

**Title:** Initiating Sustainable Behavior: Feel Good for Doing Good

**Project type:** Research

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**Abstract:**

This study investigated if alteration of cues and rewards of people at a university workout center could impact water bottle disposal behaviors. Using a Social Cognitive Theory model, two 8-week interventions were conducted. After a baseline was determined, educational signs were posted and then environmental changes were made to affect awareness and cognition. Results recorded changes from a baseline proportion 73.2% of recyclable plastic and glass bottles disposed of in garbage cans to 26.8% in the recycling bins to 26.1% of the bottles in the garbage cans and 73.9% in the recycling bins after the interventions. Surveys also suggested supportive cognitive changes. The simple interventions used to nurture, support and reinforce pro-environmental behaviors would not only lower garbage costs, research indicates these actions also improve morale, well-being, and public image. This study documents how destructive waste habits can be changed toward positive recycling behaviors with proper support and design.

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