case study

Scenario 3: Moving from Knowledge to Action

3-2-1 Campaign, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA)

Alaska youth answer the question "What can I do about global warming?" with a results-oriented action campaign

"We decided that we wanted to do something about global warming since it's having huge affects in Alaska. And we, the youth of Alaska, are going to be its next generation and we'd like to inherit a healthy planet."

— L. Evans, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA), Anchorage chapter

The Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) is the National Wildlife Federation's environmental leadership program for Alaska teens. AYEA members crafted a plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through a program they called the 3-2-1 Efficiency Campaign. Their strategy was to invite individuals to take a pledge to replace **3** incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, turn their thermostat down **2** degrees in the winter and unplug **1** household appliance when not in use.

The first year of the 3-2-1 Efficiency Campaign was a huge success, and the students estimated that as result of their campaign there was an annual prevention of almost 10 million pounds of carbon from entering the atmosphere. They continued their work, expanding the reach of their campaign and raising the level of actions they are asking pledge-signers to commit to. Most recently, AYEA partnered

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The AYEA 3-2-1 Pledge:

3 - Unplug 3 electronic appliances (e.g, stereo, TV) when not in use
(Saves 3,000 lbs. CO_2 / year)

2 - Bring 2 reusable plastic or canvas bags when you go shopping
(Saves 50 lbs. CO_2 / year)

1 - Replace 1 regular use incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb
(Saves 100 lbs. CO_2 / year)

with the Alaska Association of Student Governments (AASG) and turned their campaign into a contest. The AASG districts are now competing against one another to see which can get the most people to take the new 3-2-1 revised pledge. In the pledge, signers commit to unplugging **3** electronic appliances, taking **2** reusable bags when going shopping and replacing **1** incandescent bulb with a CFL bulb. They aim to get 5,000 people to take the pledge to reduce carbon emissions in Alaska by an estimated 19.8 million pounds.

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In addition to their 3-2-1 Efficiency Campaign AYEA received the 2006 President's Environmental Youth Award for their work in a statewide global warming outreach and education project. The AYEA teens developed a petition requesting federal legislation that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest in renewable energy. AYEA collected 5,000 teen signatures from 105 communities in Alaska, which represented more than 10 percent of the enrolled high school population. They presented their petition to Senator Lisa Murkowski, who requested that AYEA members meet with climate change specialists in Fairbanks to bridge the "science and public awareness" divide, which they continue to do through their organization. In 2007, AYEA teens traveled to Washington D.C. to testify on energy issues and global warming. See them on the YouTube video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lEBZBTrfpo