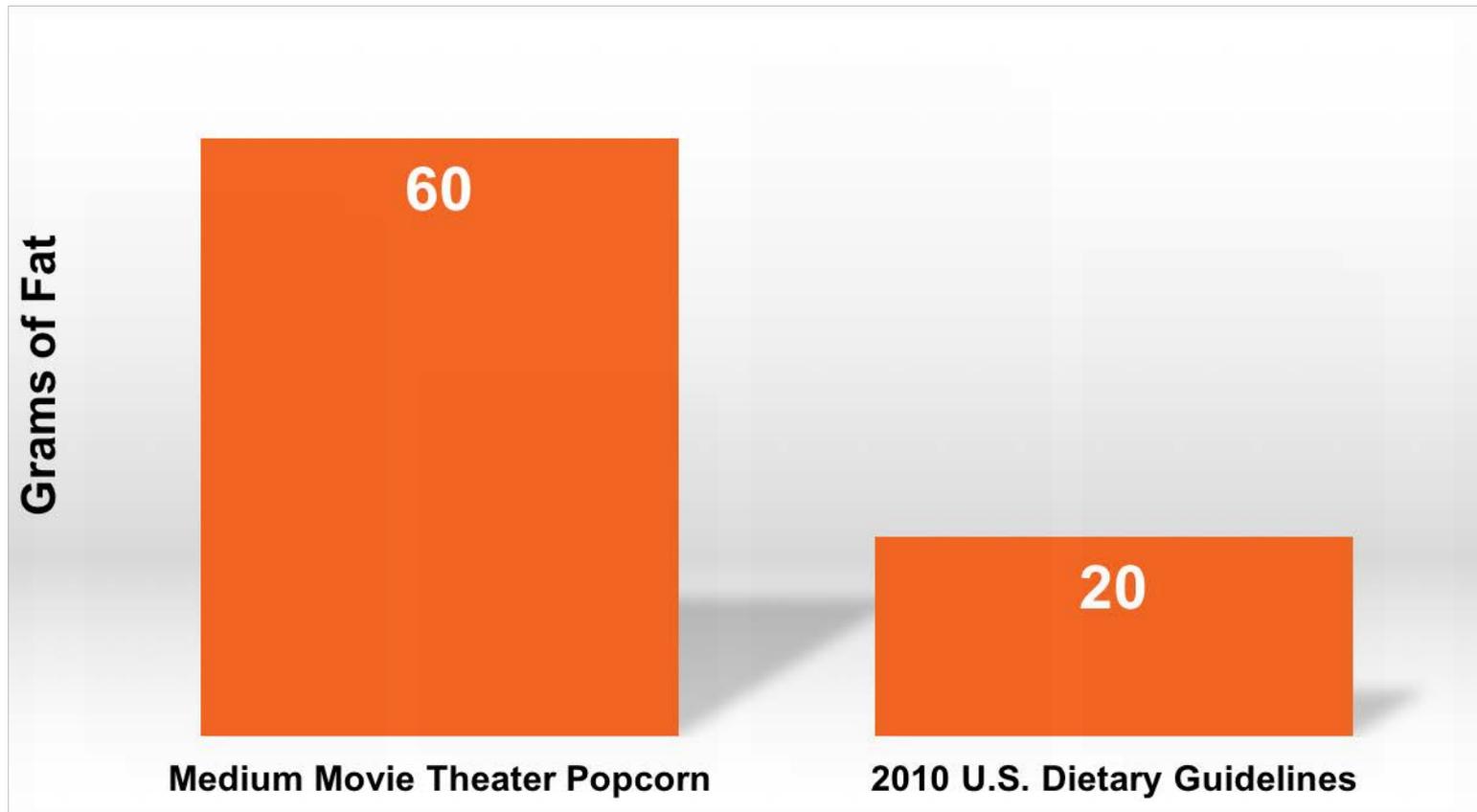
- **Data report:**

- A typical medium popcorn at the movies contains 60 grams of saturated fat.*
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends no more than 20 grams/day of saturated fat.

* Source: Center for Science in the Public Interest
<https://cspinet.org/new/200911182.html>

Would *reading* these data be likely to change your snack choices at the movies?

A Traditional Approach to Data



Is *seeing* this chart more likely to change your snack choices at the movies?

300%

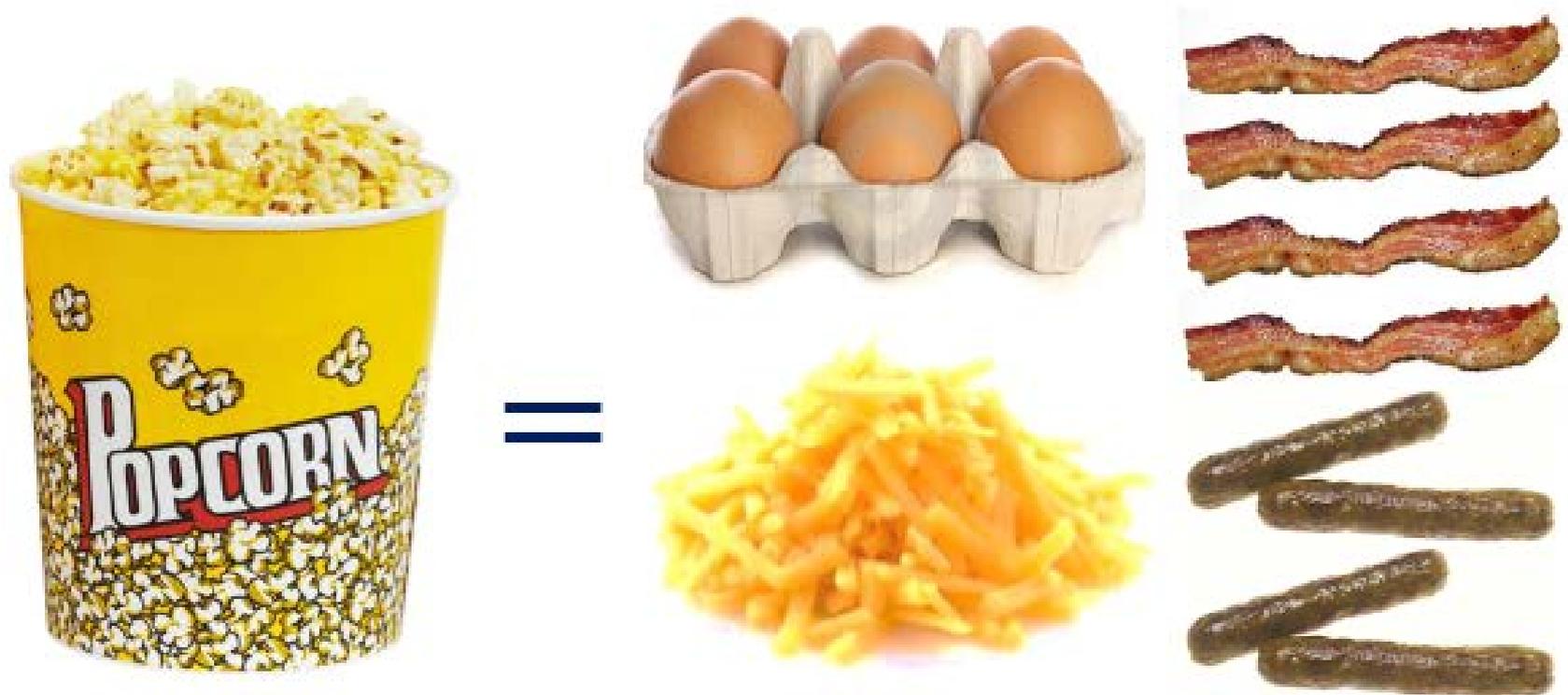
A typical medium movie theater popcorn has *three times* the recommended daily allowance of fat!





A typical medium popcorn at the movies has the same amount of saturated fat as “six eggs with cheddar cheese, four strips of bacon, and four sausage links.”

~ Source: Center for Science in the Public Interest



Here's the winner!

What Story Do the Data Tell?

- Student data*:
 - 46.7 percent report no aspirations beyond high school
 - 38.7 percent don't feel an adult cares about them in school
 - 30.3 expect to drop out before graduation

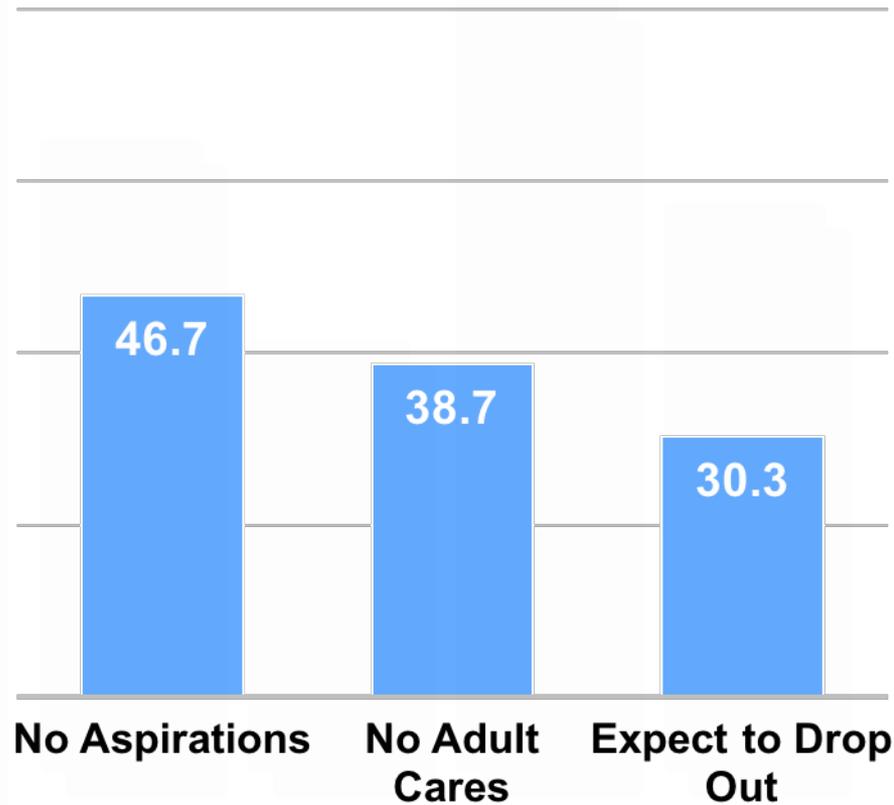
Who should care about this data?

How can we convey the data to better tell this story?

**As reported in 2016 ABC School District survey, grades 9-12*

A Traditional Approach to Reporting Data

Ninth Grade Student Perceptions from Schoolwide Survey



Key Findings

- **46.7 percent** report no aspirations beyond high school
- **38.7 percent** believe there is no adult that cares about them at school
- **30.3 percent** expect to drop out before graduation

Through Their Eyes

Ninth Grade Student Perceptions From Schoolwide Survey

Almost one-half of students have no vision for their future beyond high school.

Almost one in three students don't believe they will graduate.

And more than one-third don't believe that we care.





Social math places data into a real-world context that our audience easily understands.

**(Think back to that popcorn...
and the bacon, eggs, cheese, and sausage.)**



In 1991, enough alcohol was consumed by college students to fill 3,500 Olympic-size swimming pools.

The amount spent on alcohol exceeded dollars spent on books. It was far greater than the combined amount of fellowships and scholarships provided to students.

The image features a large, central text overlay on a brown, diamond-shaped background. The text is white and reads: "The tobacco industry spends more money promoting smoking in a week than the Federal government spends on preventing smoking in a year." The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of a large pile of discarded cigarette butts and a crumpled cigarette pack, suggesting a significant amount of waste and consumption.

The tobacco industry spends more money promoting smoking in a week than the Federal government spends on preventing smoking in a year.



How Social Math Works

Makes an issue urgent and relevant to an audience by comparing your data to universally understood number around:

- Dramatic events (e.g., the number of residents displaced following a natural disaster)
- Understandable costs (e.g., “For less than the price of a cup of coffee each day...”)
- Current numbers from other issues (e.g., “It’s more than 10 times the money we spend to incarcerate someone each year.”)

**Social math doesn’t “dumb down” your issue.
It crystalizes it.**



Social Math: Find the Right Context

- Whom/what does it impact?
- What does it look like?
- How much money does it mean?
- How much time lost does it represent?
- What resources does it use/save?
- How long/wide/short/tall is it?
- Where can we place it?

The key: Comparisons must be made in real numbers—not percentages.



Example: 2015 YRBS Data

Nationwide, 5.6% of all students grades 9-12 did not go to school on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

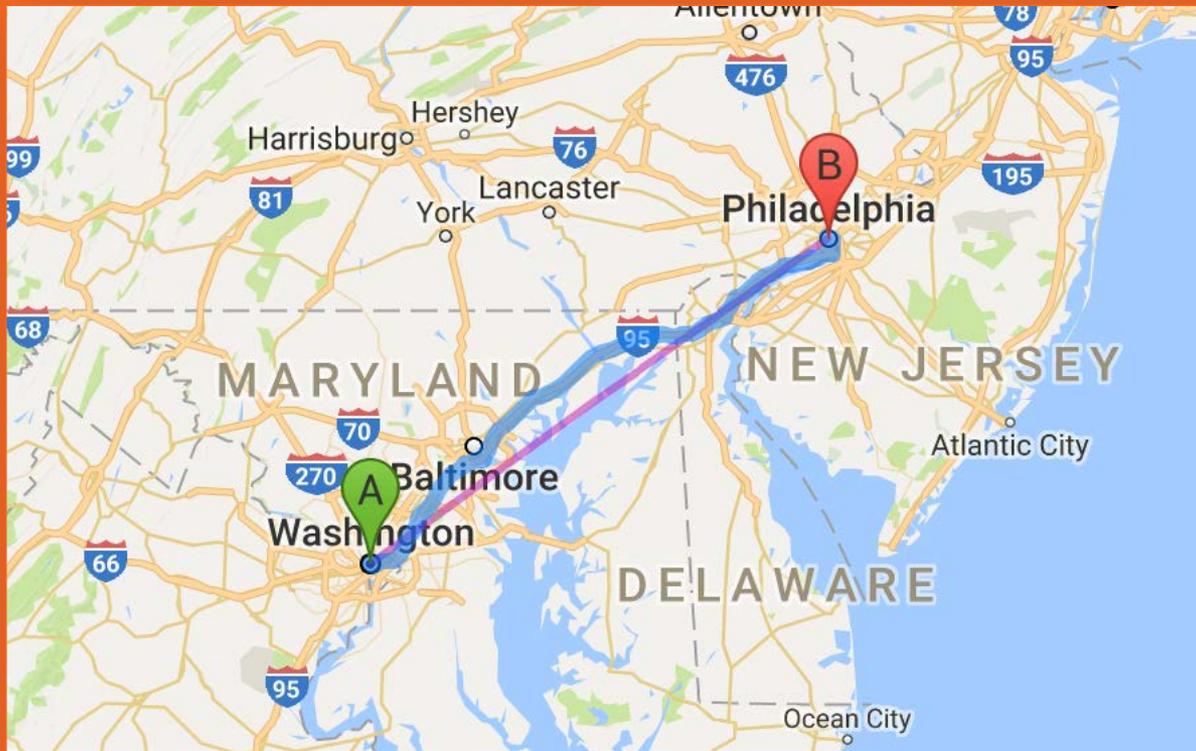


Only 5.6%? That sounds like a pretty small problem to me.

In 2015, almost one million high school students reported skipping school at least one day in the past month because they didn't feel safe.



That's enough high school students to fill more than 18,000 school buses.



If we put every high school student who reported skipping school because they didn't feel safe into school buses, we could line those buses bumper-to-bumper all the way from Washington, DC to Philadelphia, PA.

In 2015, almost one million high school students reported skipping school at least one day in the past month because they didn't feel safe.



More than the population of Austin, TX



Let's Try It!

Let's say that you were able to provide mental health services to 128 students in your school district last year.

How might you use social math (linguistically and/or visually) to represent this number?

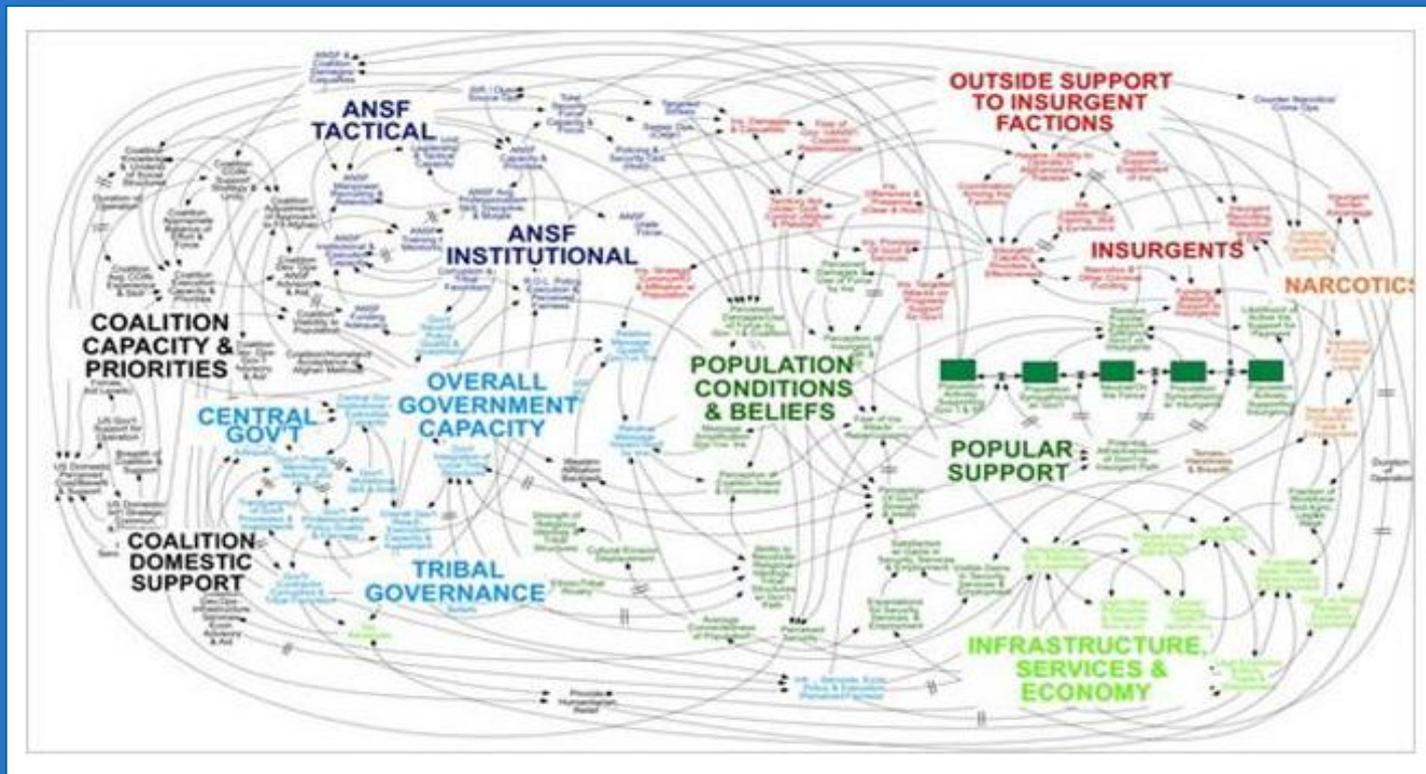
(Chat your ideas!)





Infographics: Accurate visual representations of data that can help tell your story

But first, a word of caution...



CHILDREN ARE DIFFERENT

YOUTH AND ADULTS ARE DIFFERENT.

As a result, adolescents are more prone to risky behavior.

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

EXPOSED TO HIGH LEVELS OF VIOLENCE

54.1% of people serving life-without-parole sentences for crimes committed as youth reported witnessing violence in their homes.

CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Research indicates that teens are still developing their decision-making capacity for change, even when they have experienced some trauma. You can make a difference: they can learn from their mistakes and be rehabilitated if given the opportunity.

HIGH RATES OF ABUSE

44.9% reported experiencing physical abuse. 79.2% of girls reported sexual abuse.

THESE SCIENTIFIC DIFFERENCES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF THREE RECENT US SUPREME COURT RULINGS.

MILLER V. ALABAMA (2012)

In Miller v. Alabama the Court required that courts "take into account how children are different, and how their differences render them irreducibly different from adults in ways that bear on sentencing decisions that result in life in prison."

GRAHAM V. FLORIDA (2010)

In Graham v. Florida the Court also held that because children have a greater capacity for rehabilitation and have a lower level of culpability than adults, "they are less deserving of life."

ROPER V. SIMMONS (2005)

In Roper v. Simmons the Court held that death penalty for children was unconstitutional. "The central issue of the case was whether the Constitution's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment applied to juveniles. The Court held that the death penalty for juveniles was unconstitutional because it was disproportionate and excessive punishment for juveniles."

BOTTOM LINE:

Because of the difference in their brains, the impact of childhood trauma, and the U.S. Supreme Court rulings based on those facts, children who commit crimes should be held accountable in age-appropriate ways that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT FAIRSENTENCINGOFYOUTH.ORG. TALKPART.COM/SMITH

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Anatomy of an Infographic

- Subject is clear
- Color palette and iconography are consistent

CHILDREN ARE DIFFERENT

YOUTH AND ADULTS ARE DIFFERENT.

As a result, adolescents are more prone to risky behavior.

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

EXPOSED TO HIGH LEVELS OF VIOLENCE

54.1% of people serving life without parole sentences for crimes committed as youth reported witnessing violence in their homes.

CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Research indicates that teens are still developing their decision-making capacity for change, even when they have experienced some trauma. Youth are malleable; they can learn from their mistakes and be rehabilitated if given the opportunity.

HIGH RATES OF ABUSE

44.9% reported experiencing physical abuse. 79.2% of girls reported sexual abuse.

THESE SCIENTIFIC DIFFERENCES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF THREE RECENT US SUPREME COURT RULINGS.

MILLER V. ALABAMA (2012)

In Miller v. Alabama the Court recognized that youth "who are exposed to violence are different" and that their differences warrant special treatment sentencing them to a lifetime in prison.

GRAHAM V. FLORIDA (2010)

In Graham v. Florida the Court also held that because children have a greater capacity for rehabilitation and have a lower level of culpability than adults, "they are less deserving of life."

ROPER V. SIMMONS (2005)

In Roper v. Simmons the Court held that death penalty for children who commit crimes is unconstitutional. "It is not so much the fact that the child's mind is still developing, but the fact that the child's character is not so well formed that the child should not be held to the same criminal responsibility as an adult."

BOTTOM LINE:

Because of the difference in their brains, the impact of childhood trauma, and the U.S. Supreme Court rulings based on those facts, children who commit crimes should be held accountable in age-appropriate ways that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

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Anatomy of an Infographic (cont.)

- Issue is clearly explained
- Graphics help define sections

CHILDREN ARE DIFFERENT

YOUTH AND ADULTS ARE DIFFERENT.

AS A RESULT, ADOLESCENTS ARE MORE PRONE TO RISKY BEHAVIOR.

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

EXPOSED TO HIGH LEVELS OF VIOLENCE
54.1% of people serving life without parole sentences for crimes committed as youth reported witnessing violence in their homes.

CAPACITY FOR CHANGE
Research indicates that teens are still developing their decision-making capacity for change, and when they have experienced severe trauma, such as violence, they are more likely to make bad decisions and to miss out on opportunities.

HIGH RATES OF ABUSE
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- ROPER V. SIMMONS (2005)**
In Roper v. Simmons the Court held that death penalty for children who commit capital offenses "is cruel and unusual punishment" because children have a greater capacity for rehabilitation and have a lower level of culpability than adults. "They are less deserving of life."

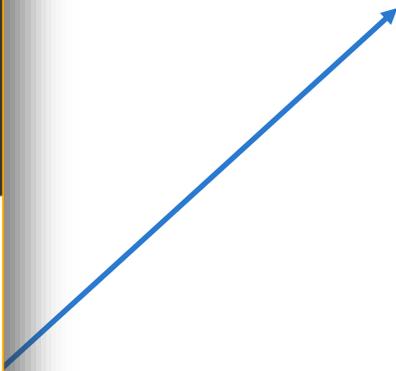
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Anatomy of an Infographic (cont.)

- Deeper data give more credibility
- Summarizes key findings



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In Graham v. Florida the Court also held that because children have a greater capacity for rehabilitation and have a lower level of culpability than adults, "they are less deserving of life."

ROPER V. SIMMONS (2005)

In Roper v. Simmons the Court held that because of their immaturity, lack of experience, and susceptibility to peer pressure and other external influences, children are less culpable than adults and thus should not be sentenced to death.

BOTTOM LINE:

Because of the difference in their brains, the impact of childhood trauma, and the U.S. Supreme Court rulings based on those facts, children who commit crimes should be held accountable in age-appropriate ways that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

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Anatomy of an Infographic (cont.)

- Offers a call to action
- Cites sources and includes contact info

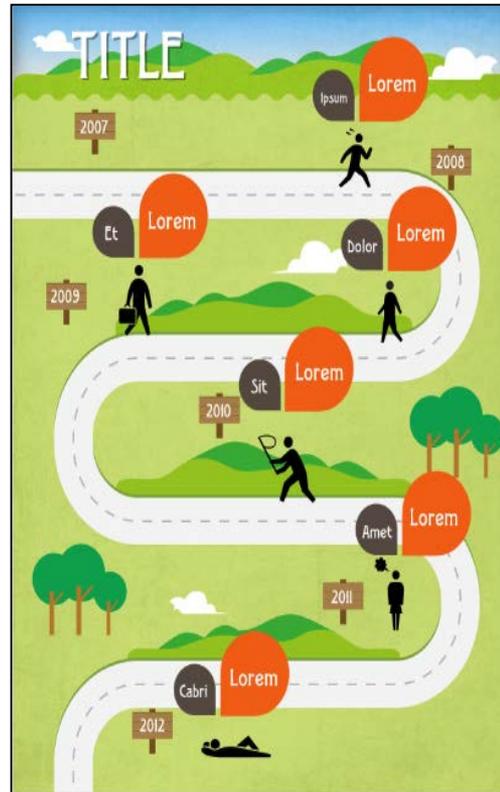
Create Infographics Online

Piktochart



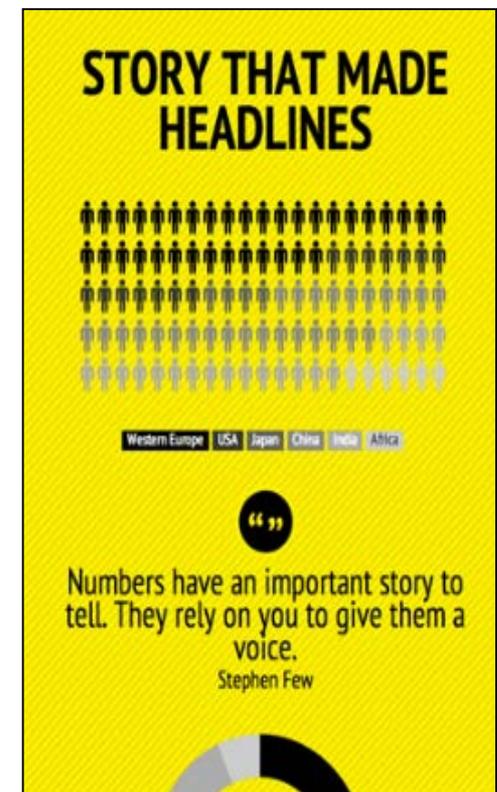
<http://piktochart.com>

Easel.ly



<http://easel.ly>

Infogr.am



<http://infogr.am>

PART 5: WRAP-UP

Once Again

Whom do you need to reach?

- What do you know about the audience's priorities, needs, beliefs, values?
- How do they like to receive information?
- What data do they want/need?

How should you display your data?

- Traditional charts, graphs, tables
- Social math
- Word clouds
- Images/graphics
- Descriptive/explanatory text

How should you convey your data?

- Descriptive narrative success stories
- Infographics
- Fact sheets
- Public testimony
- One-on-one meetings
- Media
- Video



- *Making Data Talk: A Workbook*, National Cancer Institute:
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/cancerlibrary/mdt-workbook.pdf>
- CDC's Division of Community Health Success Story Application:
<https://nccd.cdc.gov/DCHSuccessStories/default.aspx>
- *Doing Social Math*, FrameWorks Institute:
<http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/framing-files.html>
and
http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/eZines/doing_social_math_ezine.pdf



Key Takeaways

- For most of us, data are an abstraction that requires meaningful context for it to be understood.
- Stories—linguistic and/or visual—provide meaningful context.
- Together, stories move our hearts while data influences our minds.
- There are multiple ways to represent and communicate data at any point in grant funding. Our choices should be grounded in the preferences of our audiences.
- Social math is a particularly potent method for crystallizing data for audiences.



Questions?

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& Trainer

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June 22, 2017; 2:30 – 4:00 ET

Sustained Progress: Effective Strategies to Support Successful Programs

September 28; 2:30 – 4:00 ET

Extending Your Impact: Increasing Buy-In, Expanding Partnerships, and Engaging Stakeholders, Including Families

Thank you for joining today's Online Learning Event!

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We look forward to being with you again on
June 22!