

Studies funded by the U.S. National Cancer Institute and the Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic of Germany. Reported in *PEDIATRICS*, an official peer-reviewed journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics

NEW RESEARCH FINDS Hollywood's smoking hurts young U.S. children...and hooks teens in other countries.

New studies further strengthen the scientific case for R-rating future smoking in U.S. films: to protect young children exposed primarily to G/PG/PG-13 movies and to stem the global tobacco epidemic now killing 5 million a year.

A decade of research has established that mainstream U.S. movies are one of the most important channels recruiting adolescent smokers in the United States.

Now a study following elementary school students for two years finds that, after controlling for other influences, the more smoking they see on screen, the more likely they are to try smoking.

While teens get about half of their on-screen tobacco impressions from G/PG/PG-13 films, younger children receive 80% of their exposure from youth-rated films.

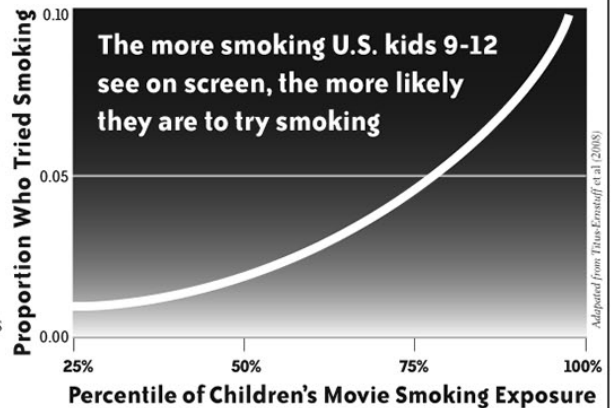
Previous studies found that teens who saw the most smoking on screen were 2.7 times as likely to smoke as those who saw the least. The younger children with the highest exposures in this study, some of whom were first- or second-graders when first exposed, were 2.3 times as likely to smoke two years later.

The authors conclude that, compared to labeling films with tobacco, the "more practical solution to reduce children's exposure to movie smoking would be to eliminate smoking from youth-rated movies."

U.S. films are the most popular in the world, so the smoking in them has global impact. Researchers followed more than 2,500 German students aged 10-16 who had never smoked before the study and found that, just as in the U.S., teens with the highest exposure to Hollywood films with tobacco were twice as likely to become smokers as those with the lowest exposure.

German teens whose parents *don't* smoke were more strongly influenced than those whose parents smoke, meaning that films with smoking undermine the strongest parental example.

These new studies show the harm done by U.S. movies with smoking starts younger—and spreads globally.



"Take substantive and effective action to eliminate smoking from films accessible to children and youths, and take leadership and credit for doing so."

Instead, the MPAA announced a vague tobacco labeling policy, then applied it mainly to indie PG films in limited release—useless to parents and the industry alike.

Research will continue to accumulate showing that films with smoking harm children from the earliest years and that U.S. films with smoking are a vector for addiction, disease and death worldwide.

The film industry's history of collaborating with tobacco firms is indefensible. Its reckless disregard of today's scientific evidence is inexcusable. **R-rate tobacco now.**

"My objective is to gain consensus among the member companies of MPAA on Harvard's pending recommendations, and then begin implementation."

Letter from MPAA President Dan Glickman to State Attorneys General, October 5, 2006

A year ago, the Harvard School of Public Health, at the MPAA's own invitation, advised the industry:

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