

Why do most teenagers smoke psychology essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Smoking is defined as the inhalation of the smoke of burning tobacco in cigarettes, pipes, and cigars. The smoke that inhaled contains about 4, 000 chemicals, including cancer-causing nicotine, tar, and carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, ammonia and hydrogen cyanide (Martin T, 2008). Smoking is also an addictive habit that can have long negative effects on health, including mental and physical health (Nyholm C, 2009).

There are many negative effects caused by smoking such as lung diseases, heart diseases, stroke and increasing blood pressure (Iannelli V, 2004). Tar is the brown, tacky material that left behind at the end of the cigarette filter. It makes a smoker's teeth and fingers brown and coats everything it touches with a brownish-yellow film. Tar in the cigarette smoke paralyzes the cilia in the lungs and leads to lung diseases. For examples, emphysema, bronchitis and lung cancer (Martin 2006). Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a type of gas which is colorless, neutral and tasteless. When the level of carbon monoxide in the blood increases, it will decrease the ability to carry oxygen. It is harmful to the body at any level and it can cause death while long-term exposure at lower levels can lead to heart disease (Aiers 2007). Nicotine is an active drug which is also a stimulant that activates the brain's rewards system can be found in cigarette. Nicotine induces feelings of pleasure and increases mental awareness when it reaches the brain. Nicotine also constricts blood flow to the heart, thus increasing blood pressure and heart rate (Besinger 2003). Hydrogen cyanide, a colorless, poisonous gas, is one of the toxic present in cigarette smoke. Breathing in small amounts of hydrogen cyanide may cause a person headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, and vomiting

while breathing in larger amounts may cause them gasping, irregular heartbeats, fainting, and rapid death (Martin 2008).

There are many factors causing teenagers smoke such as peer pressure, the feel good syndrome, curiosity, and the power of role models. Usually teenagers start smoking when their best friend smokes, but this is not the only factor as parental smoking can make it seem normal to do, the media can also make it look more attractive, and sometimes teenagers have very easy access to tobacco products (Gorman 1996).

Teenagers always look for approval and acceptance from their peers. Friends who smoke will always encourage them to smoke (Christensen SA, 2008). This become a strong force for teenagers start to smoke just to fit in with the crowd. Frequently they feel confident and pressured. Some teenagers believe that smoking makes them more popular, "cool", attractive, sexy or strong. They just want to have a 'cool' look when people around see them and did not think of the negative effects that will affect their health (Evans 2008).

2. 2 Feel good syndrome

Smoking is a way to avoid feeling unpleasant emotions such as sadness, distress, and worry. It can hide apprehensions, fears, and pain. This is accomplished moderately through the chemical effects of nicotine on the brain. Nicotine is one of the main ingredients in cigarettes which are poison and as addictive as heroin and cocaine (Stevenson J, 2008). When smoking, the release of brain chemicals makes smokers feel like coping and dealing

with life and stressful emotional situations. Nicotine in the cigarette will increase the level of good feeling (Dr. Annette 2009).

2. 3 Curiosity

Cigarettes are available everywhere and almost anybody can get them. "Wanted to know how smoke a cigarette feels like" is always stated as a reason for teenagers to try to smoke a cigarette. People always feel curious and wanted to try something new in their life at teen age. Because of the availability of getting a cigarette is easy and the curiosity of teenagers, therefore it increase the number of teenagers who smoke (Evans 2008).

2. 4 The power of role models

Teens are most influenced by other friends close in age or slightly older, including siblings. Many of them smoke because their parents are smokers (Christensen SA, 2008). Therefore, a person whose best friends or older siblings smoke is much more likely to try smoking. In some cases, this is because the person looks up to his friends or family members and wants to be like them. Some of them think that doing the same thing only they can join in with the people around them although they know is not good for health (Evans 2008).

2

2. 5 Media

Portrayals of smoking in the media are nearly all attractive. Many of the teenagers admire the actors will follow what the actors do by watching those

movie or drama. They do not think of the negative effect of smoking on their health but just want to be like the actors. They also do not think carefully whether the action did in the drama or movie is good or bad but just do it. Besides that, smoking also appears in music videos. Cigars are mainly seen as a symbol that goes with living the high life (Harsanyi 2007).

2. 6 Help losing weight

For some, teenager thought smoking can help them to lose their weight. They will use being overweight as an excuse to smoke (Spitzer J, 2003). Instead of eating, many teenagers especially girls will choose to smoke a cigarette. This keeps their minds off from food. Some of the teenagers think that smoking can help them achieve the look they want. They learn about this weight control methods mostly from their friends, so they start skipping meals and use cigarettes to replace the meal. Smoking does kill craving for food, but it does not help to lose weight as many as they think (Hutton 1996).

Methods to prevent smoking

There are many methods to prevent teenagers smoke so that they will have a healthy life and prevent from getting some disease. Everyone should know the method and prevent the people around them smoke so that it would not affect their health. By prevent from smoking, people would have a longer lifespan and can live happily because of having a healthy life.

3. 1 Government's role

Country should make more efforts to prevent teenagers smoke. More information about the effect of smoking should show by public service announcements. For example, show some pictures that how the smoker's lungs look like. The country should also enforce the rules so that teenagers could not smoke under age. Besides, the sale of cigarettes in the country also should decrease (Abel 2009). It is also necessary to have anti-smoking campaign especially for teenagers at school and public areas. Teen anti-smoking campaign will definitely be helpful. Professional doctors should be volunteers to talk about the negative effect of smoking during the anti-smoking campaign to the teenagers. Examples of the campaign are ' Taknak!!', ' Fight smoking' and ' A Powerful Tool for Health Promotion' (Siegel M, 1998). Those anti tobacco campaigns will motivate the youth to know the negative effects of smoking cigarettes on health, economy and mentality and benefits of quitting smoking. It may also motivate teenagers to stay away from smoking (Jacoby p. A19). In addition, anti smoking slogans are also used to influence those smokers to quit or prevent teenagers from smoking. There are many slogans use to prevent teenagers from smoking such as ' Too much smoke will leave you broke', ' If you can't stop smoking, cancer will', ' There are cooler ways to die than smoking' and ' You smoke, you die early, you save the government money' (Bose D, 2009).

3

3. 2 Parent's role

Parents should give more information about the negative effect of smoking to their children since they are still young and small. Almost all the first time

smoking happens before high school graduation. If teenager has not started smoking before he or she graduates, chances are he or she never will. That is good news because parents still have the time to influence their choices of not trying smoking (Witmer 2006). Parents also should set a good example to their children by not smoking. If parents smoke and do not want to influence their children, the only way to prevent their children from smoking is avoid smoking in front of them and do not smoke at the place where their children can see such as in the house or car (Mayo 2010).

3. 4. Teacher's role

Teachers also play an important role in preventing teenagers smoke. As a teacher, the way to prevent student smoke at teen age are care teenagers more and give them more teaching on the effect of smoking. Besides, teacher also should observe the students and stop them from smoking if found out that they had started to smoke. More moral and religion teaching should be given to the students in the school so that students can prevent themselves from start smoking. The school should have more healthy activities so that student will have more time to participate in good activities (Carney S, 2007).

3. 5 Develop self respect and confidence

There are many reasons that why teenagers smoke and one of the reason is because of peer pressure. Most of them think that it is a way to look cool and be a part of the crowd. They have to instill enough self respect, esteem and confidence so that they do not feel the need for external approval. People around should help teenagers build up their friendships, shape a healthy

<https://assignbuster.com/why-do-most-teenagers-smoke-psychology-essay/>

body image and deal with stress, without thinking about tobacco use. By helping teenagers and let them have enough confidence to themselves, they would not think of changing themselves by smoking and thus, they can prevent from smoking (Worth 1999).

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are many factors causing teenagers smoke such as pressure, the feel good syndrome, curiosity, the power of role models, media effect and help losing weight. Having campaign, parent's role, national efforts, teacher's role and develop self respect and confidence are important in this case so that it can prevent teenagers to smoke. Smoking is not good for health and there are many negative effect of smoking. Therefore, teenager should avoid smoking and take care of their health.

(1864words)