

## **Study: Kids Who Watch R-Rated Movies More Likely to Drink, Smoke**

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### **Research Summary**

A new study found that children who are allowed to watch R-rated movies are three times more likely to try smoking and drinking, HealthScout News reported Feb. 14.

Among students with no restrictions on the movies they watch, 35 percent had tried smoking, compared to only 12 percent of those who had some restrictions on their film choices, and just 2 percent among children who were not allowed to watch R-rated movies at all.

Further, 46 percent of students allowed to watch what they want had tried alcohol, compared to 16 percent of those with partial restrictions, and 4 percent of students with complete restrictions.

"Parents can talk to children about the evils of smoking and give them that message at home, but it's offset by the smoking they see in the movies," said Dr. Michael Beach, an associate professor of community and family medicine at Dartmouth Medical School and one of the study's authors. "Smoking in the movies is usually shown in a glamorous or sexual context that may have a powerful influence."

The study by researchers at Dartmouth Medical School involved 4,544 5th- through 8th-grade students from 15 schools in Vermont and New Hampshire. The participants were asked questions about parental behavior, movie restrictions, and whether they had tried alcohol or cigarettes.

The students also were asked to indicate which movies they had seen. According to the researchers, 90 percent of the students who participated in the study were under the age of 14, but only 16 percent of them were completely restricted from seeing R-rated movies.

The research is published in the current issue of [Effective Clinical Practice](#).