

# Denormalizing Smoking via Policy and Media Interventions

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**Abstract.** This four-year project is designed to investigate the effectiveness of three major types of public health interventions being used by the Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program (MTCP): local clean indoor air policies, local policies to restrict youth access to tobacco products and televised anti-tobacco media campaigns. The data will come from two sources: 1) a population-based telephone survey of Massachusetts adults and youth ages 12 to 17 in the year 2000 and a longitudinal follow-up survey two years later of all youth respondents and all adult respondents who were smokers in the year 2000; and 2) town-level data drawn primarily from the MTCP management information system, the central repository of operating data concerning the local programs funded by the state's 1993 tobacco tax. The town-level data will be linked to individual survey data based on the respondent's town of residence.

By examining the prospective effect of variation in strength, duration and enforcement of local clean indoor air ordinances and youth access ordinances on changes in the smoking behavior of youth and adults, the research will assess the contribution of these policies to the prevention of smoking initiation and the promotion of smoking cessation. By evaluating respondents' exposure to the antitobacco media campaign based on their television viewing patterns and recall of specific advertisements, the research will assess prospectively the impact of media exposure on youth and adult smoking. The research will help to identify potential mechanisms for the effect of these interventions. In addition, it will contribute to knowledge of how to design effective television counter-advertisements by assessing reactions to specific ads which vary in message and in valence and level of emotion aroused. Finally, the research will contribute to improving the methodology for assessing youth smoking in population-based samples by evaluating whether audio-computer-assisted telephone interviewing (T-ACASI) improves the reporting of smoking behavior by youth in telephone surveys. The long term objective of this project is to provide guidance to states and communities on the most effective ways to design and evaluate tobacco control interventions.

**Thesaurus Terms:** air pollution control, behavior modification, health care policy, mass information media, smoking cessation longitudinal human study adolescence (12-18), adult human (19+), behavioral and social science research, telecommunication.