

Bryant, A. L., Schulenberg, J., Bachman, J. G., O'Malley, P. M., & Johnston, L. D. (2000). Understanding the links among school misbehavior, academic achievement, and cigarette use: A national panel study of adolescents. *Prevention Science, 1*(2), 71–87.

Abstract

Relations among academic achievement, school bonding, school misbehavior, and cigarette use from 8th to 12th grade were examined in two national panel samples of youth (n = 3056). A series of competing conceptual models developed a priori was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings suggest that during middle adolescence the predominant direction of influence is from school experiences to cigarette use. School misbehavior and low academic achievement contribute to increased cigarette use over time both directly and indirectly. Two-group SEM analyses involving two cohorts—gender and ethnicity—revealed that our findings are robust. In addition, comparisons between high school dropouts and nondropouts and between eighth-grade cigarette use initiators and nonusers revealed few differences in direction or magnitude of effects. Results suggest that prevention programs that attempt to reduce school misbehavior and academic failure, as well as to help students who misbehave and have difficulty in school constructively avoid negative school- and health-related outcomes, are likely to be effective in reducing adolescent cigarette use.