

# Get the facts from ttac!

## Smoking among 18-24 year old college students

According to a national study, 26.7% of college students smoke cigarettes (Monitoring the Future, 2002). 28% of college students who smoke begin to smoke regularly at or after the age of 19, when most were already in college (Wechsler, 1998). While positive results are being seen in this population, the fact remains that more than a ¼ of the college population are smokers... There is still work to be done!

Many who start to smoke want to stop, but can't. Approximately 50% of college students surveyed tried to quit in the previous year (Harvard Alcohol Survey 1997). 18% of college smokers made 5 or more attempts to quit (Wechsler, 1998).

### What are some possible reasons for the increased cigarette use among this population?

- College students have an inaccurate perception of the smoking norm. College students have a higher perception of smoking among their peers and are influenced by this perception.
- College students have more freedom to make personal decisions now than they did when they lived with parents or guardians.
- There is increased visibility of smoking on campus and increased peer pressure.
- Stress is cited as reason for cigarette use among college students.
- Tobacco companies are more heavily targeting this population through print, media, specialty item distribution and sponsorship of public entertainment events.

### What intervention/prevention measures are being used for this population?

- Policy and environmental strategies seem to be the most effective way to decrease cigarette use among this population. Strategies include:
  - Increase in number of smoke-free areas on campus
  - Limited tobacco advertising on campus
  - Cigarette price increases
- Social norms approach to reduce cigarette use is also used, but its effectiveness with tobacco control has been debated.

### What are the gaps?

- Few intervention studies have been conducted on college prevention programs... so there is little information on effectiveness.
- Few cessation programs are available on college campuses, and the ones that are available have not been evaluated to measure effectiveness.

### What do we go from here?

- Institute policy and environmental strategies on campus.
- Evaluate current prevention programs to determine effectiveness.
- Provide and evaluate cessation programs on campus.
- Develop longitudinal studies on cigarette use, initiation, and reasons for use among the college-age population.

- Evaluate tobacco industry marketing strategies and develop counter-marketing campaign for college populations.

*For More on Smoking Trends:*

**Facts about Tobacco Use Among College Students (American Cancer Society)**

[http://www.cancer.org/downloads/COM/Facts\\_About\\_%20Tobacco\\_Use\\_%20Among\\_College\\_Students.pdf](http://www.cancer.org/downloads/COM/Facts_About_%20Tobacco_Use_%20Among_College_Students.pdf)

**Monitoring the Future: National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975-2002. Volume II: College Students and Adults Ages 19-40 (University of Michigan)**

[http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/vol2\\_2002.pdf](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/vol2_2002.pdf)

**Increased levels of cigarette use among college students: A cause for national concern**

Wechsler, H, Rigotti, NA, Gledhill-Hoyt, J, and Lee, H. *JAMA* 280:1673-8.

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/280/19/1673>

**Smoking on the rise among young adults: Implications for research and policy**

Lantz, P. *Tobacco Control*, Supplement 1: I60-I70, 2003.

[http://tc.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/12/suppl\\_1/i60](http://tc.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/12/suppl_1/i60)

**Trends in Tobacco Use (American Lung Association)**

<http://www.lungusa.org/data/smoke/smoke1.pdf>

**US college students' use of tobacco products: Results of a national survey**

Rigotti NA, Lee JE, and Wechsler H. *JAMA*. 284(6):699-705, 2000.

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/284/6/699>

*For More on Tobacco Industry Marketing:*

**2003 Report on Cigarette Sales, Advertising and Promotion (US Federal Trade Commission)**

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/menu-tobac.htm>

**Tobacco Company Marketing to College Students Since the Multistate Settlement Agreement Was Signed (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids)**

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/>

**Why and how the tobacco industry sells cigarettes to young adults: Evidence from industry documents**

Ling, PM and Glantz, SA. *American Journal of Public Health* 92(6):908-916, 2002

<http://kstask.org/pdf/LingAJPHYoungAdults.pdf>

*For More on Tobacco Control Strategies:*

**How to Launch a Smoke-Free College Campaign (American Cancer Society)**

[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div\\_NE/COM\\_11\\_2x\\_How\\_to\\_Launch\\_a\\_Smoke-Free\\_College\\_Campaign.asp?SiteArea=](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div_NE/COM_11_2x_How_to_Launch_a_Smoke-Free_College_Campaign.asp?SiteArea=)

**Position Statement on Tobacco on College and University Campuses (American College Health Association)**

[http://www.acha.org/info\\_resources/tobacco\\_statement.pdf](http://www.acha.org/info_resources/tobacco_statement.pdf)

**Tobacco Free U (BACCHUS and GAMMA)**

<http://www.tobaccofreeu.org>

**US public universities' compliance with recommended tobacco-control policies**

Halperin, AC and Rigotti, NA. *Journal of American College Health* 51(5):181-8, 2003.