

IMPACT OF GRAPHIC DESIGN IN PUBLIC SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP

MIRANDA ROBERTSON | ROBERT MCMILLEN

ABSTRACT

Both impactful and invaluable, graphic design is an underutilized communication asset for public service scholarship. Well-designed published information has a strong impact on viewers by providing a unique, effective means to communicate. Good design is powerful in the field of public health. It increases engagement, strengthens collaborative relations, and can even save lives.

The collaboration between design and public health is an uncommon partnership but is growing in popularity. Our research team at Mississippi Tobacco Data (MTD) quickly realized that our audience, who often includes policymakers and stakeholders, needs access to our information in clear, concise, readily accessible forms. Skilled designers possess the abilities to translate a standard black and white document into a work of art by highlighting critical information and providing a visual roadmap for the viewer. The outcome of this uncommon collaboration is fast, effective communication of critical information in the hands of decision-makers.

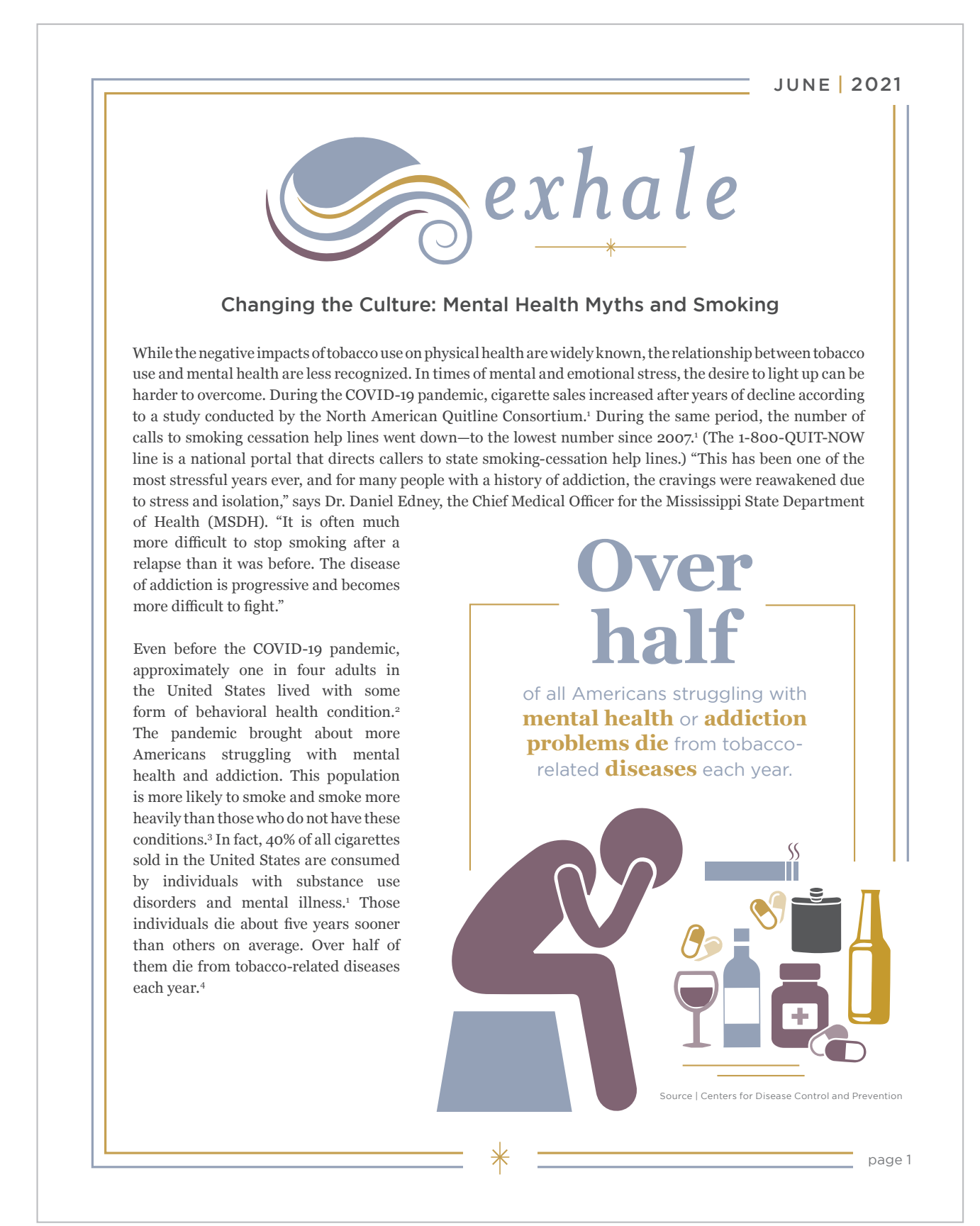
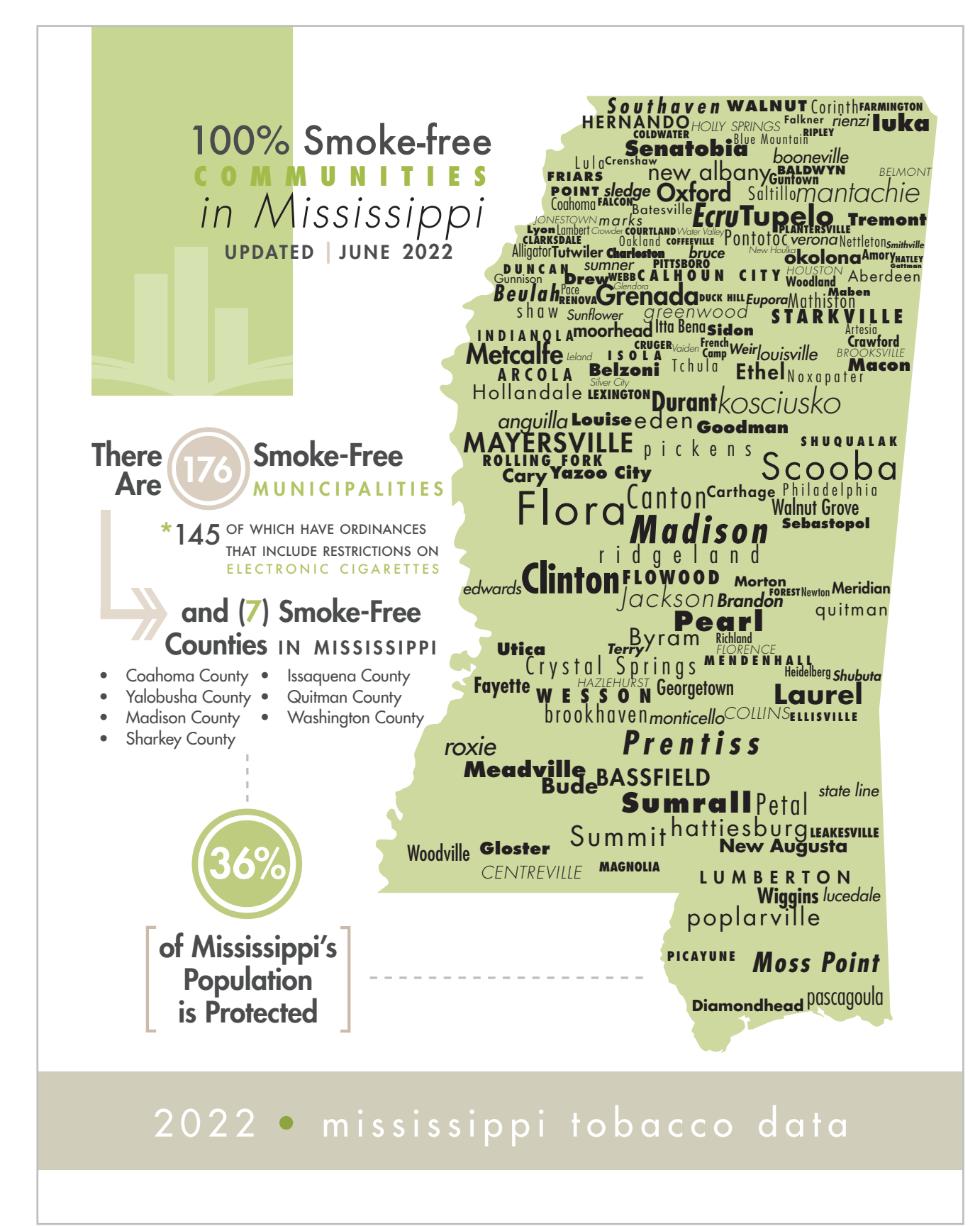
Graphic design is an underutilized asset in public health and its implementation can lead to increased awareness of public health data and policy. Design bridges the communication gap between organizations, healthcare professionals, researchers, and the general public by translating complex concepts into more easily digestible

content. The positive impact of design communication is evident during public health crises and is a highly effective tool for providing lifesaving information.

For over a decade, our research team has fine-tuned our approach to utilizing graphic design as a communication asset for our research. Beginning with the development of a strong branding package, MTD has since produced countless well-designed infographics, data-driven reports and factsheets, posters, newsletters, and maintained a website to house it all. Many of our designed publications, such as the *Raising the Age of Sale for Tobacco to 21 in Mississippi* factsheet, land directly in the hands of policymakers in our state and provide impactful information. Other publications, such as the *100% Smoke-Free Communities in Mississippi* factsheet, capture the interest of local elected officials in our state who are considering adopting a smoke-free ordinance for their community.

Currently, there are 174 smoke-free municipalities in Mississippi, and the age of sale for tobacco products was recently raised to 21. The impact of well-designed published information continues to be an invaluable communication asset for public service scholarship. Good design is where engagement increases, collaboration strengthens, and change begins.

“Good design is where engagement increases, collaboration strengthens, and change begins.”



Mississippi Tobacco QUITLINE
1.800.QUITNOW

MISSISSIPPI TOBACCO DATA

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER

designed by: Miranda Robertson
mstobaccodata.org