



Reducing Transmission of COVID-19: Measuring Mask Use Compliance in Shelby County

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Purpose

- Measure community adherence with the Joint Task Force's recommendation of mask usage to reduce COVID-19 transmission
- Inform communications and policy strategies/tactics to improve compliance with mask wearing by the general public

Methods

- Count the number of individuals who correctly wore masks by:
 - 1) Direct observation in 20 large retail settings
 - Pre- and Post-Policies measurements taken
 - 10 in high-transmission areas, 10 in low-transmission areas in Shelby County
 - 2) Review of video tapes captured by City cameras of outdoor public areas (Highland, Madison, & Beale)

Retail Observation Results

Pre-Policies

(6/15 - 6/21/20) n= 4,060

- **Overall mask usage: 51%**
- Mask use by age:
 - 2-18 year olds: 35%
 - 55+ years: 64%
- Correct mask usage:
 - 2-18 year olds: 31%
 - 41+ years: 61%
- Lowest mask usage among Hispanic/LatinX: 34%
- Highest mask usage among Asians: 91%

Post-Policies

(7/9 – 7/15/20) n= 3,970

- **Overall mask usage: 92%**
- Mask use by age:
 - 2-18 year olds: 85%
 - 41+ years: 94%
- Correct mask usage:
 - 2-18 year olds: 78%
 - 41+ years: 92%
- 92-96% mask usage among all ethnicity and racial groups
- 1-2% higher rate of compliance in low transmission zip codes

Video Surveillance Results

Pre-Policies (5/26 – 6/11/20)

- 23 hours observed
- Correct mask usage never exceeded 60%
- In 21 of 23 hours, at least 2/3 of people did NOT display proper mask usage

Post-Policies (6/20 – 7/14/20)

- 21 hours observed
- The highest rate of mask usage was 67%
- In 17 of 21 hours, at least 60% of people did NOT display proper mask usage

Overall in outdoor public spaces, data indicate a slightly better compliance with the City Mask Ordinance and County Health Directive. However, compliance is still far from optimal.

Recommendations

- Ensure correct mask usage
 - Develop commercials or internet ads explaining how to wear mask correctly
- Focus on groups with lower compliance rates (ex. Children, Young Adults)
- Observations at smaller retail stores
 - Gas stations, corner stores, etc.
 - Enforce correct mask usage even while picking up to go food

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QUESTIONS?