

# Nudge Theory Use to Decrease Obesity and Prevent Stroke

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## Background

### Definition of Nudge Theory

Nudge theory is basically

1. understanding how people make decisions, think, and behave
2. helping people improve their thinking and decision making
3. change management, identifying, and modifying unhealthy influences on people
4. choice architecture, libertarian paternalism that does not dictate choice, but nudges a person to choose wisely

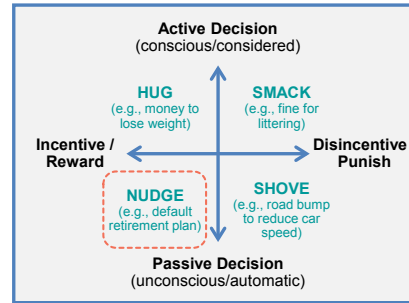
### Founding Father of Nudge Theory

- Developed by 2017 Nobel prize winner in behavioral economics, Richard Thaler Ph.D, University of Chicago
- Co-wrote global best selling book Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness

### Study Locations for the Nudge Theory

- Successfully implemented by the UK London Nudge Unit.
- National Institute of Health, White House Social and Behavioral Science Team (SBST)

### Matrix to Promote Behavior Change

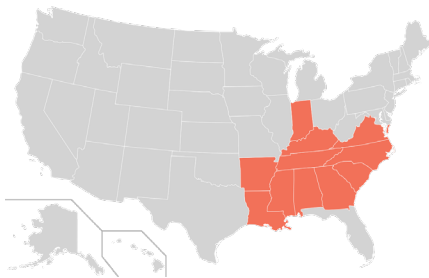


### Mindspace Diagram

<b>Messenger</b>	We are heavily influenced by who communicates information
<b>Incentives</b>	Our responses to incentives are shaped by predictive mental shortcuts such as strongly avoiding losses
<b>Norms</b>	We are strongly influenced by what others do
<b>Defaults</b>	We 'go with the flow' of pre-set options
<b>Salience</b>	Our attention is drawn to what is novel and seems relevant to us
<b>Priming</b>	Our acts are often influenced by sub-conscious cues
<b>Affect</b>	Our emotional associations can powerfully shape our actions
<b>Commitments</b>	We seek to be consistent with our public promises, and reciprocate acts
<b>Ego</b>	We act in ways that make us feel better about ourselves

## Practical Application

### US Southern Stroke Belt



### Problem: Increase in US Childhood Obesity

- Highest rates of childhood obesity prevalent in the US southern stroke belt
- Causing increased rates of cerebral vascular disease, diabetes and stroke

### Solution: Using Nudge Theory as a Tool

Behavioral health coaching, education and modifications is a low cost intervention to decrease risk factors and promote healthy food choices and portions

### Example of a Nudge

- A nudge is choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding options. Nudges are not mandates.
- Placing fruit at eye level is a nudge
- Banning junk food is not

### Nudge Theory Uses Choice Architecture to Influence Decision Making

- App for food counting
- Education regarding nutritional facts
- Size of food plate
- Default rules with school lunches
- Make healthy food more visible and accessible
- Visible clues for better nutritional choices, exercise promotion
- Prescriber link for increased BMI in EMR to order nutritional counseling

## Conclusion

- We are at a pivotal point for developing low cost solutions to aid in the prevention of childhood obesity.
- Nudge theory, choice architecture, and behavioral economics can help influence change, cultural norms regarding food intake, and exercise promotion.

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