

Title: Secondhand Smoke: Exposure and Tolerance

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The San Joaquin Valley is an area characterized by high smoking rates and a diverse, underserved population. This study examines secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure among college students at CSU Stanislaus. Utilizing an email-distributed survey that integrates our newly developed Tolerance for Secondhand Smoke (TSS) Scale, the research investigates students' experiences with SHS and their perceptions of its community impact. This descriptive research study involves the sphere of public health education and awareness targeted to the young adult population. Preventative measures for tobacco and smoking are implemented within the K-12 school system, yet despite efforts, many students participate in smoking activities or are exposed to second-hand smoke in their home and community. Preliminary analyses reveal a modest negative correlation between childhood SHS exposure and adult tolerance levels, suggesting that greater early-life exposure is linked to lower acceptance of SHS in adulthood. These insights will inform targeted public health interventions designed to address the unique challenges of this region. In addition, the survey examines variations in exposure and attitudes based on factors such as academic major, housing type, age, and ethnicity, offering a nuanced picture of how socio-demographic factors interact with tobacco exposure. Given the distinct socio-economic and geographic context of Stanislaus County which is predominantly rural with pockets of urban areas and high smoking prevalence, these findings provide critical insights that can help public health agencies and institutions enhance their smoking education programs.