

# Increasing young adult smoking linked to smoking in movies

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Do young adults learn behaviors from movies? In a paper published in the November issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, researchers from the University of California, San Francisco, examined the relationship between young adults (age 18-25) observing smoking in movies and the likelihood of starting to smoke. They found that more exposure to smoking in movies was significantly associated with young adults beginning to smoke or becoming established smokers.

After falling for several decades, the incidence of smoking in movies started increasing around 1990 and, by 2000 was comparable to 1950 levels. Young adulthood is the time when most adolescent experimenters either transition to regular use or stop smoking. Young adults also compose the largest share of United States movie viewers, with 34% attending a film at least once a month.

Using random-digit telephone dialing to ensure a representative cross-section of 18-25 year olds, a national web-enabled survey of 1528 young adults was conducted between September and November 2005. This study investigated the hypothesis that exposure to smoking in movies is related to smoking in young adults.

Writing in the article, the authors from the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California, San Francisco, states, "This study is the first to demonstrate that smoking in movies is associated with smoking in young adults in a dose-dependent manner; the more a young adult is exposed to smoking in the movies, the more

likely he/she will have smoked in the past 30 days or have become an established smoker.” Stanton Glantz, the senior author, adds, “Our new study shows that the influence of movies promoting smoking extends well beyond adolescence into young adulthood.”

Source: Elsevier Health Sciences

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