Flushing is a habit that people practice daily, and often no thought goes behind this action at all. Many people have unknowingly been flushing the wrong products down the toilet. Only human waste and toilet paper should be thrown down the toilet, nothing else.

Seattle Public Utilities has had to deal with many clogs, backups, leaks, and overflows due to unflushable material building up in the wastewater system. Cascadia Consulting Group found that college-aged audiences were the biggest contributors to the number of unflushable items that are entering the wastewater system in Seattle. The purpose of this study was to find the best strategy to engage college aged audiences in an outreach campaign to change their flushing behavior.

To create an outreach campaign for Seattle Public Utilities, I did intensive research on the target audience and different outreach strategies. I also analyzed previous data from surveys and focus groups that Cascadia Consulting Group had already conducted. And in addition to that, I organized another focus group of Seattle University students for additional data. I found that the best thing to do when creating a behavior change plan, is to fully understand the audience and what messages engage them. By focusing on a few key messages that engages the audience, you’ll maximize potential for behavior change. The approach of tugging on their emotions, showing the consequences of behavior, and strategic imagery could be applied to behavior change of many topics, not just limited to flushing.