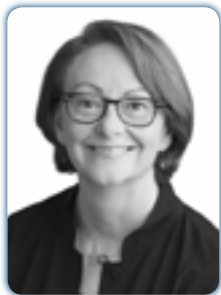


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THE IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA TO REDUCE TOBACCO USE AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS: FINDINGS FROM THE TRUTH FINISHT CAMPAIGN

Statement of the Problem: Significant changes in the media and tobacco use landscapes prompted changes in the message and media strategies for a new phase of the anti-tobacco truth campaign launched in 2014. A comprehensive media strategy was implemented across multiple platforms, and media messages were designed to focus on a broad smoking de-normalization strategy by showcasing various negative consequences of tobacco use, while enlisting this new generation to be part of a movement to end smoking. Five key attitudinal constructs were identified, including anti-social smoking sentiment, anti-tobacco industry sentiment, independence, anti-smoking imagery, and support for an anti-tobacco social movement. The purpose of this comprehensive evaluation is to examine the relationships between awareness of truth campaign advertisements, the five key attitudinal constructs, intentions to smoke and tobacco use behavior using a longitudinal, nationally representative sample of youth and young adults.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Study samples for all analyses were drawn from the Truth Longitudinal Cohort (TLC), a probability-based, nationally representative cohort (n=14,000). Logistic regression models examine awareness of truth advertisements in relation to targeted attitudes over time. Structural equation models (SEM) tested causal pathways.

Findings: Regression results demonstrate a dose-response relationship between higher ad awareness and higher levels of anti-tobacco attitudes and intentions not to smoke, holding constant baseline attitudes and intentions. SEM models show higher ad awareness predicts higher anti-tobacco attitudes; attitude changes were significantly associated with greater support for an anti-tobacco social movement; and in turn, greater movement support predicted lower levels of smoking intensity and a slower rate of progression over time.

Conclusion & Significance: A carefully designed, national anti-tobacco mass media campaign can help a new generation of youth and young adults reject tobacco. The evidence of increased tobacco use initiation among young adults calls for the continued support of public education mass media campaigns to inspire tobacco-free lives.

Biography

Donna M. Vallone, PhD, MPH serves as Chief Research Officer of the Schroeder Institute at Truth Initiative (formerly American Legacy Foundation) and holds adjunct appointments in the College for Global Public Health at New York University and the Health, Behavior and Society Department of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her research interests focus on examining the influence of mass media to reduce tobacco use among lower socioeconomic status (SES) and racial/ethnic minority groups. She is a section editor of the upcoming National Cancer Institute Tobacco Control Monograph, *A Social Ecological Approach to Addressing Tobacco Related Health Disparities* (expected 2017). Author of over 75 peer-reviewed academic manuscripts, Vallone's research has been funded by various entities including the National Institute for Drug Abuse and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vallone holds a doctoral degree in Sociomedical Science, an interdisciplinary degree between sociology and public health, from Columbia University.

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