

Confirming “truth”: More Evidence of a Successful Tobacco Countermarketing Campaign in Florida

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The Florida Tobacco Control Program began in April 1998 with the launch of the “truth” countermarketing campaign. “truth” messages described the tobacco industry’s purposeful attempts to market a harmful product to teens and its denial of cigarettes’ addictive and deadly effects. Florida youth smoking rates declined rapidly between 1998 and 1999, and research suggests that the “truth” campaign contributed to these reductions.



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Using data from a national telephone survey with a large sample of Florida teens, this study provides evidence that Florida’s “truth” tobacco countermarketing campaign was successful in reducing smoking among Florida teens well beyond the first year of the program. While smoking prevalence between Florida teens and their national counterparts was comparable before the launch of “truth,” smoking rates were substantially lower among Florida teens between fall 2001 and spring 2002. Florida teens had higher levels of “truth” campaign awareness and were more likely than were youth from the rest of the country to agree with campaign-targeted beliefs. Two of these beliefs were the only items associated with current smoking. The fact that there were no differences in beliefs about the social and physical effects of smoking between Florida and national youth suggests the “truth” campaign was successful in changing beliefs about tobacco and smoking behavior among Florida teens.

Link: <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/94/2/255?etoc>