

Children see. Children do.

Your children are twice as likely to smoke if you do. Half of all premature deaths among life-long smokers result from tobacco use.



Medical Facts

Roughly half of all people who smoke regularly will eventually be killed by their habit.¹

Initiation to cigarette smoking is influenced by several kinds of factors: environmental, behavioral, personal, and sociodemographic.^{2,3}

Parental smoking is more important in establishing smoking as a normative behavior, and is associated with more positive and fewer negative perceptions of the health consequences of smoking.³

The research on the influence of parents' smoking behavior on their children's cigarette use has included multiple studies of the relative risk of initiation if one or both parents smoke. Bauman et al. (1990) found a consistent relationship between parental and adolescent smoking in a cross-sectional study of 12- through 14-year-olds in 10 urban areas in the southeastern United States. Compared with adolescents whose parents had never smoked, those whose parents currently smoked were almost twice as likely to smoke; those whose parents had once smoked were three times as likely to smoke.^{4,5} Bauman et al. (1990) findings also indicate that parent lifetime smoking is more strongly related than parent current smoking by adolescents.⁴ According to the 1994 Youth Smoking Survey (YSS), 31% of 10- to 14-year olds and 10% of 15- to 19-year-olds believed that parental smoking was one reason why people their age started smoking.⁶

According to the 1994 YSS, almost half of young persons aged 10-19 (46%) have at least one parent who currently smokes. This includes 61% of current smokers and 43% of never smokers.⁷ Young people aged 15-19 are more likely to smoke if both parents smoke (36% of males; 41% of females) than if neither parent smokes (17% of males and females).⁸

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