

# Some interventions help to prevent smoking in kids but not cessation

*By ACSH Staff — December 11, 2012*

Although the legal age for purchasing tobacco products is 18, everyday more than 3,800 pre-teens and adolescents ages 12 to 17 smoke their first cigarette, among whom 1,000 go on to become addicted smokers. In response to these disturbing figures, researchers explored the effect of [behavior-based interventions](#) [1] on preventing smoking initiation among young people who have not become regular smokers, as well as behavior-based interventions aimed at promoting cessation.

Those interventions found to be effective in preventing smoking initiation ranged from distributing materials to parents and children with a video and a series of follow up calls, to participation of teens and parents in seven sessions some including only family members, some with larger groups accompanied by workbooks and activities to be completed at home. The majority of effective tobacco cessation interventions were mobile phone-based and incorporated follow-up and education materials.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) found that these prevention interventions reduced the risk of smoking initiation by 19 percent compared to a control group, at seven to 36 months follow up, but there was no impact on cessation rates. The bottom line recommendation by the USPSTF is that clinicians begin to provide interventions, such as education or brief counseling, to prevent initiation of tobacco use and stop kids before they pick up their first cigarette.

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**Links**

[1] <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/draftrec3.htm>