

Factors affecting Chilean elementary and high school children's smoking

Factores que inciden en el habito de fumar de escolares de education basica y media del Chile

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Despite the harmful effects of tobacco millions of people continue to smoke. Many of these smokers, including most news smokers, are adolescents - both in Chile and in other countries. This study sought to determine the prevalence of smoking among Chilean elementary and high school children and to quantify the relative impact of socioeconomic, socio-cultural, familial, mass media exposure, demographic, educational and psychosocial factors on smoking. A representative sample of 2,967 elementary and high school children from Chile's Metropolitan Region were chosen at random, by grade (IV, VI, and VIII elementary school grades and I and IV high school grades), sex, type of school and geographical area. Prevalence of smoking was determined through an anonymous self-administered questionnaire. Socioeconomic status (SES) was measured by means of Graffar's modified method and family conditions, mass media exposure and psychosocial factors were registered. Scholastic achievement was measured b