



September 2006

Recall of Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns in Ontario

Background

Tobacco control mass media (MM) campaigns are key elements of comprehensive tobacco control strategies.¹ In Canada, MM campaigns have been identified as important components of both the Federal Tobacco Control strategy and the Smoke-Free Ontario strategy. This update discusses awareness of the messages of four MM campaigns aired in Ontario in 2005.

Method

Data from the first wave of the Ontario Tobacco Survey (OTS), a telephone-based, regionally-stratified random sample of Ontario adults, were collected from July to December 2005 (N=1,251, response rate=57%). Respondents were asked: “In the past 30 days, have you seen any anti-smoking advertisement or campaign taking place in Ontario with the following themes or slogans: An ad ...”

- about kids doing risky things with the message “What’s more stupid?”²
- about a former waitress who is dying of second-hand smoke with the message: “Support a smoke-free Ontario?”³
- about a character named Bob who is trying to quit smoking?”⁴
- showing smoke-rings with the message: “Don’t let your children be a target, make your home smoke-free?”⁴

Aided recall of MM campaigns was examined by age, sex, smoking status, and factors related to the message of each campaign using design-based chi-square tests.

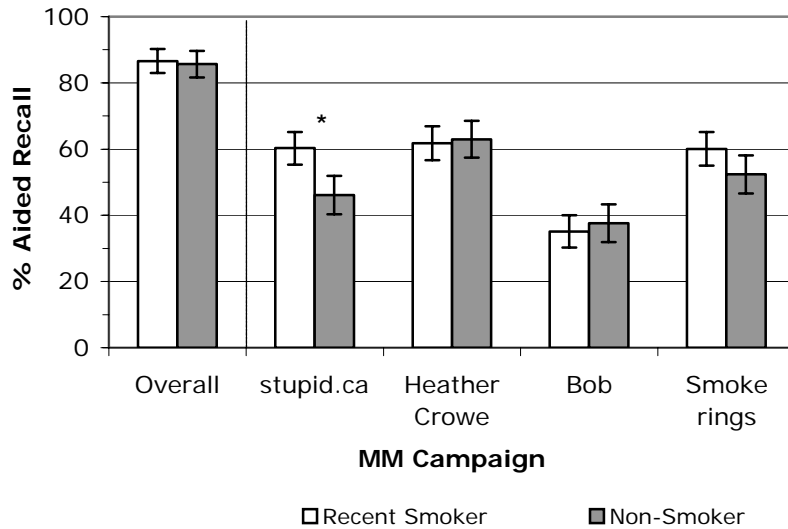
Results

- 86% of adults in Ontario recalled exposure to at least one of the MM campaigns; recall did not vary by gender, but 18- to 24-year-olds were more likely to recall MM campaigns than older respondents ($p=0.014$).
- Recall by smokers did not differ according to whether the respondent intended to quit in the next 6 months.
- Smokers and those living with children under 18 years of age were more likely to recall the “stupid.ca” campaign (targeted to youth aged 12-15) than those without children (57% vs. 44% respectively; $p=0.005$).
- Recall of the “smoke rings” campaign (targeted at parents) did not differ significantly between households with or without children, or among respondents with or without a complete smoking ban in their homes.
- Recall of the former waitress, “Heather Crowe” campaign did not differ between respondents who had a complete smoking ban in their homes and those who did not.
- Recall of the “Bob” campaign did not differ by whether respondents had ever used NRT or bupropion; however, recall of “Bob” was more likely among those who had used other cessation aids or resources (i.e. hypnosis, acupuncture, laser, or counselling) compared to those who had not (31% vs. 14% respectively; $p=0.008$).



Aided Recall of Mass Media Campaigns in Ontario Among Recent Smokers and Non-Smokers

Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals
* $p < 0.05$



Discussion

Overall awareness of MM campaigns is high among Ontario adults. Although “stupid.ca” was targeted to youth to prevent smoking initiation, greater recall among adult recent smokers compared to non-smokers may indicate that this campaign was effective in sending health messages to smokers. Recall of the “Bob” campaign was significantly lower than other messages; however, survey interviewers noted that those familiar with the campaign did remember “Bob” clearly and favourably. Those using non-pharmaceutical cessation supports may have identified with “Bob” as a smoker struggling to quit.

The survey did not capture information about unaided recall of campaigns or their impacts on campaign viewers. It is possible that differences in recall could be explained by differences in broadcasting schedules and exposure among campaigns. Future cycles and longitudinal data from this study will continue to capture MM activities and examine their potential relationship to quit intentions, attempts and successes.

Investigators: Susan Bondy, Steve Brown, Joanna Cohen, Roberta Ferrence, John Garcia, Paul McDonald, Shawn O’Connor, Peter Selby, Tom Stephens

Project Directors: Lori Diemert, Charles Victor

References:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, August 1999*. Atlanta GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; August 1999. [cited 2006 September 19]. Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/research_data/stat_nat_data/bestprac-dwnld.htm.
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. News Media. For Youth, By Youth: A Campaign to Keep Kids From Smoking. [updated 2005 March; cited 2006 September 19]. Available from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/media/articles/archives/ar_05/030105a_ar.html.
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. News Release: McGuinty Government Honours Tobacco Control Advocate. Heather Crowe Award Recognises Efforts to Make Ontario Smoke-Free. December 16, 2005. [cited 2006 September 19]. Available from: <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/news/2005/121605.asp>.
- Health Canada. Health Canada National Campaigns: Quitting (TV Campaign) and Second-hand Smoke (TV Campaign). [cited 2006 September 19]. Available from: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/res/media/camp/index_e.html.