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# Evaluation of a social marketing campaign to denormalize tobacco use among young adults: Evaluation of Ohio's DEBUNKIFY campaign

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*RTI International is a trade name of  
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- RTI International and Harris Interactive
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# Presentation Objectives

- Background of the Debunkify Campaign
- What have been the early effects of Debunkify?
- What still needs to change?



- Developed by OTPF with Northlich
- Launched July 2006
- Targets 18-24 year olds
- Aims to correct misperceptions about prevalence of tobacco use and dangers of secondhand smoke
- Includes TV & radio, website, and 10-month mobile tour

# Debunkify Campaign Rationale

- Seeks to “debunkify” myths about:
  - Smoking prevalence
  - Social appeal of smoking
  - Correct perceptions of the dangers of secondhand smoke
- Created a "marked" behavior for the non-smoking lifestyle and engaged targets to create personal identification

# Example Ohio Debunkify Message: “Game Show Models”

- Television advertisement
- Aired shortly after “Debunkify” launch in 2006
- Purpose:
  - Introduce brand & theme:
    - ◆ “Debunk” idea that most people smoke
    - ◆ A non-smoking lifestyle is an acceptable choice
  - Create buzz around target audience
  - Drive traffic to [debunkify.com](http://debunkify.com) website

# Example Ohio Debunkify Message: “Game Show Models”



# Example Ohio Debunkify Message: “Secondhand Snakes”

- Television advertisement
- Aired shortly after “Debunkify” launch in 2006
- Purpose:
  - Introduce brand & theme:
    - ◆ “Debunk” idea that secondhand smoke isn’t deadly
    - ◆ Understand reasons for promoting and supporting smoke-free establishments
  - Create buzz around target audience
  - Drive traffic to [debunkify.com](http://debunkify.com) website



# Example Ohio Debunkify Message: “Secondhand Snakes”



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# Evaluation Design: Debunkify



# Approach

- Longitudinal sample (web-based)
  - Baseline: July/August 2006 or October/November 2006
  - Follow-up: May 2007
- Sample Characteristics
  - 322 18- to 24-year olds in Ohio (62% female; 91% White)
  - 347 18- to 24-year olds outside Ohio (68% female; 91% White)
  - 69% had at least some college education
- Weighted to populations of target in Ohio and the U.S.

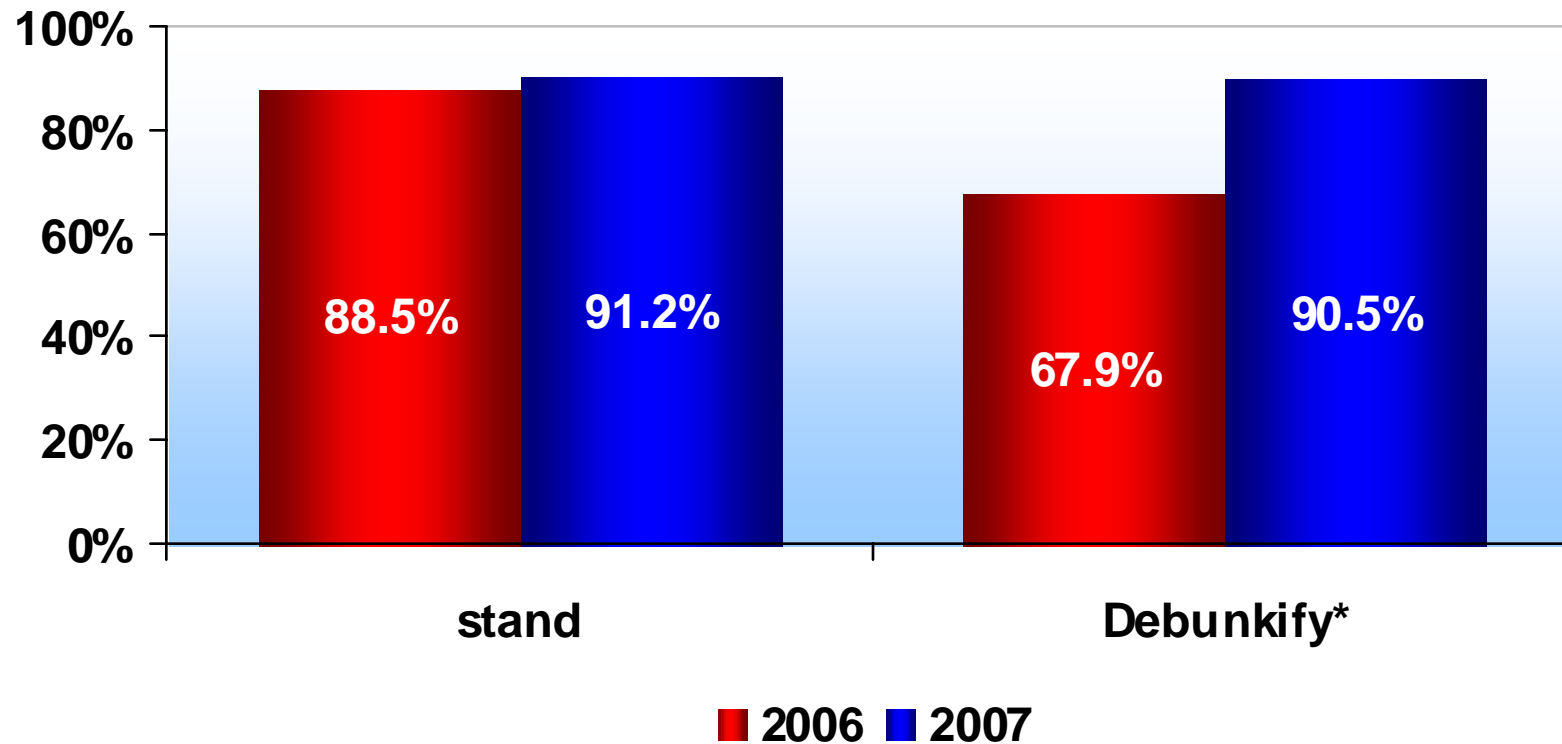
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# Confirmed Awareness of Debunkify



# Campaign Awareness Increased:

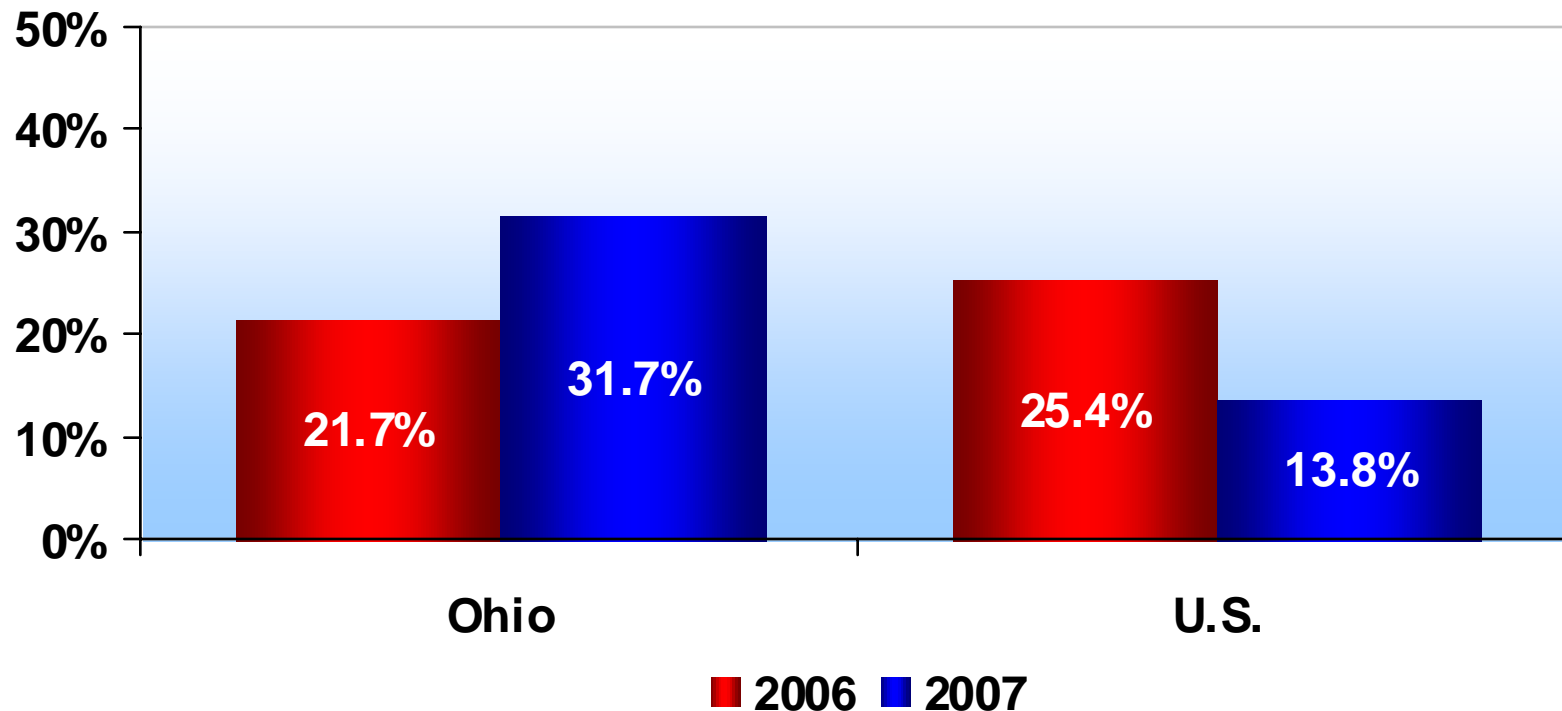
Aided Awareness of stand and Debunkify Campaigns: 2006–2007



\* Statistically significant changes between 2006 and 2007 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

# Awareness of Programs Increased:

Awareness of School or Community Programs to Prevent Exposure to Secondhand Smoke in Ohio and the U.S.: 2006–2007



Changes within group over time were not statistically significant; however, the difference between the increase in Ohio and the decrease in the rest of the U.S. was statistically significant at the .05 ( $p < .05$ ) level.

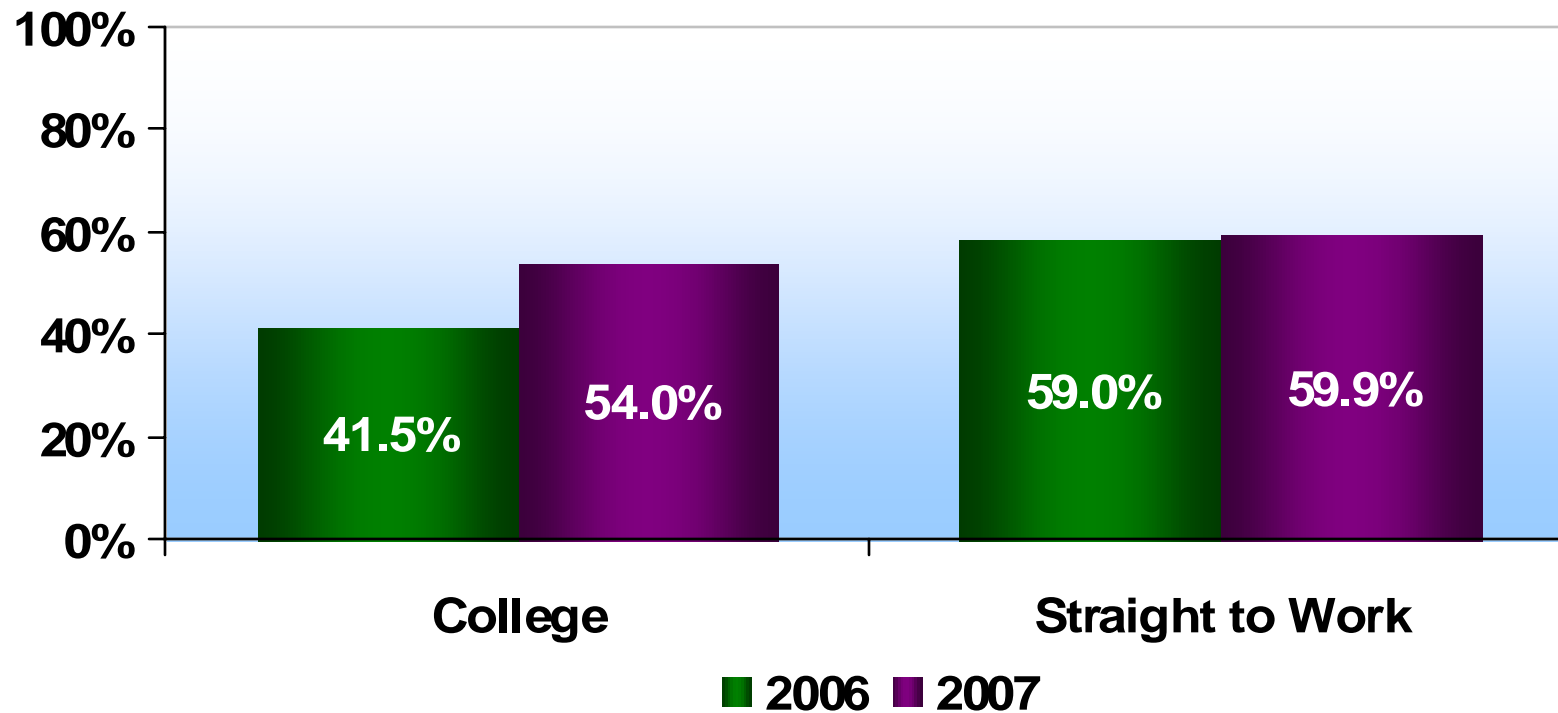
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## Brand Affinity with Debunkify

**DEBUNKIFY**

# Brand Reaction:

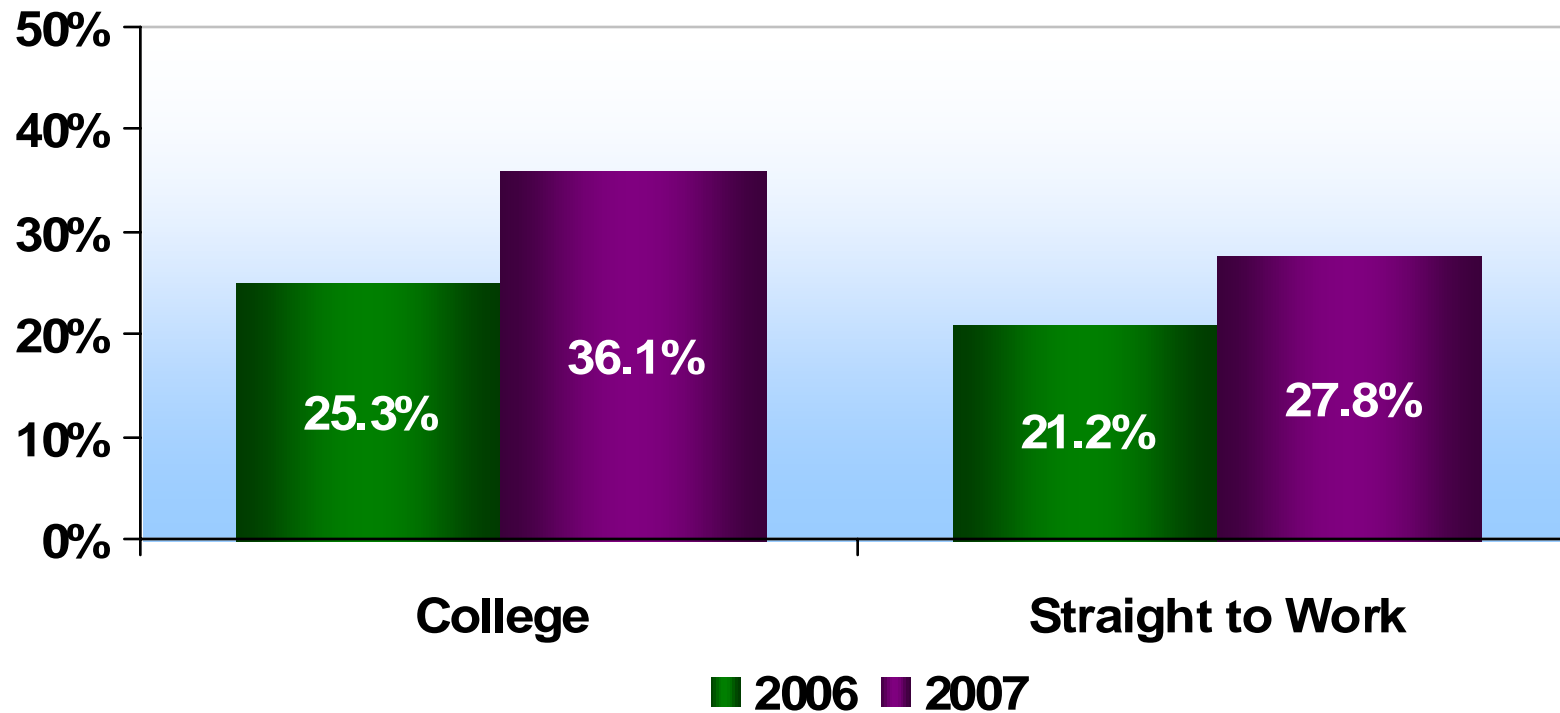
When you think Debunkify, you think...  
Tobacco companies are lying to me





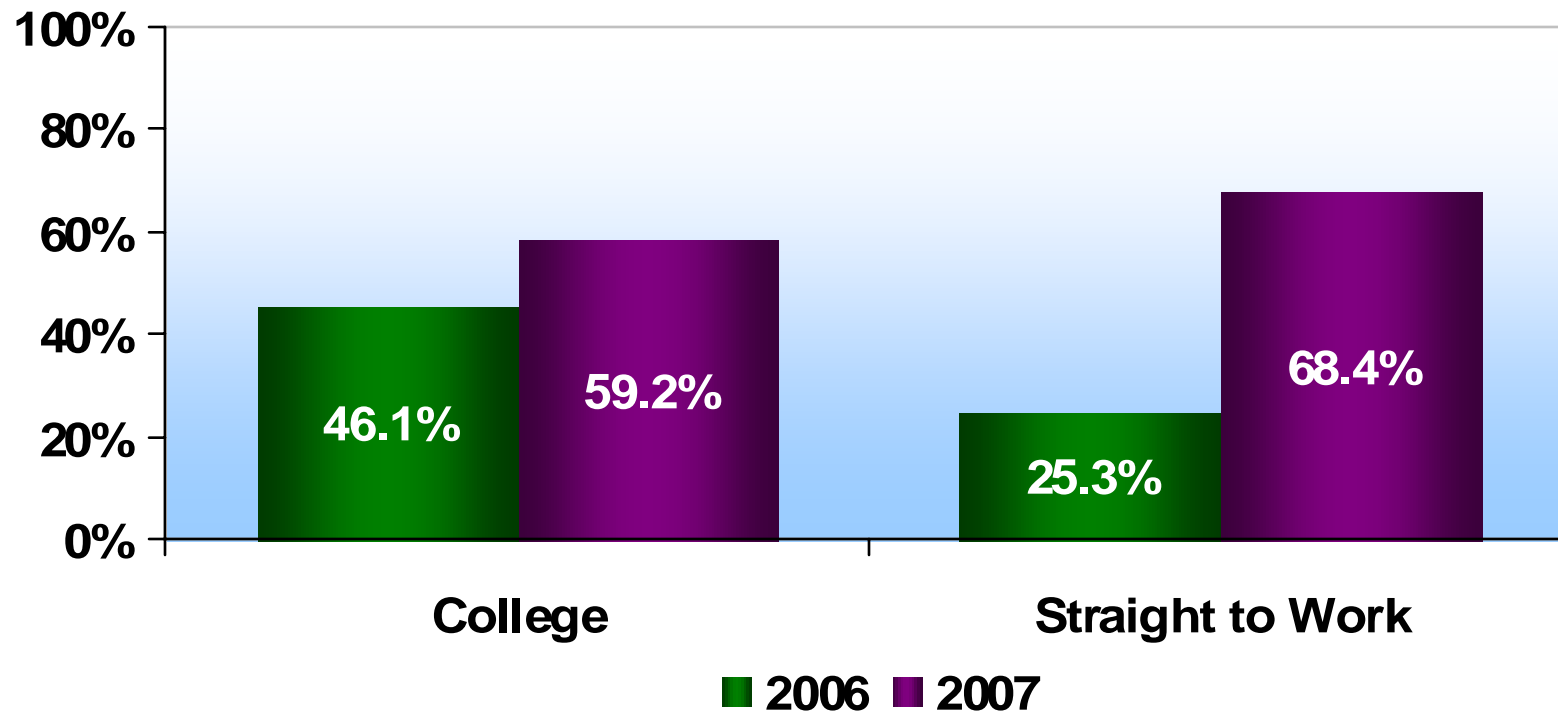
# Brand Loyalty:

I'd talk about Debunkify in front of my friends who smoke



# Brand Personality:

People in Debunkify don't get fooled by tobacco companies



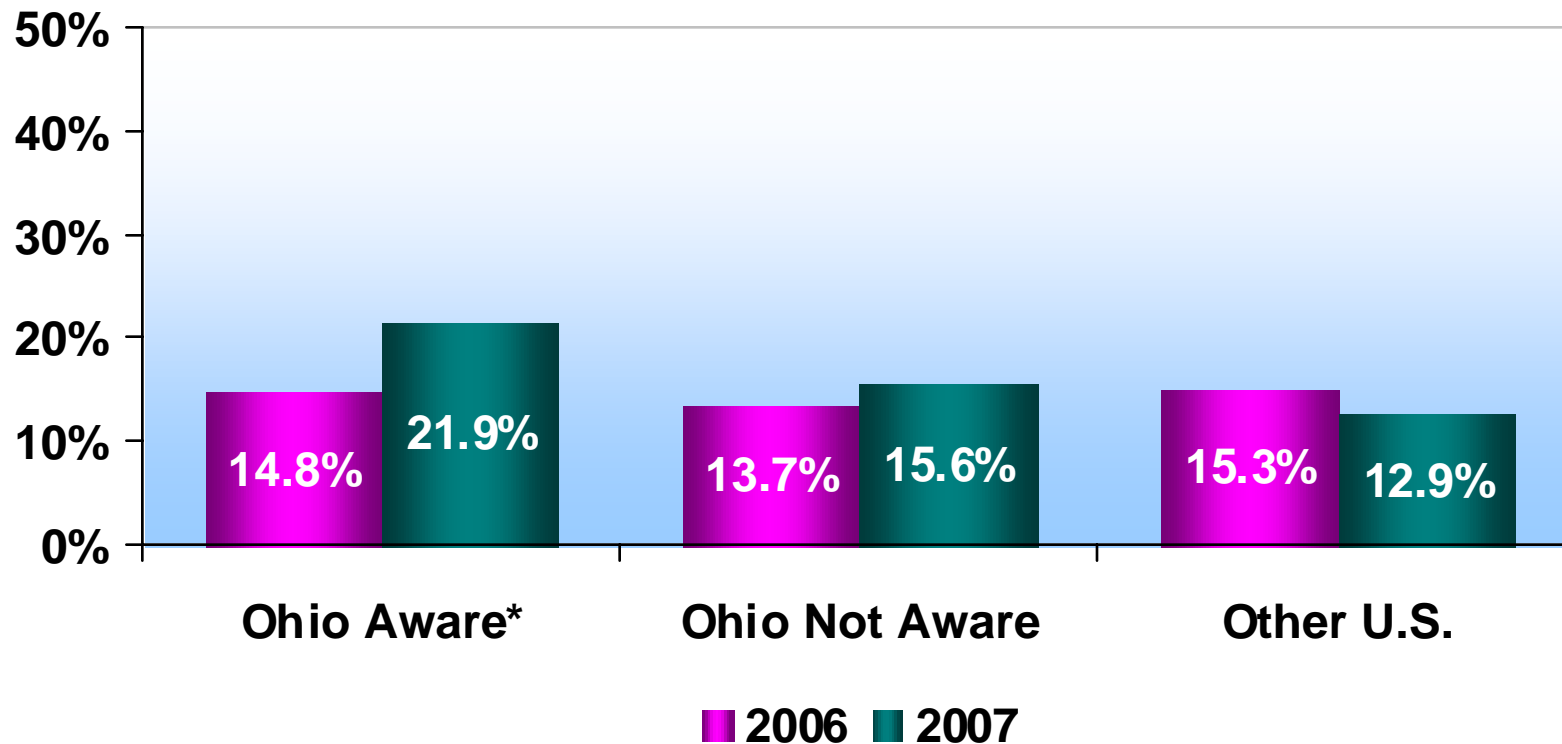
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# Changes in Beliefs and Attitudes



# More Accurate Perception of Prevalence:

Accurate Perception of Adult Smoking Prevalence by Debunkify  
Awareness: 2006–2007



\* Statistically significant changes between 2006 and 2007 ( $p < 0.05$ )

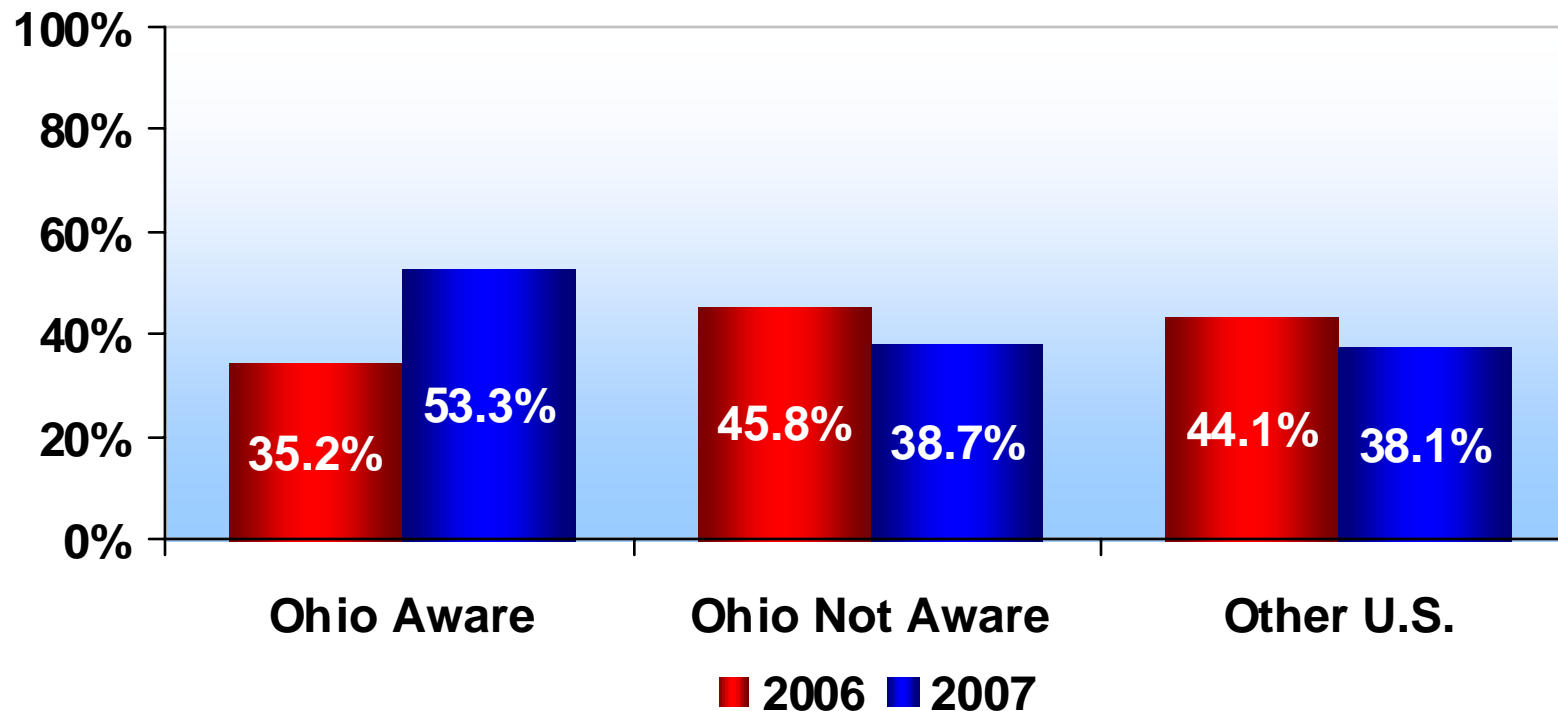
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## Changes in Tobacco Use



# Increased Quit Attempts:

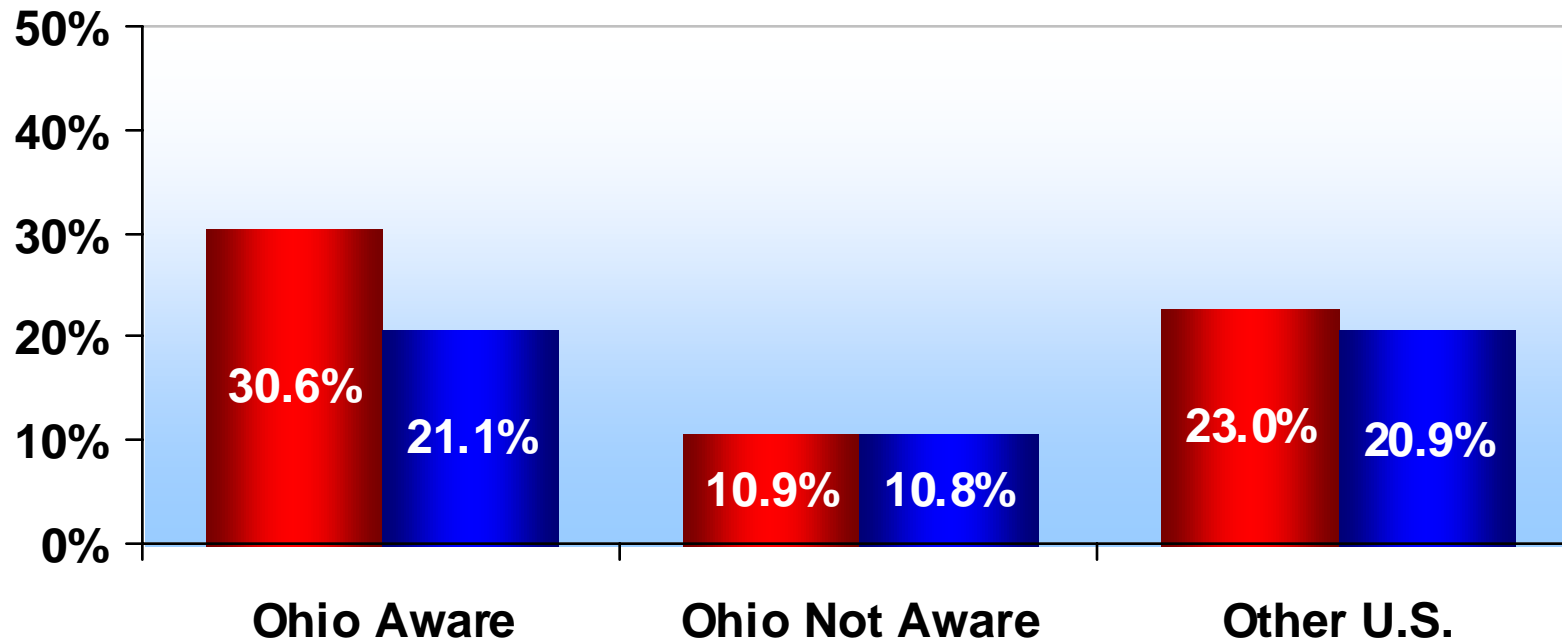
Baseline Current Smokers' Quit Attempts by Debunkify Awareness:  
2006–2007



Changes within group over time were not statistically significant; however, the difference between the increase in Ohio and the decrease in the rest of the U.S. was statistically significant at the .05 ( $p < .05$ ) level.

# Decreasing Smoking:

Current Smoking among Young Adults by Debunkify Awareness:  
2006–2007



■ 2006 ■ 2007

Changes within groups were not statistically significant; however, the difference between the decrease among those with confirmed awareness, compared to no change among those who were not aware, approached statistical significance ( $p = .053$ ).

# Summary of Results

- Aided awareness increased to 90+%
- Young adults in Ohio increasingly aware of school or community efforts to prevent secondhand smoke
- More accurate perception of smoking prevalence
- Decreased smoking prevalence
- Increased quit attempts



# Conclusions

- DEBUNKIFY reaching young adults in Ohio
- Changes in campaign-related beliefs
- Decreasing tobacco use and tobacco cessation
- Need to continue efforts to convey DEBUNKIFY messages:
  - Accurate perceptions of smoking prevalence increased, but still only 1/4 held accurate perceptions
  - Limited change in beliefs about secondhand smoke

# Additional Information

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