

Article: Correlates of Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Inferential Test: Correlation

Excerpt from the Research Article

From intact families, 321 adolescents participated in the present study...the age range for all being 12–16 years. There was no significant age difference between the sexes. Participants were asked to estimate how often (a) they, (b) their mothers, (c) their fathers, and (d) their best friends smoked tobacco and used alcoholic beverages. The estimations were made on a 5-point scale with anchors of 0: never, 1: almost never, 2: occasionally, 3: often, and 4: very often.

Table 1
Correlations for Adolescent Girls' and Boys' Tobacco and Alcohol Habits with Those of Their Mothers, Their Fathers, and Their Best Friends

	Girls' habits		Boys' habits	
	Tobacco	Alcohol	Tobacco	Alcohol
Mother smokes	.39 [†]	.38 [†]	.30 [*]	.16
Mother uses alcohol	.43 [‡]	.37 [†]	.23	.20 [*]
Father smokes	.22	.01	.20	.08
Father uses alcohol	.18	.39 [†]	.42 [‡]	.34 [†]
Friends smoke	.52 [‡]	.52 [‡]	.71 [‡]	.72 [‡]
Friends use alcohol	.43 [‡]	.83 [‡]	.70 [‡]	.76 [‡]

* $p < .05$. [†] $p < .01$. [‡] $p < .001$.

The present study corroborates previous research indicating both parental and peer influence on tobacco and alcohol consumption among adolescents. The study suggests that the influence of peers might be greater than that of parents. However, correlations as such do not suggest causal relationships. There are certainly other social psychological factors that may contribute to the explanation of or covary with adolescent alcohol and tobacco consumption.

¹ Source: Björkqvist, K., Båtman, A., & Åman-Back, S. (2004). Adolescents' use of tobacco and alcohol: Correlations with habits of parents and friends. *Psychological Reports, 95*, 418–420. Copyright © 2004 by Psychological Reports. Reprinted with permission.