

The National Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control, 2000-2003

ABSTRACT

The sustainability of comprehensive tobacco control programs is enhanced by the ability to monitor changes in the social climate through a set of social, environmental, and political indicators. This poster presents a method to measure the social climate of tobacco control and discusses changes in the social climate in the past years. This approach includes measures of smoking rates, cultural norms, knowledge, public support for smoking bans, and household and community practices. In 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 annual cross-sectional assessments of the social climate were conducted via telephone interviews with a representative sample of U.S. adults. In these four years, the prevalence of adult smoking decreased from 24.1% in 2000 to 18.9% in 2003, $p=.001$, self-reported smoking bans in public and private places became more prevalent, and public support for tobacco control policies increased.

Methods

The Social Climate Survey consists of a set of questions designed to measure the norms, practices, and knowledge concerning tobacco within seven social institutions:

- 1) Family and Friendship Groups,
 - 2) Education,
 - 3) Government and Political Order,
 - 4) Work,
 - 5) Health and Medical Care,
 - 6) Recreation, Leisure, and Sports,
 - 7) Mass Communication and Culture.
- This institutional-based perspective stresses not simply individual variations in behaviors and attitudes, but rather attempts to use cross-sectional survey data for the measurement of societal norms, practices, and beliefs surrounding tobacco.

The survey was administered to representative samples of U.S. adults who were interviewed by telephone between July and September of either 2000, 2001, 2002, or 2003. Samples from each year represent the civilian, non-institutionalized adult population over age 18 in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. Households were selected using random digit dialing procedures which included households with unlisted numbers. The design used standard computer-assisted telephone interviewing techniques.

Results and Discussion

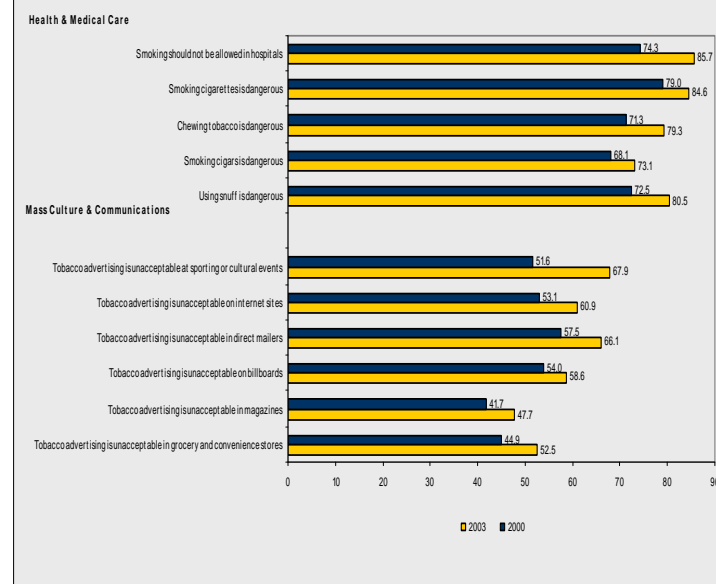
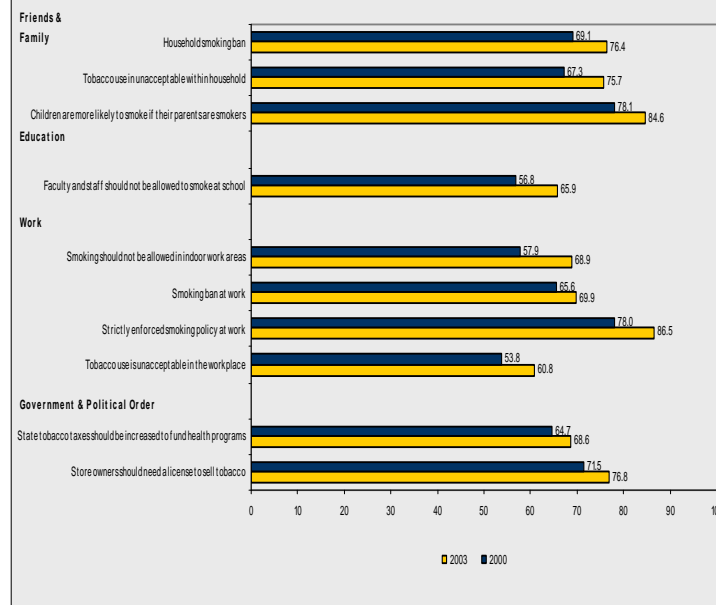
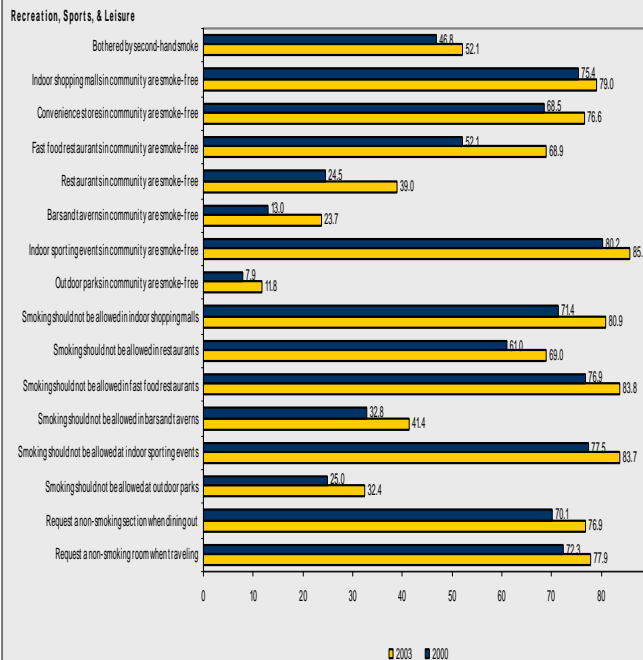
The weighted and unweighted sample characteristics are presented in the table below. Comparisons of 2000 (N=1,503) and 2003 (N=3,010) demonstrate that the prevalence of adult smoking decreased from 24.1% in 2000 to 18.9% in 2003, $p=.001$, self-reported smoking bans in public and private places became more prevalent, and public support for tobacco control policies increased. These findings suggest that tobacco control practices and social norms are becoming increasingly ingrained into the social climate of the United States.

Comparison of Characteristics of the Original and Weighted Samples

Sample Characteristics	2000		2003		
	Orig. Sample	Wtd. Sample	Orig. Sample	Wtd. Sample	
Rural/Urban	Rural	30.6	29.7	26.0	25.6
	Urban	69.4	70.3	74.0	74.4
Smoking Status	Non-smoker	76.1	75.9	81.7	81.1
	Smoker	23.9	24.1	18.3	18.9
Gender	Male	39.6	49.5	38.9	47.7
	Female	60.3	50.4	60.8	52.0
Race	White	80.4	76.5	78.9	77.0
	African-American	9.7	11.8	12.1	11.0
	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.7	2.7	1.6	3.4
	American Indian/Alaska Native	1.0	1.8	1.2	2.4
	Other Race	0.2	0.2	4.7	4.7
Age	18-24 years	11.6	12.0	11.7	12.0
	25-44 years	36.4	37.2	35.5	35.7
	45-64 years	34.1	33.8	35.9	36.3
	65+ years	17.9	17.0	16.9	16.0
Education	Not HS Grad	9.4	9.1	7.7	7.8
	HS Grad	31.7	30.6	28.9	28.5
	Some College	25.2	25.7	26.1	25.9
	College Grad	33.7	34.6	37.3	37.7
Region	Northeast	18.4	18.8	17.8	19.0
	Midwest	24.4	22.6	24.7	22.4
	South	39.6	35.4	39.8	35.8
	West	17.6	23.2	17.7	22.7

Improvements in Social Climate, 2000 to 2003

37 of 57 indicators (65%) improved significantly over this four-year period



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