



Tailoring Messages for Impact

Communication Strategies for Strengthening IVP Programs

Safe States Alliance

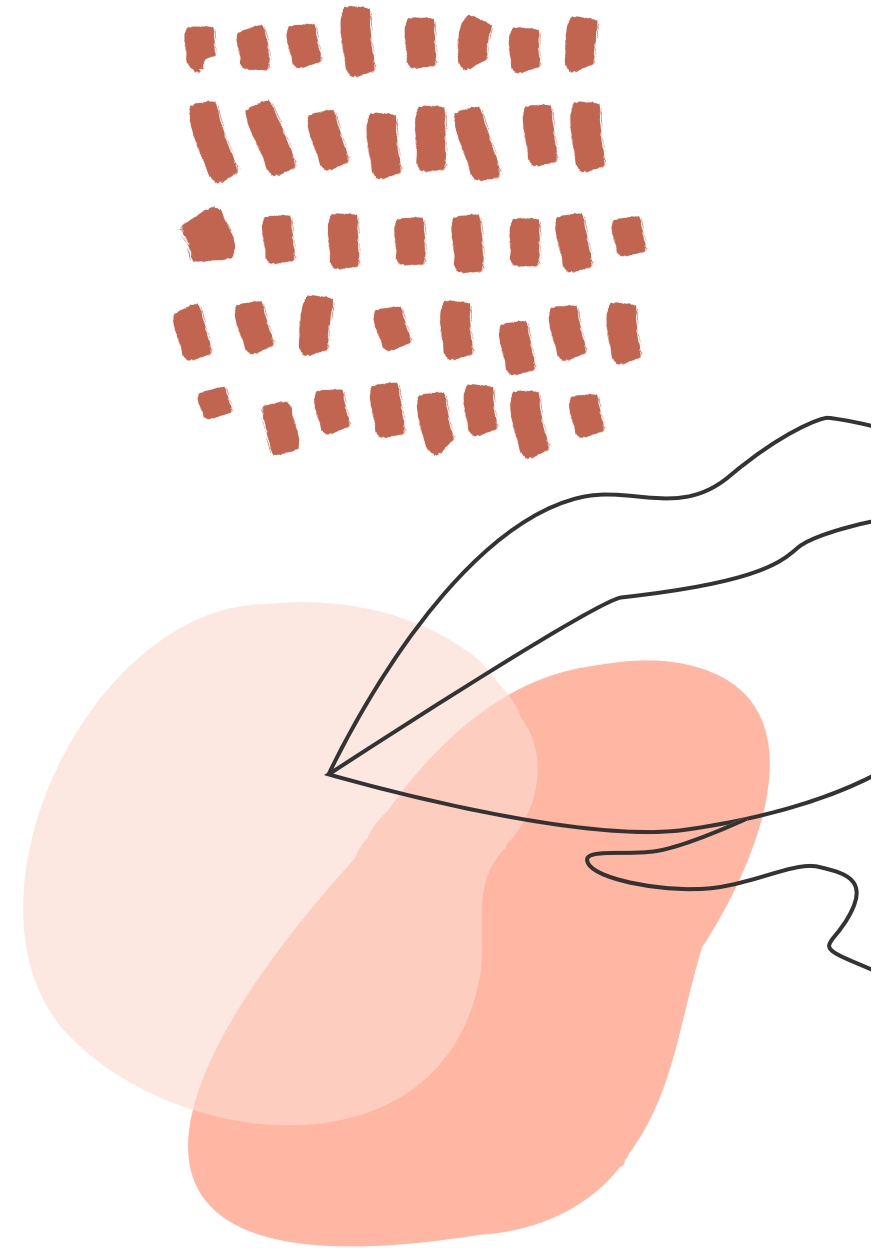
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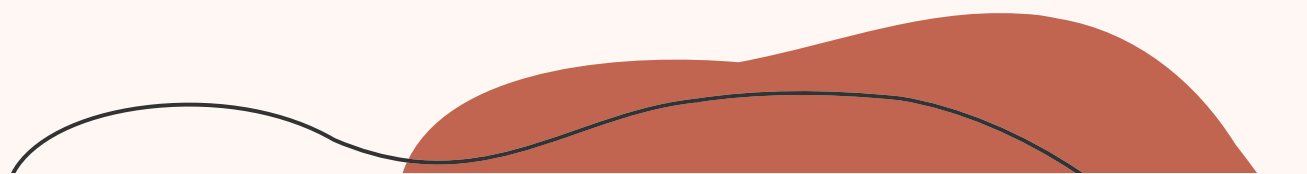
Learning Objectives

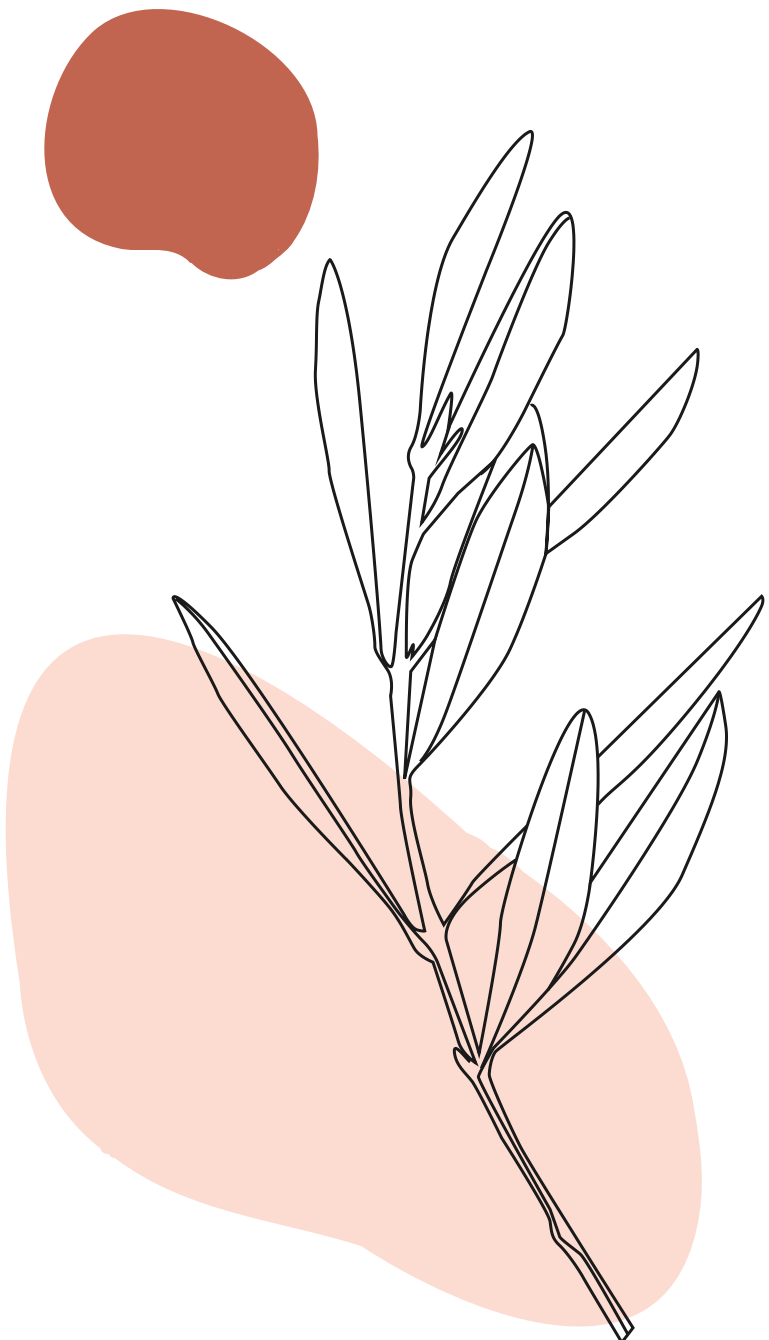
- Differentiate targeted vs tailored messaging
- Identify audience characteristics for tailoring
- Apply a tool to strengthen tailored messages





Why Tailoring Matters

- Messages compete with noise
 - Generic messaging limits impact
 - Tailored messaging drives behavior change
- 



What is Tailoring?

- Individualized communication
- Based on beliefs, behaviors, culture
- Reflects lived experience

Tailoring vs Targeting

TARGETING

- Group-level approach
- One message for broad audience

Example:

“Don’t vape. It harms your lungs.”

TAILORING

- Individual-level approach
- Message adapts to beliefs/behavior

Examples:

- “You’ve already taken the first step...”
- “Don’t let social pressure decide...”

**Targeting reaches audiences.
Tailoring resonates with them.**

VAPES AND CIGARETTES

Different products. Same dangers.



GET THE FACTS



mass.gov/vaping

@GetTheVapeFacts



My Life My Quit



<https://co.mylifemyquit.org/en-US>

Get help
quitting

What do we do?

Our goal is to help youth have a better understanding of what vaping is and how we can help them. Any teen can text our number if they need help quitting or to talk about what they are going through.

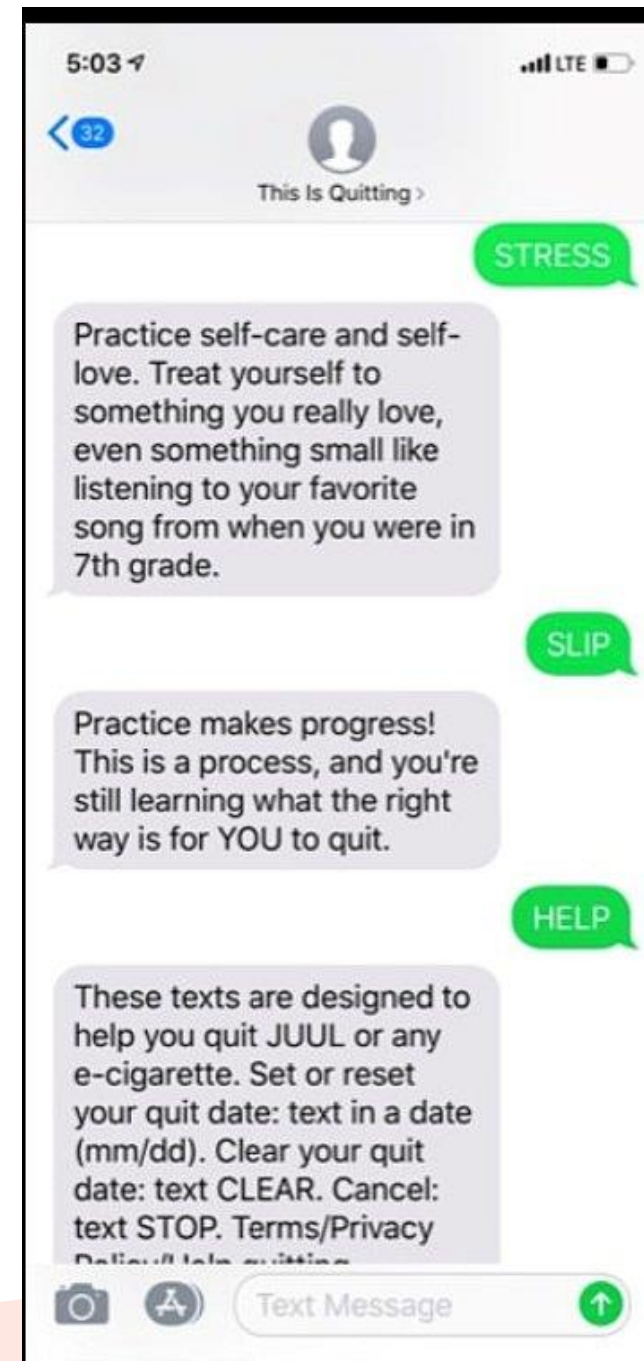
Text "Start my quit"
to 36072 or scan
the QR to talk to a
coach on our
website.

**NO VAPE
IS SAFE**



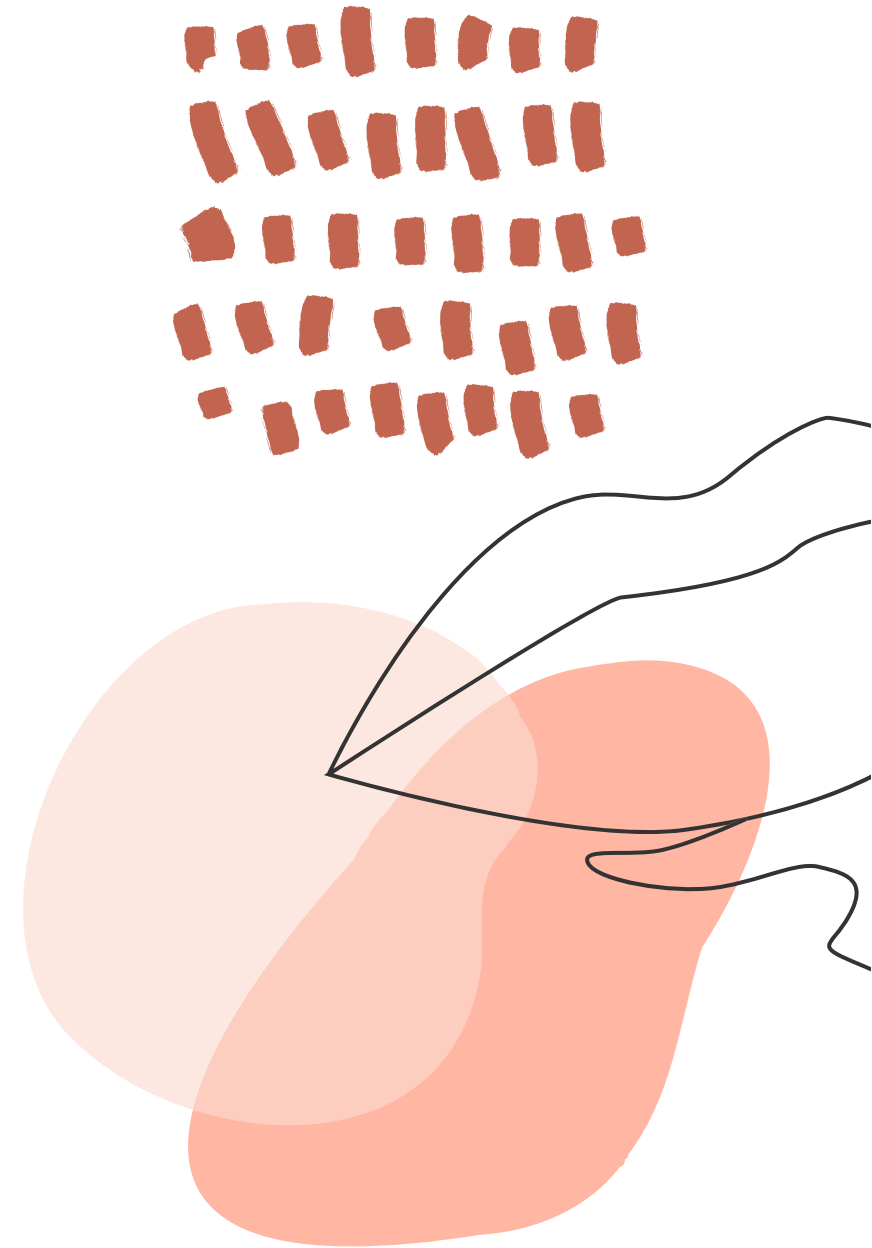
Why Tailoring Works

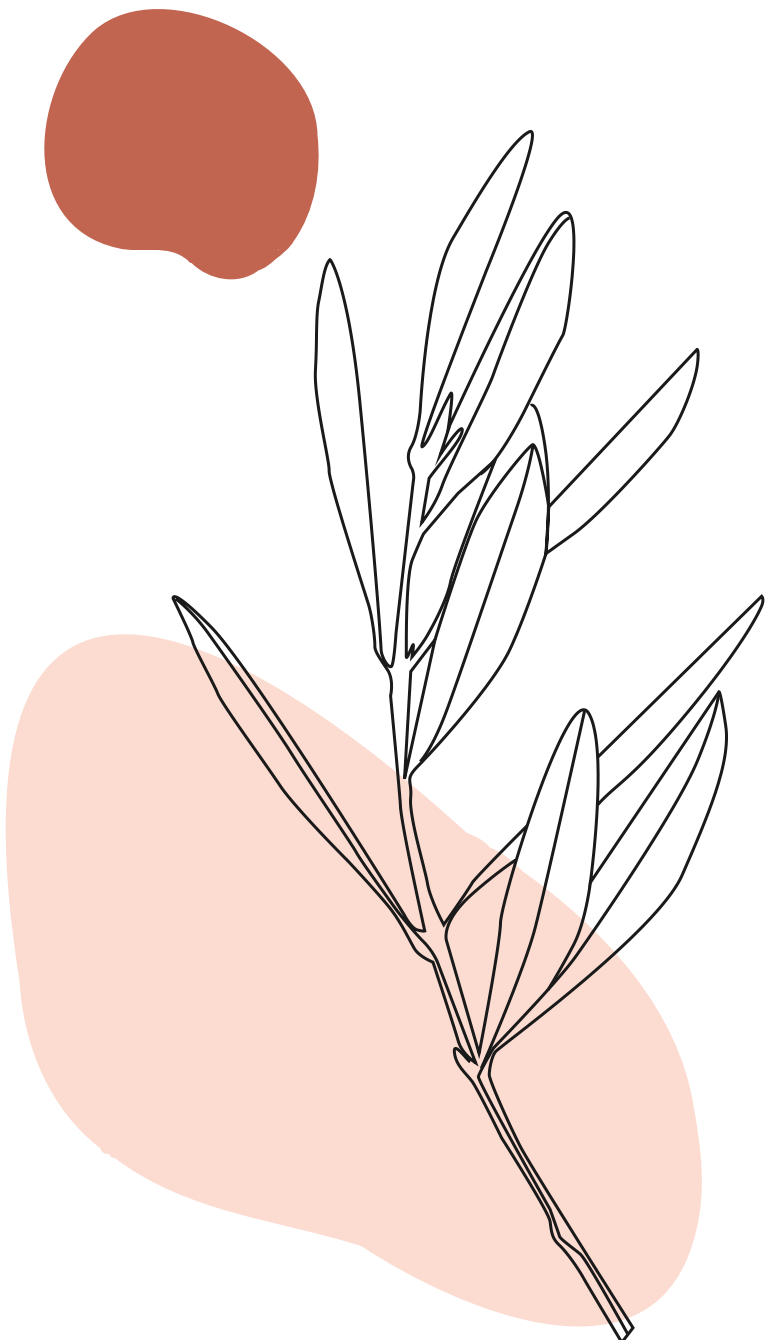
- Increases relevance
- Improves attention & recall
- Supports behavior change



Know Your Audience

- Values
- Barriers
- Motivations
- Trust



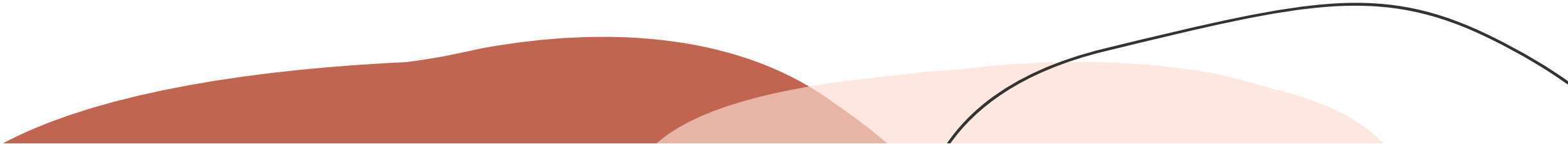
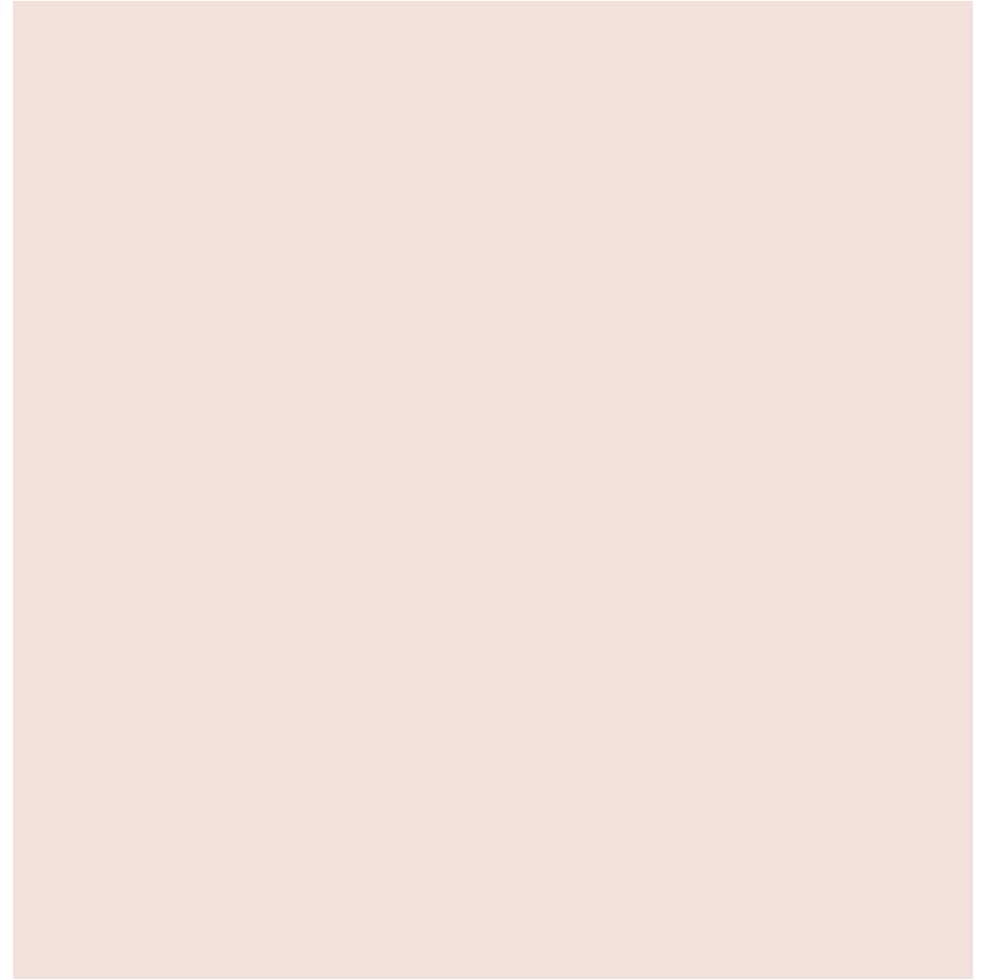


Culture & Trust

- Culture shapes perception
- Trust drives action
- Community voice matters

Practical Strategies

- Personalization
- Message framing
- Channels
- Messengers



Be S.M.A.R.T.

Secure Gun Storage Save Lives

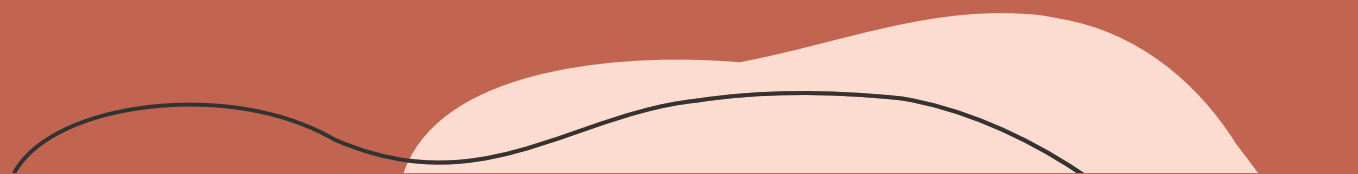


PSA: Gun Stolen from Car

https://youtu.be/FSdsLPLrXIE?si=KmD_vUVZXGDmZw8V



Potential Audiences

- Parents and Caregivers
 - Gun Owners and Non Gun-Owners
 - Care Givers
 - Community Leaders and Influencers
 - Healthcare Professionals
- 



Secure Gun Storage
Saves Kids' Lives

SECURE GUN STORAGE

SHARE

SUPPORT US

TRAININGS

ABOUT US



What Does it Mean to Be SMART?



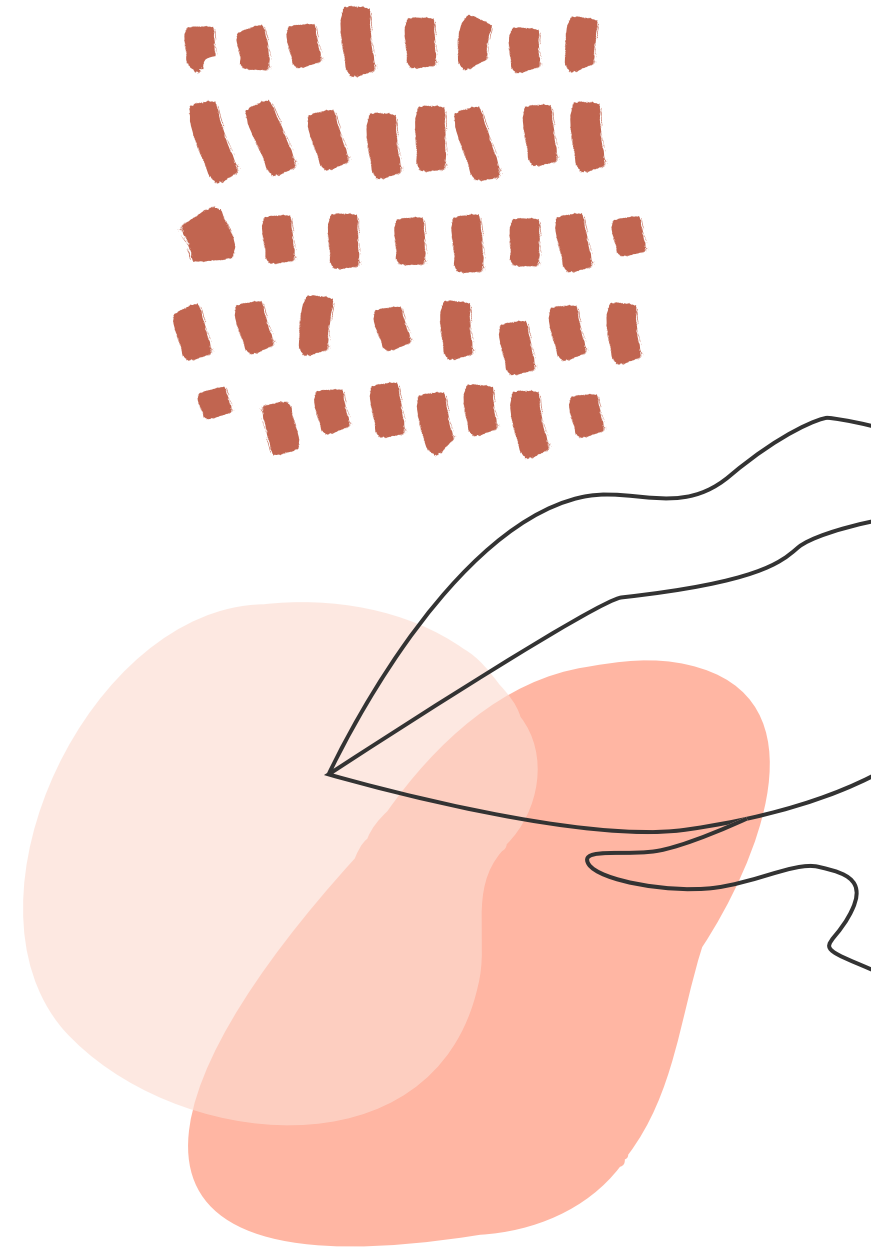
Secure all firearms in your
home and vehicles.



<https://besmartforkids.org/>

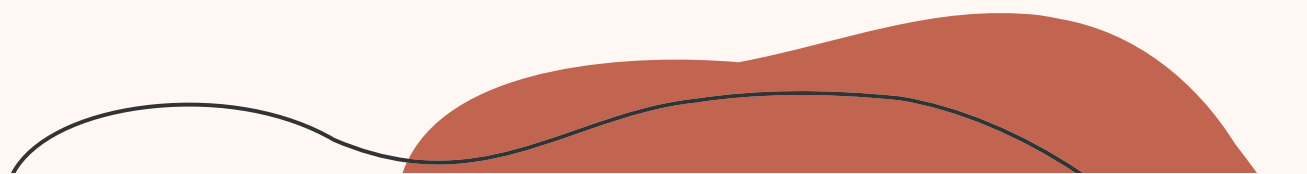
Digital Tailoring

- Data-driven messaging
- Segmentation
- Real-time adaptation





Cultural Tailoring Score (CTS)

- Reflects values & beliefs?
 - Language culturally appropriate?
 - Trusted messenger?
 - Aligned with lived experience?
- 

Apply the Tool

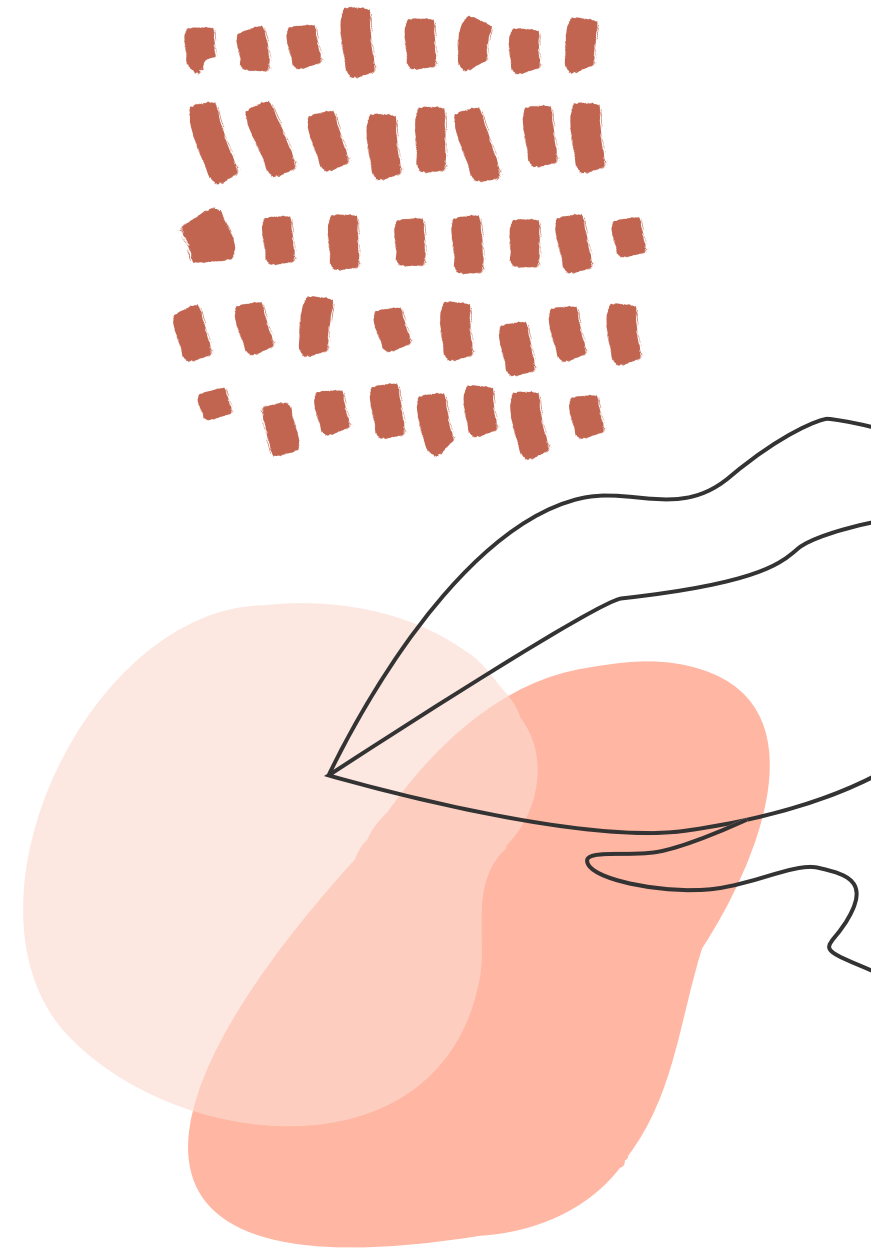
- Think of your message
- Would audience see themselves?
- Is it trustworthy?
- Does it reflect reality?

Table 1. Culturally tailored communication score sheet.

Component name	Component explanation and key references	Component scoring	Totals
1. Audience engagement	The inclusion of intended audience members in the creation of messaging and materials serves as the foundation of cultural tailoring (Airhihenbuwa, 1995; CDC, 2023; Kreuter et al., 2003; Lapinski et al., 2024). This component accounts for progressively greater levels of engagement of the intended community or associated professionals in creation of materials.	0- None 1- Surveys 2- Key informant interviews 3- Compensated group or individual interviews 4- Co-creation through academic-community partnership 5- Community organization(s) or culturally concordant professional(s) contracted. Add 1 point for relevant community logo/slogan.	0–6
2. Language	Language is a cultural scaffold for making sense of new information (Doak et al., 1996; McKee & Paasche-Orlow, 2012; Sudore et al., 2009). This component begins with source clarity and progresses to meaning. Award no points if a piece is not in plain English. Use of the CDC Clear Communication Index is recommended, and English language materials should receive 90–100 points for clarity and layout (CDC, 2005). Where possible, interpretive transcreation (Katan, 2014; Piñeiro et al., 2018) or origination in preferred language is best.	0- Difficult or complicated language 1- Plain English, e.g., Clear Communication Index > 90 2- Key words/phrases (e.g. proverbs, quotations) in preferred language 3- Literal translation to preferred language 4- Interpretive transcreation or origination in preferred language.	0–4
3. Surface cultural cues	Representation of intended audience through audiovisual elements by which individuals belonging to a particular group would identify other members (Kreuter et al, 2003; Resnicow et al., 1999; Zhou et al., 2022). Score 1 point for each identifiable element, up to six, in non-exhaustive list at right.	0- None Add 1 point for correspondence with group perceptions of identity for each of the following: - demographics - race/ethnicity - clothing - hairstyle - adornments - music - food and beverages - locations.	0–6

Common Pitfalls

- Overgeneralizing
- Ignoring culture
- Information overload
- No testing



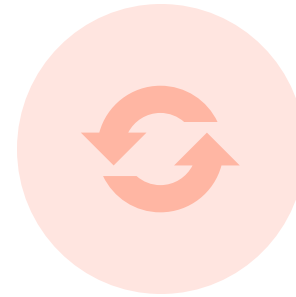
Measuring Impact



ENGAGEMENT
METRICS



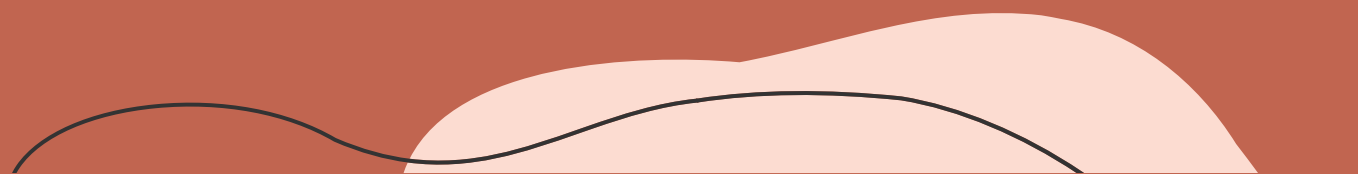
BEHAVIOR
CHANGE

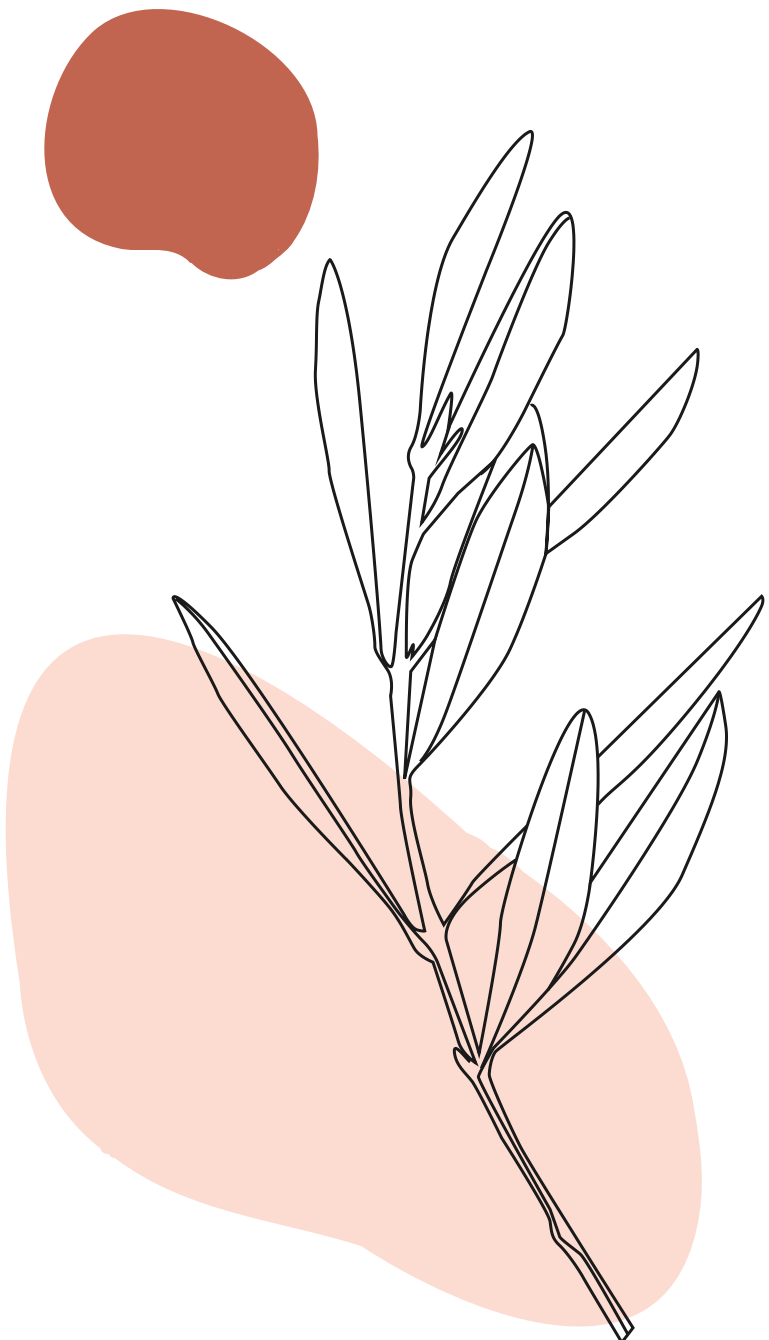


FEEDBACK
LOOPS



Key Takeaways

- Relevance drives impact
 - Tailoring improves outcomes
 - Trust matters
 - Test and adapt
- 



References

Noar, S. M. et al. (2011). Tailored health communication.

Kreuter, M. W. et al. (2003). Achieving cultural appropriateness.

Deloitte (2023). Public health messaging insights.

Public Health Collaborative (2024). Culturally driven strategies.

Recent CTS framework (2025). Cultural tailoring assessment tool.

Closing Reflection

People don't respond to information.
They respond to meaning.

Thank you!

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