



TEXAS TEENAGER ATTITUDES TO RECYCLING

Presentation of Market
Research Findings
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INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

- DipM, MCIM: Member Chartered Institute of Marketing
- 10 year career in marketing, market research and advertising
- Now an Environmental Educator for Texas Discovery Gardens
- Masters Science Marketing Research dissertation: 20k words
- City of Irving joint project
- New recycling program in schools



RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- Identify teenager awareness and attitudes to current recycling initiatives
- Identify teenager media and message preferences when promoting recycling



LITERATURE REVIEW

- TEENAGER PSYCHE
- TEENAGERS & MARKETING
- TEENAGER ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY



LITERATURE REVIEW : TEENAGER PSYCHE

- **No real ‘average teen’**
- **Recognized Growth Stages**
 - Tween (9-12); Teen (13-17); Young Adult (18 -)
- **Recognized Developmental Tasks**
 - Develop an adult-like self-identity
 - Emancipate from parents/guardians
 - Acquire skills for future economic independence
 - Develop psychosexual differentiation



LITERATURE REVIEW : TEENAGER PSYCHE

Shared characteristics:

- Individualization / Developing self-identity
- Present orientated
- KAGOY = “Kids Are Getting Older Younger”
- Media savvy
- Increase in disposable income
- “More” generation
- Technology = instant gratification



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGER PSYCHE

- **Same core reference groups (SSSS)**
 - Family
 - School
 - Peers*
- **But changing contexts**
 - Diversifying family structures
 - Higher expectations
 - Media culture / exposure
 - Information superhighway



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGER PSYCHE

- **Peers as a reference group**
 - Emotional crutch
 - Friendships replace time with family
- **Not an easy transition to adulthood**
 - Friendship/ school/ family/ learning issues
 - Puberty / chemical imbalances
 - Harder to control behavior
 - Extreme self-consciousness



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & MARKETING

How kids spend leisure time:

- **Watching TV: 64%**
- **Reading for pleasure: 18%**
- **Listening to CDs or tapes: 19%**
- **Listening to the radio : 17%**
- **Playing computer games : 8%**
- **Playing video games : 6%**
- **On-line : 5%**



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & MARKETING

- **VERY Lucrative Market**
 - US teenagers spend between \$94 – \$153 billion a year (source: Kidfluence, 2003)
- **Exposure to Marketing Messages:**
 - TV, Internet, Radio, Magazines, Movies, Sport, Outdoor Events, Music Events, Video & Computer Games, Schools, Shopping Malls, Ambient



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & MARKETING

CHILD DEVELOPMENT & TV

- **Aged 2-5: trusts commercials, doesn't know difference between commercials & advertising**
- **Aged 6-9: pays a lot of attention to ads, but differentiates from programming, begins to recognize that ads are trying to persuade**
- **Aged 10-14: less interested in ads, knows the difference between ads & programming, understands some persuasion techniques**



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & MARKETING

- **Majority of teenagers need ‘peer acceptance’ to accept a product or concept**
- **“Cool’ needs to differentiate**
 - **Can’t be same for younger market**
 - **Can’t apply to adults**
 - **Can’t appear to be trying too hard (can be cynical)**
 - **Can’t be stagnant**
 - **Doesn’t have to be realistic or perfect**



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & THE ENVIRONMENT

- Variety of Information Sources
 - Family, school, peers, media
 - Inaccurate, anecdotal, incomplete
 - This also applies to adults!
- Recycling Behavior = intergenerationally (IG) influenced



LITERATURE REVIEW: TEENAGERS & THE ENVIRONMENT

- School Curriculum
 - Not comprehensive
 - Not decisive
 - Eg. Grade 8 Science Book (400+ pages)
 - 2 pgs on solid waste disposal, 2pgs on recycling, 4 sentences on composting.
 - Not one High School in Irving offered Environmental Science



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- 8 focus groups, 80 students, Irving ISD, April 2005
- Proposed sampling frame:
 - 4 schools; 2 middle schools, 2 high schools; 2gps each school
 - Grade 8s and Grade 9s
 - 50% Ethnic, 50% Caucasian background
 - 50% girls, 50% boys
- Screener questionnaire
 - Recycling Propensity – no Recycling Rejecters, no Recycling Advocates
 - No close friends, no class disrupters



REALITY

- Recruiting difficult
 - Timing, transport & incentive issues
 - Parental permission required
 - No screener questionnaire
- Final number 65 students
 - 43% male, 57% female; 28% Anglo, 72% non-Anglo
 - Four G8 groups, Three G9 groups, One G10 group
 - Self-consciousness issues re. peers / tape-recorder
- Future research:
 - Same sex groups
 - Minimum of 90 minutes during school hours
 - Snowball recruitment method
 - Teacher buy-in / TEKS link-up



METHODOLOGY

- Focus Group format
 - Introduction, format & objectives
 - Three individual exercises
 - Guided group discussion
 - “Concept board” activity

- 3 Individual warm-up exercises
 - Recycling propensity
 - Recycling behavior
 - Recycling education recall
 - Attitude to recycling



DATA ANALYSIS

Caveats:

- Not a large sample
- Error margin +/- 5%
- “Test” mentality of students
= Want to give the *right* answer



FIRST EXERCISE: RECYCLING PROPENSITY

Worksheet One

Remember – this is not a test, there is no right or wrong answer!!

What have you recycled over the last month? (circle all that apply)

- Paper Aluminum Cans Glass
- Plastic Food scraps (e.g. in compost)

What have you recycled over the last week? (circle all that apply)

- Paper Aluminum Cans Glass
- Plastic Food scraps (e.g. in compost)

Have you recycled anything today? (circle all that apply)

- Paper Aluminum Cans Glass
- Plastic Food scraps (e.g. in compost)

Circle only ONE of the statements below:

- I recycle when I can, both at school and at home.
- I recycle when I remember to.
- I recycle always, every chance I get.
- I don't really recycle stuff much.



METHODOLOGY: FOCUS GROUP FORMAT

Second individual worksheet

- 11 questions, multiple choice
 - Actual recycling behavior
 - Recycling knowledge recall
 - Observed behavior



SECOND EXERCISE: RECYCLING BEHAVIOUR

1	Do you or your family regularly recycle at home by using the blue bags which get collected from the kerbside?	A - YES B - NO C - We have done but we don't now D - We live in an apartment
2	Do you or your family ever recycle by using the recycling bins outside some churches?	A - YES B - NO (go to Question 4)
3	If you or your family have recycled at a church or other place of worship, is this the same place you and your family go to worship?	A - YES B - NO C - Our church doesn't have recycling bins D - Our church has them but we don't recycle here E - I don't really go to church
4	Has your family ever brought recycling to school in a car to put into the school recycling bins?	A - YES B - NO
5	If your family does recycling, who makes sure that the trash is separated into recycling stuff and regular trash? (Recycling can be glass or bottles or aluminium cans or plastic or food scraps for compost).	A - Your mother or your Grandma B - Your father or your Grandpa C - Older sister/s or brother/s D - Younger sister/s or brother/s E - You do it F - We don't recycle at home G - We all do it



SECOND EXERCISE: RECALL /OBSERVED BEHAVIOUR

6	Do you remember learning about recycling in Science class?	A - YES B - NO C - Not sure
7	Do you remember what year or years your school teachers talked about recycling?	WRITE DOWN GRADE/S or leave blank:
8	Do you remember learning about the “recycling loop”?	A - YES B - NO C - Not sure
9	Do you remember seeing any students using the new blue recycling bins inside the classroom?	A - Yes, all students use them B - Yes, a lot of students use them C - Some students use them D - A few students use them E - I have not seen any students using them
10	Have you seen any <i>school staff and/or teachers</i> using the new blue recycling bins?	A - YES a lot B - Only a few C - NO
11	Do you remember seeing any posters advertising the new recycling blue bins?	A - YES B - NO



RECYCLING BEHAVIOUR

- Claim to Recycle (Worksheet 1):
 - 34% answered a) when I can
 - 22% answered b) when I remember
 - 3% answered c) every chance I get
 - 17% answered d) I don't recycle much
- Actual Recycling Behavior (Worksheet 1&2):
 - 30% Low recycling level
 - 17% Medium recycling level
 - 18% High recycling level

NOTE: Percentages do not equal 100% due to ommittance of Grade 10 group scores



RECYCLING BEHAVIOUR

- 18% Parents Used the Outdoor School Recycling Bins
- Who separates the recycling at home?
 - 55% don't recycle at home;
 - 17% said they did it themselves (of which 81% were Medium or High recyclers);
 - Remainder said their guardians or older siblings
- “It's not really a chore, a chore is something you *have* to do” (Male, Anglo, 15)



EDUCATION RECALL

- Do you remember learning about recycling at school?
 - 63% recalled learning about recycling at school;
 - 6% didn't;
 - 31% weren't sure
- Do you remember learning about the 'recycling loop'?
 - 14% knew the 'recycling loop';
 - 51% not sure;
 - 35% couldn't describe it if asked



OBSERVED RECYCLING IN SCHOOL

- HAVE YOU SEEN STUDENTS USING THE BLUE BINS?
 - 8% said all students have been using them*;
 - 29% see a lot;
 - 32% see some;
 - 15.5% see a few;
 - 15.5% not seen any students using the blue bins
- HAVE YOU SEEN STAFF USING THE BLUE BINS?
 - 43% seen staff using bins a lot*;
 - 34% sometimes;
 - 23% said no
- DO YOU RECALL SEEING ANY RECYCLING POSTERS?
 - 40% recalled seeing recycling posters in their school

* Results skewed by two schools with enthusiastic 'recycling' advocate teachers



THIRD EXERCISE: WORD ASSOCIATION

- List of 45 words or statements
- Asked to circle 15 or more that they feel represent recycling issues
- Then asked to indicate 3 they feel have the strongest association to recycling
- Then asked to circle those they feel have no correlation to recycling



THIRD EXERCISE: WORD ASSOCIATION

1	Global Warming	16	Serious issue	31	Interesting
2	Waste not, want not	17	It's our tax money	32	Necessary
3	Local politics	18	Landfills are a problem	33	Cool people do it, it's <i>hot</i>
4	Tomorrow's problem	19	Curbside collection	34	Not cool, boring
5	Global Warming	20	Someone else's problem	35	Every little helps
6	Sustainable future	21	For rich people	36	Doesn't make a difference
7	Consumerism	22	For poor people	37	Makes me feel really good about myself
8	Overpopulation	23	Eco-terrorists	38	Something parents do
9	Ozone Depletion	24	Eco-warriors	39	Makes me feel less guilty
10	Habitat destruction	25	My school thinks it is important	40	Nothing in it for me
11	Loss of biodiversity	26	Everybody's doing it	41	Something younger kids do
12	Natural resources running out	27	Hardly anyone's doing it	42	Messy and dirty
13	Less waste at city dump	28	It's the law	43	Easy to do
14	Increasing trash levels	29	It is only trash	44	The intelligent thing to do
15	Environmentally friendly	30	Hard to do	45	I have no time to do it



DATA ANALYSIS

Strongly Associate with Recycling

- 24 students listed Less Waste at City Dump (7 males, 17 females)
- 17 students said it was a Serious Issue
- 16 students associate recycling with Natural Resources Running Out
- 14 said that “Every Little Helps” (slightly more likely to be non-Anglo females)

BASE = 65 students, each select 3 choices out of 45 options



DATA ANALYSIS

Do Not Associate with Recycling:

- 49 students stated it was not for poor people, 47 said it was not for rich people
- 39 students said it had nothing to do with local politics, 36 students said it was not related to 'our tax money'
- 38 students did not associate recycling as being 'just trash'

BASE = 65 students, each select 3 choices out of 45 options



DATA ANALYSIS

Recycling Attitudes:

- 35 students did not think that 'cool people did it'
- Only 3 students strongly agree that it is 'tomorrow's problem'
- 23 students said it made them feel good about themselves (21 were female); 4 felt this strongly (3 females, 1 male)
- 49 out of 65 students thought it was necessary (29 were girls)
- 18 thought that it was 'messy and dirty'

BASE = 65 students, each select 3 choices out of 45 options



GROUP DISCUSSION

- ‘Warmed up’ topic
- Discussion Guide:
 - Benefits / drawbacks of recycling (flipchart answers)
 - Does recycling have an ‘image’?
 - Who does / doesn’t do it at school
 - What would make students recycle more?



BENEFITS /BARRIERS

- **BENEFITS**

- Saves the environment, saves trees
- Stops global warming
- Pretty easy to do (convenient at school)
- Get money (cans, paper)
- Gratifying

- **BARRIERS**

- Not everyone does it
- Hard to remember
- Don't like being "told" to do it
- Takes time
- Complicated, hard to do



RECYCLING IMAGE

- Not that 'cool', has no real tangible connection or impact on their lives
- It's an individual choice, not a group activity
- Some consider it 'elementary school' behavior
- For some it appeals to "rebellious" side to not do it



RECYCLING IMAGE: IS IT COOL?

“I don’t think it necessarily needs to be cool, as long as a person knows that it’s right.” (Female, Anglo, 15)

“It’s not that it’s *not* cool, like if you were going to recycle something, nobody’s going to say “Hey you recycled” and laugh at you or anything. But it’s also not like a big thing, no-one is going to say “Hey you recycled, that’s awesome!” (Female, Hisp, 14)



RECYCLING IMAGE: IS IT COOL?

“I don’t think people really give that much attention to it. When you see somebody doing it, it’s just what they’re doing.” (Female, Anglo, 15)

“Big contributing factor tho’ is that we’re teenagers, and we’re naturally rebellious, and when the establishment is trying to tell us that it is good for the older adult group...I mean, I don’t care, but some kids are like “oh, the teachers are trying to tell me to do this....”(Male, Anglo, 17)

“You’re more worried about *your world* type-thing”
(Female, Hisp, 16)



RECYCLING IMAGE: IS IT COOL?

“We saw this video, this science guy, with the recycling bin, he was trying to make it cool, but it ended up kinda cheesy”. (Male, Anglo, 14)

“I think it’s kinda nerdy” (Female, Hisp, 17)

“ I’ve seen people who like, throw the trash on the ground just because...”(Female, Hisp, 16)

“...you see the bins and everything, but you don’t see anybody else recycling; so you’re thinking like, if they don’t really care about it, I don’t see why I have to do it; or you don’t really think later on how it’s really going to affect your life.” (Female, Anglo, 15)



RECYCLING IMAGE: WHO DOES IT?

“I used to do it in Middle School, but now it’s like, well, I think its because you are thinking about so many other things” (Female, Hisp, 16)

“When you’re in elementary school, you’re learning, so you know, you’re easily told what to do and how to do it. When you get older, you develop your own mind so...” (Female, 14, Asian)

“The older you get, the less time you have, and like, sometimes in Elementary School...you have free time; by the time you get to High School you have so much work and everything else to do” (Female, 15, Indian)



WHO RECYCLES AT SCHOOL

- Not one 'type' of person
- Some High School 'cliques' wouldn't
 - The "jocks"
 - The "preps"
 - The EMO kids
- 'Skaters' & 'Goths' might



RECYCLING IMAGE: WHO DOES IT?

“I think it is the individual person in the group, like if they want to do it they will recycle, I don’t really think it really matters what group they’re in” (Female, Anglo, 15)

“It could be anybody” (Female, AfAm, 17)

“The jocks wouldn’t! Skaters might, you know, dump something in the trash as they go skateboarding by!” (Male, Anglo, 15)

“...they tend to know more about the environment” (Female, Hisp, 13)



RECYCLING: WHAT WOULD MAKE STUDENTS RECYCLE MORE?

- **They want to see other people doing it more**
- **They want their own peer group to see it as 'cool' (something teenagers do)**
- **They don't insist it has to be rewarded**



RECYCLING: WHAT WOULD MAKE STUDENTS RECYCLE MORE?

“ Well around the school we have the Viking Crew, and if they kind of pushed it more...I want to be a Viking when I am a Senior” (Female, Anglo, 16)

“If somebody says it a lot” (Female, Hisp, 15)

“If the teacher acts more on it, the students do” (Male, Anglo, 17)

“It would take some work!” (Female, Anglo, 15)



MEDIA PREFERENCES: GROUP ACTIVITY

- Scenario: Role Play
 - All advertising executives
 - Need a campaign to improve recycling rates for students
- Asked to create 'concept boards'
- Given 50+ pictures
 - Teen and lifestyle magazines
- Incentivized

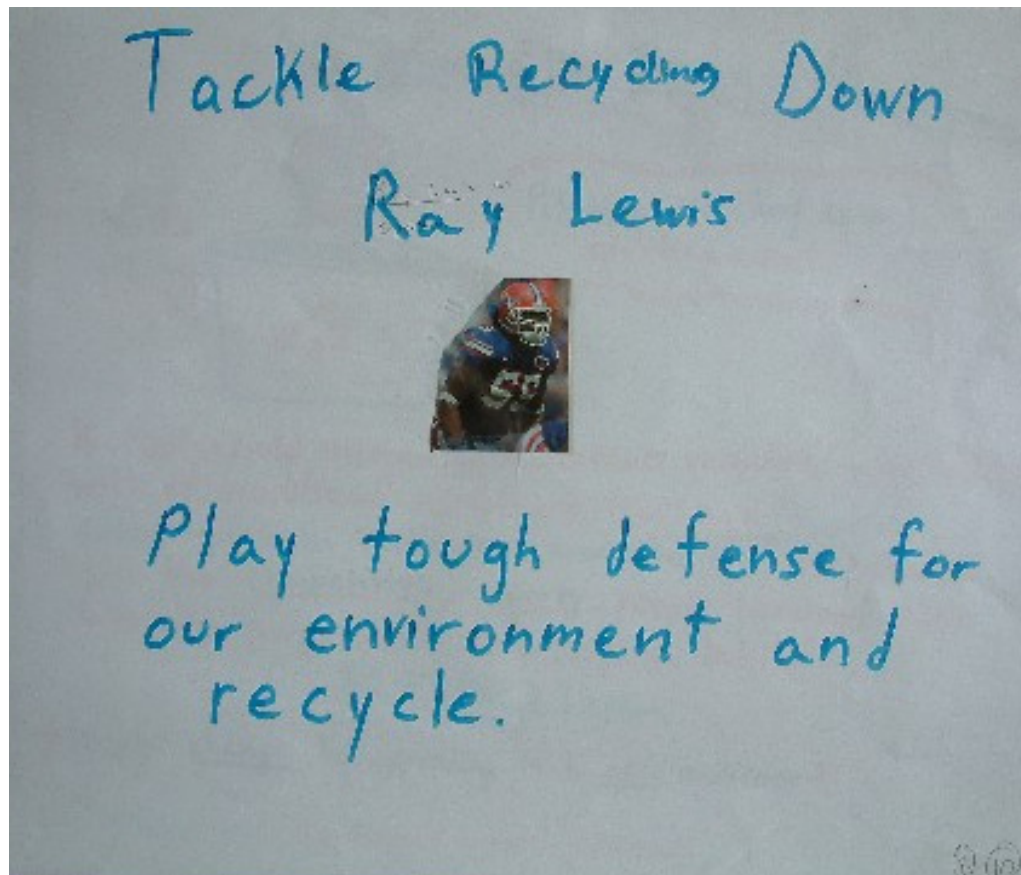


GROUP ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

- Challenging activity
 - Creativity not everyone's gift
 - Most stuck with poster format
- Common themes:
 - Sports/celebrity endorsement
 - Inclusive activity
 - Shock value e.g. “..Or This Will Happen”



FOUR FINALISTS



COPY:

- Tackle Recycling Down
- Play tough defense for our environment and recycle

OBJECTIVE: PERSUADE

MAJOR THEMES:

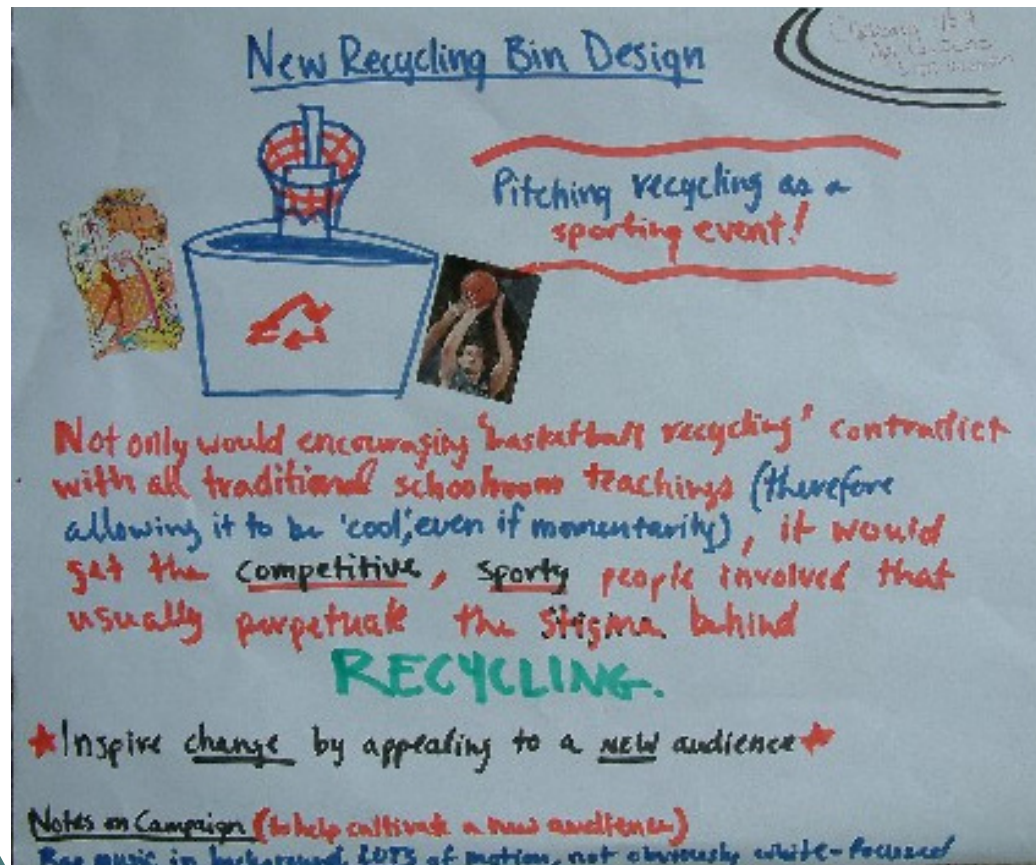
- Sports theme
- Celebrity theme

IMAGERY:

- Ray Lewis (or other famous football defense player)



FOUR FINALISTS



COPY: (for Marketing Campaign)

- New Recycling Bin Design
- Pitching recycling as a sporting event!
- Not only would encouraging 'basketball recycling' contradict with all traditional schoolroom teachings (therefore allowing it to be 'cool', even if momentarily), it would get the *competitive*, *sporty* people involved that usually perpetuate the *stigma* behind recycling.
- Inspire change by appealing to a new audience.
- NOTES on CAMPAIGN: (To help cultivate a new audience) Rap music in background, LOTS of motion, not obviously white focused.

OBJECTIVE: PERSUADE

MAJOR THEMES:

- Attempt "cool" (subverts schoolroom teaching)
- Sports theme
- Multi-racial appeal



FOUR FINALISTS



COPY:

- Protect what your Mama gave you
- Recycle!! Help save mother nature

OBJECTIVE: PERSUADE

MAJOR THEME:

- Attempt at 'cool' via popular music, making the strap line a twist on a popular teen rap song: "Protect what your daddy gave you"

IMAGERY:

- Collage of natural vistas in shape of planet



FOUR FINALISTS



COPY:

- ROCK THE BIN
- Recycle

OBJECTIVE: PERSUADE

MAJOR THEMES:

- Attempt at "cool"
- Celebrity endorsement (male and female teenagers).
- "Used to see the celebrities on the library posters and look what book they were reading".

IMAGERY:

- Use of graphics
- Use of graphic font
- Use of Recycling Loop icon



MEDIA & MESSAGE INSIGHTS

- Needs to look/act like a teenager communication
- Cannot remain “static”
- Needs to connect to ‘their world’
- Needs to stop being ‘trash’
 - More education on the ‘recycling loop’



SUGGESTED 'CREATIVE BRIEF' TOPICS

- Key Insights: Teenagers do not see recycling as important or relevant enough to do. Recycling is just another type of trash. Recycling is the 'rule'.
- Proposition: Recycling is What We Do
- Tone of Voice: Challenging, shock value, subversive?
- Creative Look: Think iPod; Converse; video graphics; teen idols (not too perfect!); mixtures of fact and fantasy.



SUGGESTED EXECUTION OPTIONS

- **Campaign Mechanics:**
 - Involve a celebrity (or their teenager!)
 - Involve established, admired teenager groups at school
 - Female Bias?
 - Link to School Sports Days? Competitions?
 - Posters: Keep rotating, on recycling bins
 - Involve teachers through student projects
 - Use the bins as Art Projects



SOME POSSIBLE STRAP-LINES

- Stash It! Don't Trash It!
- Hey You! Don't trash my Future! RECYCLE!
- Recycling is Not A Dirty Word
- Recycling: An Earth Savings Account in ***your*** name.
- Don't Waste Your Breath! (Or your paper, or your cans, or your future!)
- Earth Matters. Something You Control.
- My Lifestyle! Not a Waste-style!
- Teenagers! Close the Loop!