

Cigarette chosen for
this study to pinpoint
the



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Cigarette smoking is of interest to the National Institute on Drug Abuse both because of the public health problems associated with this form of substance abuse and because this behavior represents a prototypic dependence process. In the past few years the government has made every effort to reach the masses, in an attempt to curb the exploitation of tobacco use, and its acceptance among Americas Youngsters. However, cigarette smoking among adolescents is on the rise.

The premise that the behavior of adolescents is influenced by the behavior of their parents is central to many considerations of health and social behavior (Ausubel, Montemayor, & Svajiiian, 1977; Bandura & Walters, 1963). Many young people between 10-18 years of age experiment with smoking, smoking is a personal choice, and usually exploratory in nature. Typically, it takes place in rather young people and is largely dependent on: first, the availability of opportunity to engage in the behavior, second, having a fairly high degree of curiosity about the effects of the behavior; third, in finding it a way of expressing either conformity to the behavior or others (such as parents, older siblings or peers), forth, as in " Miller and Dollar's" explanation of Observational Learning, The Copying behavior effect. This research is to examine the effects of parental smoking (behavior), has, on the decision of teens to smoke cigarettes. Due to prior studies using global measures that may or may not include South Eastern North Carolina. The Fayetteville/Fort Bragg area was chosen for this study to pinpoint the effects in this particular locale. Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base have a very diverse socio-economic and culturally diverse population, which will have a positive effect on randomness of sample selection.

With this association in mind, this researcher is interested in knowing if there is a relationship of Parental influence on Teen Smoking within this Military Community. The prevalence of cigarette smoking among young teenagers is a growing problem in the United States, many young people between the ages of 10-18 are experimenting with tobacco. During the 1940's and 50's smoking was popular and socially acceptable. Movie stars, sports heroes, and celebrities appeared in cigarette advertisements that promoted and heavily influenced teens. Influence also came from Television and other media sources. The desires to be accepted and to feel grown up are among the most common reasons to start smoking.

Yet, even though teenagers sometimes smoke to gain independence, and to be part of the crowd parental influence plays the strongest role as to whether or their children will smoke, Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA), 1991. Children are exposed to and influenced by the parents, siblings, and the media long before peer pressure will become a factor. Mothers should not smoke during pregnancy, nicotine, which crosses the placental barrier, may affect the female fetus during an important period of development so as to predispose the brain to the addictive influence of nicotine.

Prenatal exposure to smoking has previously been linked with impairments in memory, learning, cognition, and perception in the growing child. (National Institute of Drug Abuse, 1995) Subsequent follow-up after 12 years suggest that regardless of the amount or duration of current or past maternal smoking, the strongest correlation between maternal smoking and a daughter's smoking occurred when the mother smoked during pregnancy.

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NIDA also reported that of 192 mothers and their first born adolescents with a mean age of 12 1/2, the analysis revealed that 26.6% of the girls whose mother smoked while pregnant had smoked in the past. The 1991 smoking prevalence estimate of 25.7% is virtually no different from the previous year's estimate of 25.

5%. If current trends persist, we will not meet one of the nation's health objectives, particularly a smoking prevalence of no more than 15% by the year 2000. When comparing the use of alcohol, cigarettes, and other drugs, only cigarette use did not decline substantially among high school senior among 1981 to 1991. In contrast studies performed by "household survey" by the NIDA and the CDC, (Centers for Disease Control) in 1991 and 92 respectively, suggested that the strongest influence on teenage smoking is parents.

Research also revealed that approximately three fourths of adult regular smokers smoke their first cigarette before the