

Changing the social climate of tobacco control in Mississippi: Collaborations Matter

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A Collaboration for Research, Dissemination, and Health Policy

- The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi
- Social Science Research Center of Mississippi State University



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The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi

- Non-profit agency made up of more than 800 public and private organizations
- Combines educational and ecological approaches to change the social climate of tobacco control



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The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi

**Mission: To Create a Healthier
Environment in Mississippi by:**

- Decreasing youth tobacco initiation
- Increasing youth tobacco cessation
- Developing and enforcing policy decreasing youths' access to tobacco and increasing clean indoor air



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Project Background

- Smoking is a socially motivated behavior
- Tobacco control programs target multiple social institutions across multiple societal levels
- The Social Climate Survey provides an annual assessment of attitudinal, behavioral, and societal variables



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Social Climate of Tobacco Control

- Piloted as part of the evaluation of the Mississippi Tobacco Pilot Program
- Designed to meet unmet data needs
- Designed through a collaborative process



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An Institutional Approach



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Sample Design & Characteristics

- Simple Random Sample of Adults
- Computer assisted telephone interviewers
- 2000: N = 803; Response Rate = 85.0%
- 2001: N = 1,504; Response Rate = 87.6%



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Research Findings

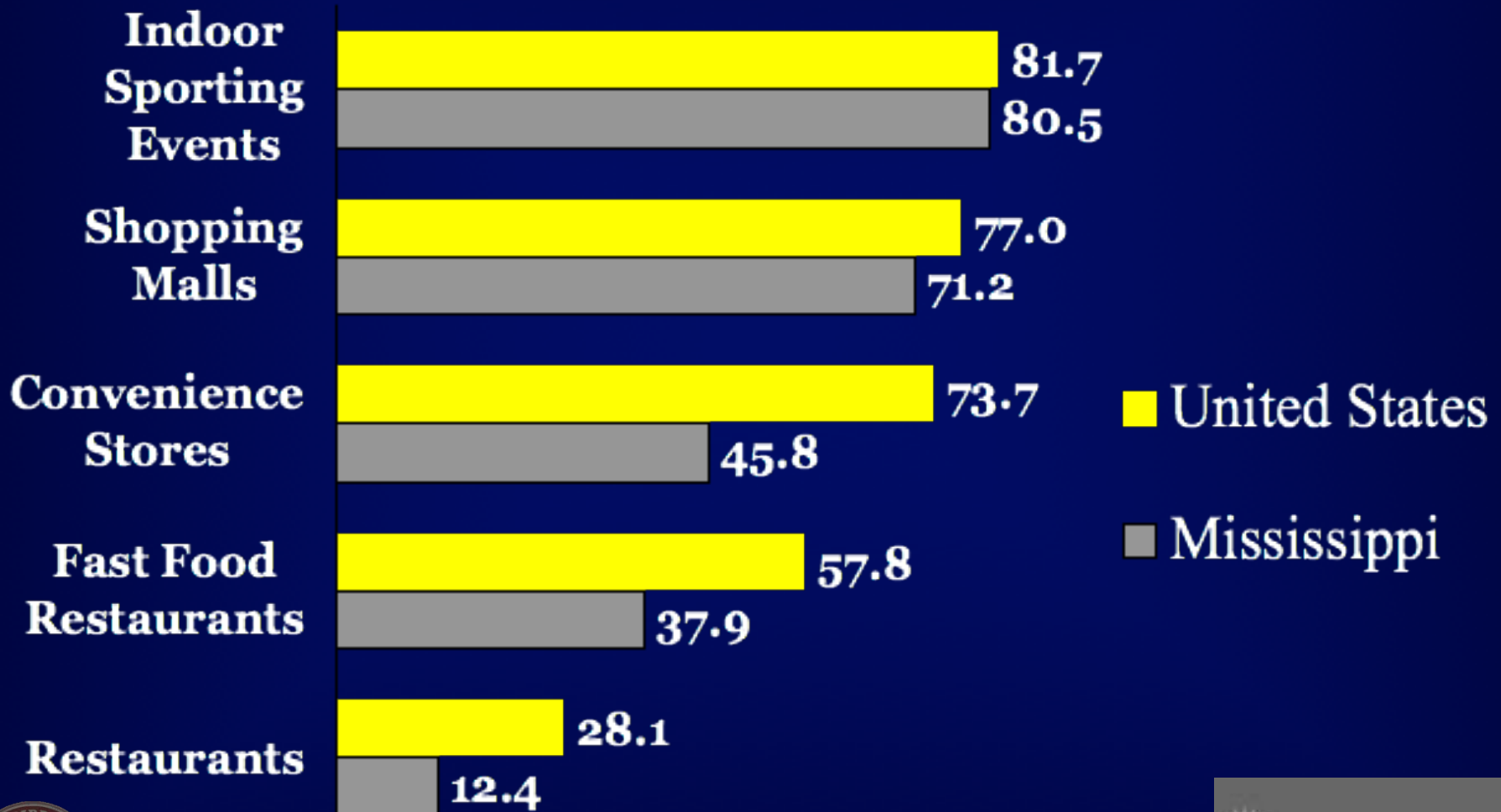
- Support for tobacco control varies across social institutions and sociodemographic variables
- More support for tobacco control policy in Mississippi than in the Nation as a whole
- BUT policy in Mississippi lags behind public opinion
- Many significant changes from 2000 to 2001



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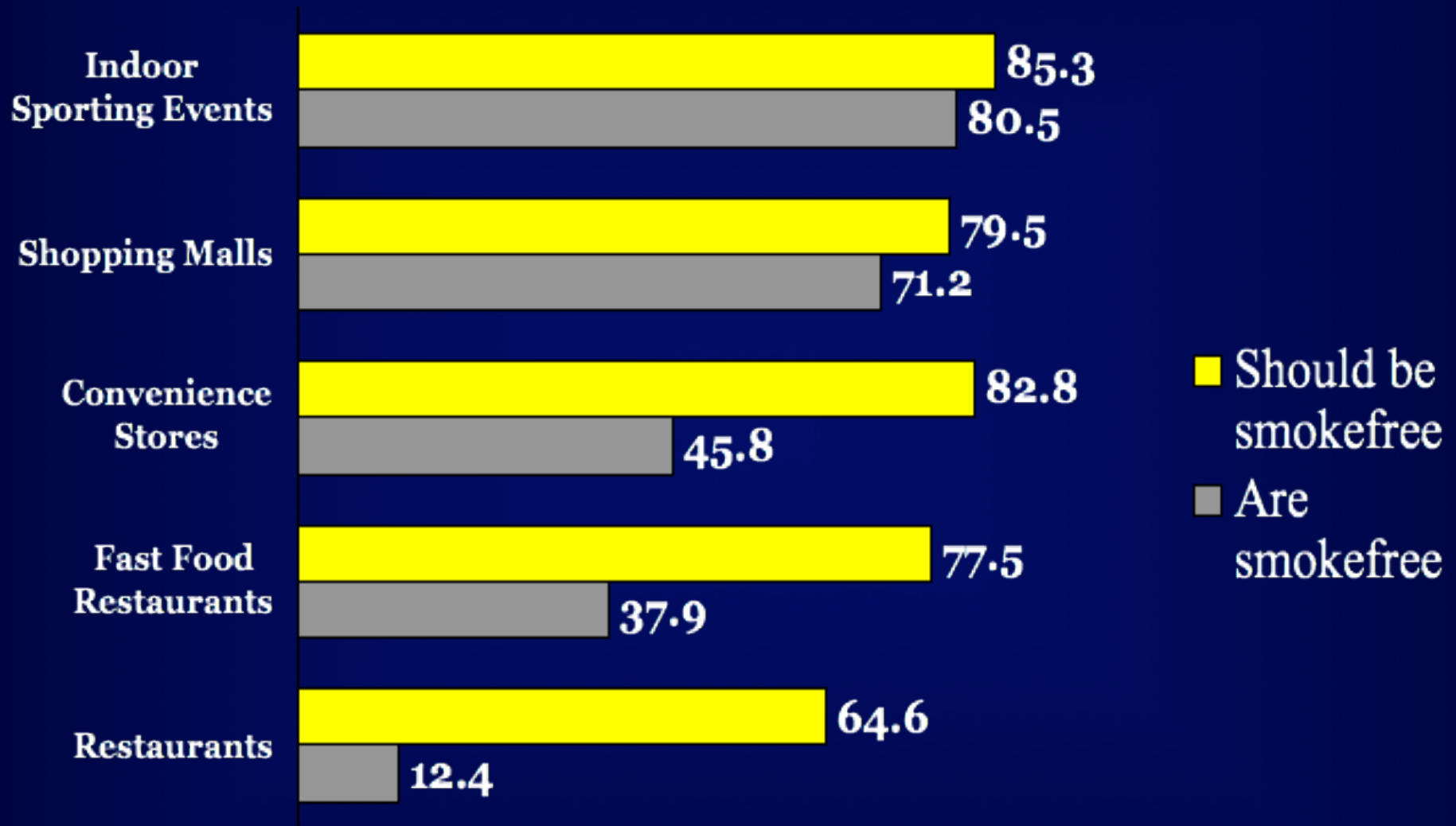
Clean Air Policies, Mississippi and The Nation



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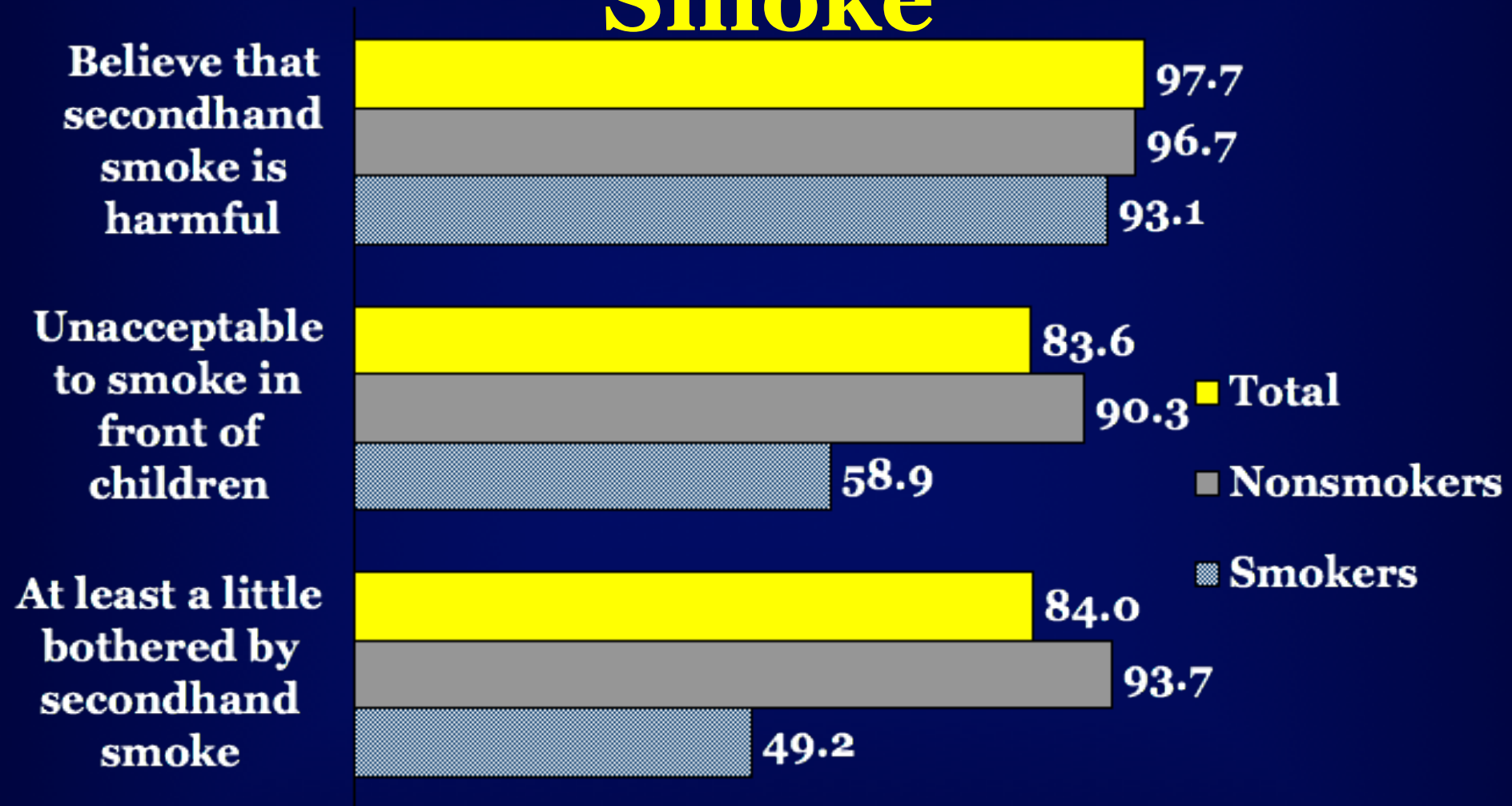
Support for Smoking Bans



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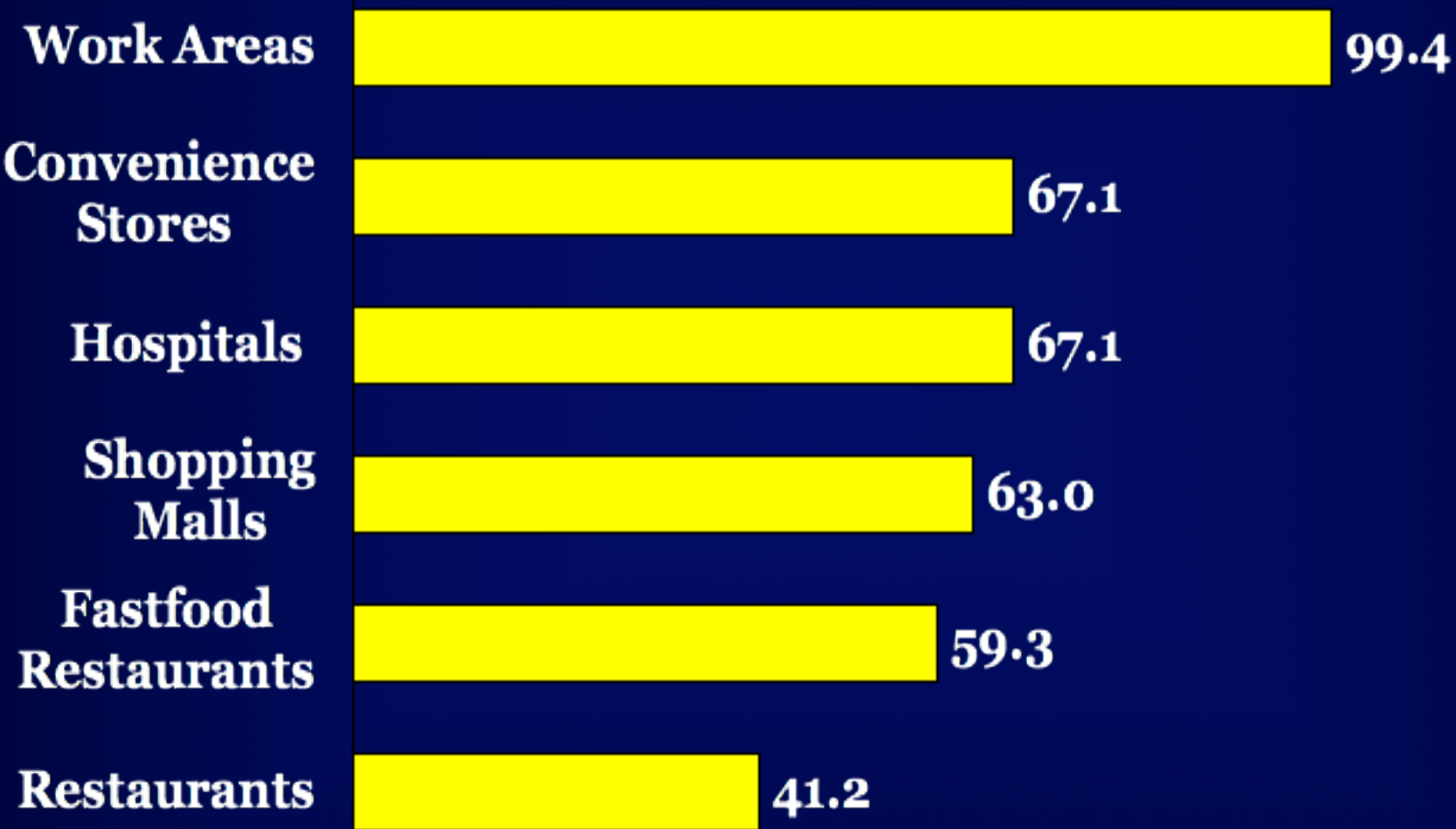
Beliefs About Secondhand Smoke



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Support for Smoking Bans, Smokers



State Tobacco Taxes Should Be Increased to Fund:

- Education programs to prevent young people from starting to smoke → **79.7% of Mississippi adults, 61.2% of smokers**
- Programs to enforce laws that prevent sales of tobacco to minors → **79.9% of Mississippi adults, 61.1% of smokers**
- Programs to help adults quit smoking → **68.9% of Mississippi adults, 49.2% of smokers**



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The Changing Social Climate in Mississippi, 2000 to 2001



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Smoking Bans

1. In the presence of children
2. Convenience stores
3. Fast food restaurants
4. Indoor shopping malls
5. Indoor sporting events
6. Work Sites



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Knowledge and Attitudes Regarding ETS

- 1. Indoor shopping malls should be smoke free**
- 2. Smoking should not be allowed in day care centers**
- 3. Hospitals should be smoke free**
- 4. Smoke from parents' cigarettes harms their children**



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Attitudes & Normative Beliefs

1. Schools should prohibit clothing or gear with tobacco logos
2. Stores should need a license to sell tobacco products
3. Tobacco taxes should be increased to fund enforcement of tobacco laws
4. Disagree that taxes on tobacco are unfair
5. Tobacco ads are not acceptable at sporting or cultural events



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Attitudes & Normative Beliefs

- 6. Tobacco use is unacceptable within household**
- 7. Parents should not allow children under the age of 18 to smoke cigarettes**
- 8. Tobacco should be regulated as a drug**
- 9. It is the responsibility of government to regulate tobacco**
- 10. Employer does not accommodate smokers**
- 11. Employer offered cessation program in past 12 months**
- 12. Tobacco ads are not acceptable on billboards**



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Dissemination: For Planning and Evaluation

- Planning and evaluation
- Shared results at health forums sponsored by the Mississippi Health Advocacy Program
- Briefed legislative committees
- Media coverage of changing social climate



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Independent Data to Inform Policy Makers

- Demonstrated to the legislature that the social climate in Mississippi was improving
- Smoke free worksites and restaurants bill
- The American Cancer Society applied findings to support an increase on state tobacco taxes

The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi

www.healthy-miss.org

**Social Science Research Center,
Mississippi State University**

www.ssrc.msstate.edu/socialclimate