

Why Government 'Nudges' Motivate Good Citizen Behavior

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Working Knowledge:

Most governments aren't subtle when they want citizens to do something. The United States spends close to \$1 billion annually on advertising—trying to convince citizens to do everything from taking flu prevention shots to reporting unattended suitcases at the airport. But now agencies are finding that subtle “nudges” can motivate behavior much better than ads, fines, or deadlines.

Nudges, or small changes to the context in which decisions are made, are the subject of a new analysis by Harvard Business School Associate Professor John Beshears and colleagues, recently published in the journal *Psychological Science*. The paper, Should Governments Invest More in Nudges? answers its own question with a resounding “Yes.”

Read the whole story: [*Working Knowledge*](#)