

Youth Smoking Rates in Mississippi, 1998-2002

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Abstract

Since the initiation of a statewide tobacco control program in 1998, several distinct yet methodologically comparable surveys have provided estimates of youth smoking prevalence in Mississippi. In the fall of 2002, the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Mississippi State University administered the Youth Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control (YSCS-TC) to a representative sample of public middle and high school students. The YSCS-TC includes social and environmental indicators and measures smoking prevalence using the same protocol as both the YTS and YRBS. To ensure that results from the YSCS-TC could be compared to extant YTS and YRBS prevalence estimates from previous years, researchers at the SSRC collaborated with the CDC to draw the sample as well as to weigh and process the data. Results indicate that youth smoking declined significantly in 2002. High school smoking prevalence declined from a high of 32.5% in 1999 to a low of 23.1% in 2002. The middle school decrease was more significant with a

decrease from a high of 23% in 1999 to a low of 11.9% in 2002. Significant decreases were also found among several subpopulations. Discussions highlight trends in smoking prevalence among middle and high school students, as well as trends within specific demographic groups.

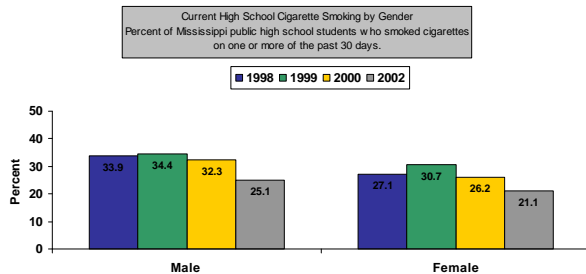
Methods

Data were collected in the fall semester of 2002 via anonymous self-administered questionnaires. A multi-stage sample design was applied with public middle and high schools selected with a probability proportional to enrollment size. Classrooms were chosen randomly within the selected schools and all of the students in selected classes were eligible for participation. A weighting factor was applied to each student record to adjust for non-response at the school, class, and student levels. SUDAAN software was used to calculate standard errors for estimates and 95 percent confidence intervals.

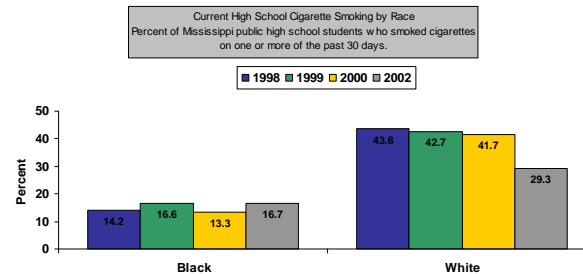
Results & Discussion

Thirty-nine of the 45 (86.67%) sampled public high schools participated in the survey, and 2,707 of the 3,762 (71.96%) sampled students completed usable surveys. The overall response rate for public high school students was 62.36%. Forty-five of the 52 (86.54%) sampled public middle schools participated in the survey, and 3,287 of the 4,205 (78.17%) sampled students completed usable surveys. The overall response rate for public middle school students was 67.65%.

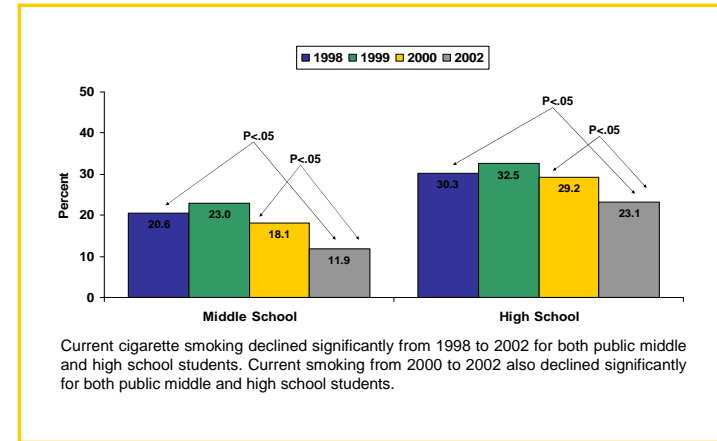
These findings indicate that substantial progress is being made towards reducing the smoking levels among Mississippi public middle and high school students. These results are consistent with a growing body of evidence from several states, including Oregon, Florida, Massachusetts, and Mississippi, which have reported declines in youth smoking after implementing statewide comprehensive tobacco control programs.



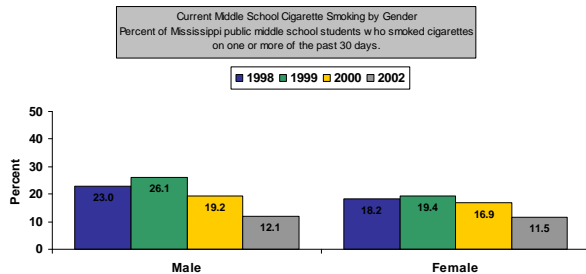
Current smoking among male high school students declined from 33.9% in 1998 to 25.1% in 2002. The 8.8 percentage point decline represents an overall 26% reduction in current smoking. For female high school students, there was a nonsignificant decrease in current smoking from 1998 to 2002.



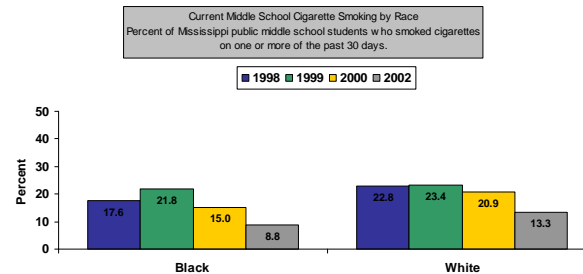
For black high school students, there was a nonsignificant increase in current smoking from 1998 to 2002. For white high school students, current smoking declined from 43.8% in 1998 to 29.3% in 2002. The 14.5 percentage point decline represents an overall 33% reduction in current smoking.



Current cigarette smoking declined significantly from 1998 to 2002 for both public middle and high school students. Declined smoking from 2000 to 2002 also declined significantly for both public middle and high school students.



Current smoking among male middle school students declined from 23.0% in 1998 to 12.1% in 2002. The 10.9 percentage point decline represents an overall 47% reduction in current smoking. For female middle school students, current smoking declined from 18.2% in 1998 to 11.5% in 2002. The 6.7 percentage point decline represents an overall 37% reduction in current smoking.



Current smoking among black middle school students declined from 17.6% in 1998 to 8.8% in 2002. The 8.8 percentage point decline represents an overall 50% reduction in current smoking. For white middle school students, current smoking declined from 22.8% in 1998 to 13.3% in 2002. The 9.5 percentage point decline represents an overall 42% reduction in current smoking.

Current Smokers (Percent of youth who smoked 1 or more cigarettes in the past 30 days)

	Mississippi Youth Tobacco Use							
	Public High Schools				Public Middle Schools			
	1998	1999	2000	2002	1998	1999	2000	2002
Total	30.3 (± 3.8)	32.5 (± 3.3)	29.2 (± 3.6)	23.1 (± 2.6)	20.6 (± 2.7)	23.0 (± 3.2)	18.1 (± 2.3)	11.9 (± 1.6)
Sex								
Female	27.1 (± 4.5)	30.7 (± 5.2)	26.2 (± 5.9)	21.1 (± 3.6)	18.2 (± 4.1)	19.4 (± 2.6)	16.9 (± 2.6)	11.5 (± 2.0)
Male	33.9 (± 3.9)	34.4 (± 4.2)	32.3 (± 4.6)	25.1 (± 3.1)	23.0 (± 3.0)	26.1 (± 4.8)	19.2 (± 3.5)	12.1 (± 1.8)
Race								
White	43.8 (± 4.0)	42.7 (± 4.8)	41.7 (± 5.9)	29.3 (± 2.7)	22.8 (± 3.9)	23.4 (± 3.7)	20.9 (± 3.6)	13.3 (± 2.0)
Black	14.2 (± 2.5)	16.6 (± 3.2)	13.3 (± 3.0)	16.7 (± 4.0)	17.6 (± 3.4)	21.8 (± 5.0)	15.0 (± 3.5)	8.8 (± 2.9)
Grade								
6					11.9 (± 2.3)	17.7 (± 4.5)	13.6 (± 4.2)	8.8 (± 2.1)
7					21.8 (± 6.5)	21.8 (± 4.1)	22.0 (± 2.7)	14.9 (± 2.7)
8					25.8 (± 4.7)	29.0 (± 5.2)	18.5 (± 4.1)	14.7 (± 3.7)
9	27.6 (± 5.0)	28.2 (± 4.1)	25.3 (± 5.3)	20.0 (± 3.1)				
10	31.4 (± 6.6)	30.3 (± 5.6)	27.6 (± 5.5)	19.7 (± 2.7)				
11	33.5 (± 6.4)	36.3 (± 8.3)	32.9 (± 8.5)	27.1 (± 5.9)				
12	29.4 (± 6.8)	35.1 (± 6.7)	32.0 (± 8.9)	26.8 (± 5.8)				