

New Research as of January 31, 2008

I. UCSF and TUTD Audit of MPAA's Tobacco Rating Practices¹

- Audience exposure to tobacco in movies that kids watch the most remained unchanged in 2007 despite the MPAA's pledge to take tobacco into account when rating movies.
- Six months after the MPAA's pledge, tobacco descriptors were included only on youth-rated movies that opened on a small number of screens or on movies that went straight to video.
- An estimated 225,000 adolescents have started smoking since the MPAA's rating announcement in May in part because of their frequent exposure to on-screen smoking.
- 53% of top box office movies released May 10-November 10, 2007 that featured smoking were youth-rated.
- None of the nationally-released, youth-rated top box office films with tobacco were given a tobacco descriptor.
- Two of the top box office, youth-rated films had 50 or more tobacco incidents but did not have a tobacco descriptor.

II. Longitudinal Study of Viewing Smoking in Movies and Initiation of Smoking by Children²

- 35% of smoking initiation in children ages 9 to 12 years old can be attributed to exposure to smoking in movies.
- Youth-rated movies account for 79% of movie smoking exposures.
- Movie smoking exposure is associated with an increased risk of smoking initiation.
- Exposure to smoking in movies in early childhood is as influential as exposure that occurs nearer to the time of smoking initiation.

III. Exposure to Smoking in Internationally Distributed American Movies and Youth-Smoking in Germany: A Cross-Cultural Cohort Study³

- Hollywood movie studios produce and/or distribute 80% to 90% of all box-office hits that are viewed in many countries. 74% of these movies contain tobacco imagery.
- After controlling for possible confounders, smoking in movies was found to be a significant predictor of adolescent smoking.
- Children of non-smoking parents had a greater response to movie smoking than children of smoking parents.
- Increased exposure to smoking in movies was associated with the initiation of smoking.

Endnotes

1. Polansky, J., Glantz, S., Titus, K. Six Months Later: Are MPAA's Tobacco Ratings Protecting Movie Audiences? December 17, 2007. Available online at <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1073&context=ctcre>
2. Titus-Ernstoff, L., Dalton, M., Adachi-Meija, A., Longacre, M., Beach, M. Longitudinal Study of Viewing Smoking in Movies and Initiation of Smoking by Children. *Pediatrics*. 2008;121:15-21.
3. Hanewinkel, R. and James Sargent. Exposure to Smoking in Internationally Distributed American Movies and Youth Smoking in Germany: A Cross-cultural Cohort Study. *Pediatrics*. 2008;121:108-117.