

Using Surveys to Promote the Adoption of State and Local Tobacco-Free School Policies

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BACKGROUND

Comprehensive, enforced tobacco-free school (TFS) policies

- lead to significant reductions of youth tobacco use¹⁻⁴
- are part of a comprehensive tobacco control program⁵

North Carolina (NC) has used district-level policy advocacy to pass TFS policies in its 115 school districts.

- **1990-2002:** 15 districts adopted TFS policies
- **2003:** NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) funds grantees statewide (TFS policy a focus)
- **2005** study shows local survey data promotes TFS policy passage⁶
- **2003-2006:** 64 more TFS districts (total: 79/115)
- **2007:** Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) funds NC surveys to promote TFS policy statewide



METHODS

Statewide Survey

- Random digit dial telephone survey
 - ❖ Support for TFS legislation
 - ❖ Support for legislation prohibiting smoking in all public, indoor places
- 251 respondents (18 years or older)
- 60% Response Rate

County-Level Survey

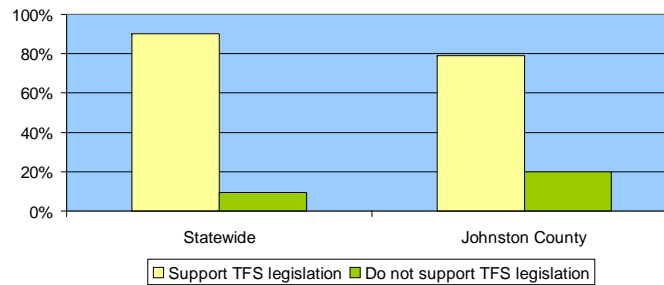
- Conducted in Johnston County (highest tobacco production in state)
- Same survey as statewide sample
- 277 respondents
- 58% Response Rate

Data Analysis

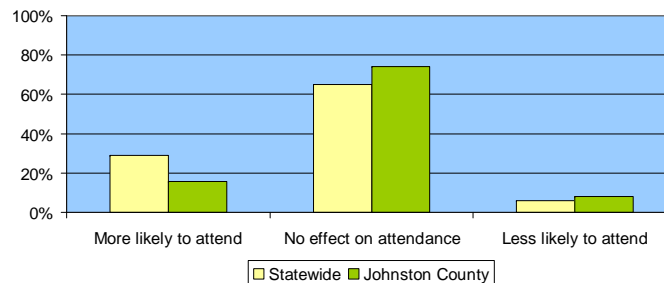
- Data weighted for education, gender, age
- Sample already representative for smokers (22%)
- Analyzed with SAS

RESULTS

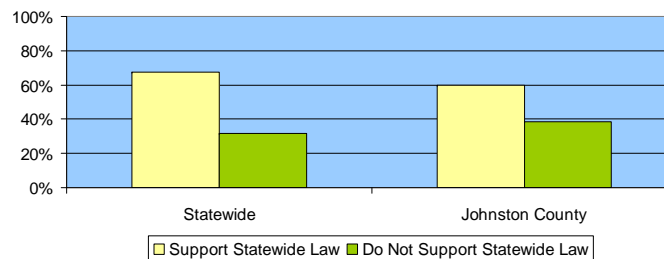
Support for TFS Legislation



Effect of TFS Policy on School Event Attendance



Support for State Legislation Prohibiting Smoking in Public, Indoor Places



COMMUNICATION OF SURVEY DATA

- Press release sent out with data (June 7, 2007)
- Story covered in
 - ❖ Raleigh, Charlotte, and Chapel Hill newspapers
 - ❖ radio interview
 - ❖ at least a dozen websites and blogs
- Data presented to Johnston County Board of Education
- Data shared by NC legislator during hearing on TFS law



WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

- In June 2007, the NC legislature passed a bill mandating all remaining NC school districts adopt comprehensive TFS policies.
- The bill was signed into law in July and takes effect in August 2008.
- At the time the bill passed, 77 of the 115 NC school districts had adopted TFS policies on their own.
- Since the bill's passage, that number has risen to 94.
- Johnston County has not yet voted on a TFS policy.

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