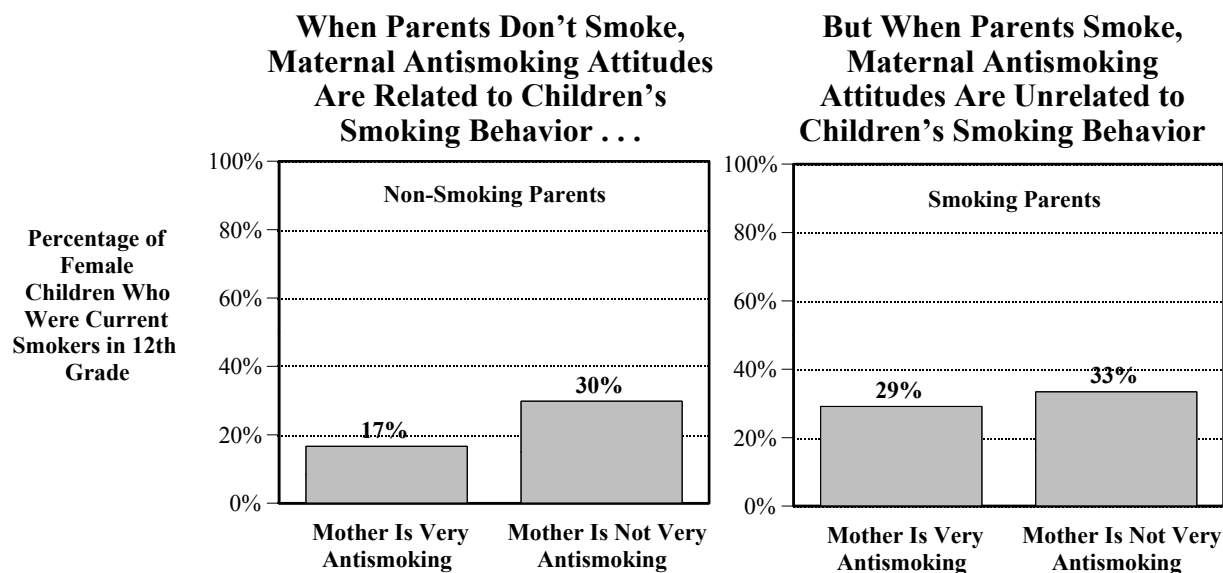


A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

“Do As I Say, Not As I Do” Doesn’t Work: Mothers’ Antismoking Attitudes Only Influential If Parents Do Not Smoke

Children exposed to strong antismoking attitudes by their mothers when they are young are nearly 50% less likely to smoke when they are older, according to a 9-year longitudinal study of youths enrolled in Washington state school districts. Mothers’ attitudes about smoking and their smoking behaviors were assessed when their children were in 3rd grade and were compared to their children’s subsequent smoking behaviors in 12th grade. Seventeen percent of female youths whose mothers had strong antismoking attitudes were current smokers compared to 30% of youths whose mothers did not have such attitudes. However, maternal antismoking attitudes were only influential if both parents did not smoke themselves, indicating that “parental smoking appears to reduce or eliminate the otherwise positive influence of parental attitudes and concerns about adolescent smoking” (p. 204). Nearly identical results were found for male children.



SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Andersen M.R., Leroux B.G., Patrick M.M., Peterson A.V., Kealey K.A., Bricker J., Sarason I.G. “Mothers’ Attitudes and Concerns About Their Children Smoking: Do They Influence Kids?,” *Preventive Medicine* 34:198-206, 2002. For more information, contact Dr. Andersen at rander@fhcrc.org.