



Tobacco Use = Poorer Academic Performance

Percentage of high school students who use tobacco by grades earned

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| A's 16% | B's 27% | C's 34% | D's/F's 52% |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|

Youth who are frequently absent tend to perform poorly in school.¹

Students who use tobacco are absent from school more frequently than students who do not use tobacco.

- Iowa middle school students who use tobacco are 36% more likely than non-users to have missed 10 or more days of school in the past 30 days.²
- Iowa high school students who use tobacco are 64% more likely than non-tobacco users to have missed 10 or more days of school in the past 30 days.³
- Students who have skipped school are much more likely to be regular smokers. Among 11- to 15-year olds who had ever played truant or skipped school, 35% admitted to smoking regularly at least one cigarette a week. For students who did not skip school it was just 5%.⁴

¹Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Survey—United States, 2009, <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health>).

²Iowa Department of Public Health. Iowa Youth Tobacco Survey 2008, <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/tobacco>.

³Iowa Department of Public Health. Iowa Youth Tobacco Survey 2008, <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/tobacco>.

⁴National Centre for Social Research and the National Foundation for Educational Research for the Department of Health, United Kingdom. Blenkinsop S, et al. Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People in England, 2002, <http://www.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/doh>.

Youth who are daily smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to suffer from symptoms of depression and anxiety which threaten academic achievement.

- Mentally healthy adolescents who smoke are nearly four times more likely than nonsmokers to develop symptoms of depression.⁵
- Children reporting depression and anxiety are 3 times more likely to score at or below the lowest 25th percentile on national standardized tests measuring basic math and reading skills.⁶
- Adolescent smokers were found to have impairments in verbal learning, sustained attention, and memory when compared to nonsmokers in their age group.⁷
- Tobacco use is associated with other high risk behaviors that affect academic achievement. Teens who smoke are more likely to try much stronger drugs.⁸
 - 95% of high school seniors who smoke, tried illicit drugs, while only 27% of non-smokers tried illicit drugs.
 - 94% of smoking seniors tried marijuana compared to 20% of non-smoking seniors.
 - 49% of smoking seniors tried cocaine, while 5% of non-smoking seniors tried it.



Fact Sheet was produced with Americans Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) through Iowa Department of Public Health, Division of Tobacco Use Prevention & Control in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education.

For more information about tobacco free schools, contact Maggie O'Rourke, community health consultant, Iowa Department of Public Health at 515-758-3006 or morourke@idph.state.ia.us.

⁵Goodman E, Capitman J. Depressive symptoms and cigarette smoking among teens. *Pediatrics* 2000; 106:748-755.

⁶Ialongo N, Edelson G, et al. Social and cognitive impairment in first-grade children with anxious and depressive symptoms, *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology* 1996; 25:15-24.

⁷Jacobsen L, Krystal J, Mencil W, Westerveld M, et al. Effects of smoking and smoking abstinence on cognition in adolescent tobacco smokers. *Biological Psychiatry* 2005; Jan1;57 (1):56-66.

⁸Columbia University. Comprehensive National Analysis Between "Gateway" Drug Use and Other Illicit Drug Use. Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, October 27, 1994.