

Youth are Exposed to Smoking by Watching Television

- Currently, youth spend more time than ever viewing television content because of their access to programming on new platforms including the Internet, cell phones and MP3 players.
 - Although live television viewing has declined, in 2009, youth spent almost 4.5 hours per day watching television programming, about 40 minutes more than in 2005.¹
- In a study examining the quantity of tobacco use depicted in TV shows popular among teens aged 12-17 in the United States in 2007, researchers found that 40% of shows reviewed contained at least one depiction of tobacco use.²
- In the same report, authors found that a higher proportion of tobacco use was depicted in programs rated TV-PG (50%) compared to shows with the more mature TV-14 rating (26%). These findings indicate that exposure to tobacco on television is more prevalent on programs that may reach younger children.²
- In 2001, young teens (ages 12-14) were more likely to report having seen smoking on television and movies than were young adults (18-24).³

Smoking in the Media has a Powerful Influence on Youth

- Exposure to pro-tobacco marketing and media more than doubles the odds of initiating tobacco use among youth.^{4,5}
- Youth who view tobacco use in movies hold more positive attitudes toward smoking.⁴ Studies consistently demonstrate that exposure to cigarette smoking in films influences viewers' beliefs about smoking and increases their intentions to smoke.⁶
- Adolescents ages 10-14 in the United States have a higher risk of smoking initiation as their exposure to movie smoking increases.⁵

Exposure to Smoking on Television May Influence Youth to Smoke

- The strongest and most extensive evidence for the link between youth exposure to tobacco in the media and subsequent smoking uptake is in film. However, literature on smoking in television also demonstrates a dose-response relationship between smoking depictions viewed and the initiation of smoking among 10-15 year olds.⁷
- Researchers have found that among some 12-14 year olds, private access to a television is a significant independent predictor of smoking initiation, and may be as important a risk factor for smoking initiation as R-rated movie exposure.⁸
- The body of evidence supporting the causal link between exposure to movie smoking depictions and youth smoking initiation is relevant to television as well, particularly because many movies are aired on television after playing in cinemas.² In 2009, tobacco use was depicted in 54% (32/59) of top grossing PG-13 movies.⁹
- Nearly all teens ages 12-17 in the United States see tobacco use on television in the context of movie trailers.¹⁰ In one study, exposure to movie trailers on television increased the attractiveness of smoking among youth who had experimented with cigarettes.¹¹

SOURCES

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⁶ National Cancer Institute. The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use. Tobacco Control Monograph No. 19. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute. NIH Pub. No. 07-6242, June 2008

⁷ Gidwani PP, Sobol A, DeJoong W. Television Viewing and Initiation of Smoking Among Youth. *Pediatrics.* 2002; 110 (3):505-508.

⁸ Jackson C, Brown JD, L'Engle KL. R-Rated Movies, Bedroom Televisions, and Initiation of Smoking by White and Black Adolescents. *Arch Pediat Adol Med.* 2007; 161 (3):260-268.

⁹ CDC. Smoking in Top-Grossing Movies – United States, 2009. 2010. *MMWR* 2010; 59 (32):1014-1017.

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¹¹ Hanewinkel R. Cigarette smoking and perception of a movie character in a film trailer. *Arch Pediat Adol Med.* 2009; 163 (1):15-18.