

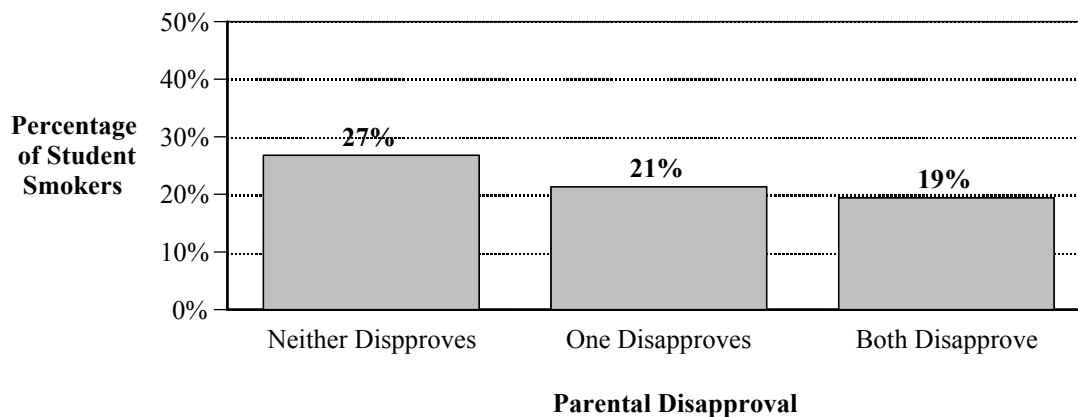
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Children Are Less Likely to Become Smokers When They Believe Both Parents Disapprove of Their Smoking

Adolescents who believe that both parents would respond negatively and be upset by their smoking are less likely to smoke, according to a longitudinal study of students in grades 4-11 attending three rural Vermont schools. Students were asked to rate what their parents' reaction would be if they were smoking cigarettes and their parents found out. Adolescents who believed that both parents would disapprove of their smoking were less likely to become smokers than those students who thought neither parent would disapprove (see figure). The results held true even when parents smoked themselves, suggesting that perceived parental expectations about smoking may be just as significant as parental smoking behavior. According to the authors, "This study offers hope for parents by suggesting that they can decrease the chances that their children will smoke through communication of nonsmoking expectations consistently over time" (p. 1260).

**Percentage of Students Who Become Smokers Reporting
That They Thought Their Parents Would Disapprove of Their Smoking**
(N=372 students who were non-smokers at baseline)



NOTES: The study included information from a baseline survey conducted in September 1996, a second survey in September 1997, and a final survey in May 1998. Smokers are students who reported having smoked at least 100 cigarettes and had smoked within the past 30 days.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Sargent J.D., Dalton M.D. "Does Parental Disapproval of Smoking Prevent Adolescents From Becoming Established Smokers?" *Pediatrics* 108(6):1256-1262, 2001. For more information please contact Dr. James Sargent at james.d.sargent@hitchcock.org

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