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A Mother's Role in Decreasing Adolescent Tobacco Use in Indonesia

Family exposure to tobacco use has a major impact on adolescents and their curiosity towards smoking.^{1,2,3} When one or both parents smoke, the odds of male children smoking increases to 3 times that of non-smoking parents.⁴ Tobacco in Indonesia is predominantly used by males and therefore, the focus is for mothers to recognize their role in decreasing tobacco use in adolescents.⁵

Mothers can make a difference if they have their husbands and other family members smoke in privacy away from the home and out of sight of their children.

Mothers and sisters in each household need to recognize that most adolescent smokers are interested in quitting smoking and many have tried at least once to quit smoking.⁶ In one study, stress from loneliness and anxiety were common factors that lead to the continuation of smoking.⁴ Adolescent smokers need family support in addressing their causes for wanting to smoke. It has been shown in research that parents' acceptance of their children's smoking habits is not unusual.⁷ Thus, stricter parental control against tobacco use can be a strategy to limit adolescent smoking.

The recognition by mothers and their efforts to decrease smoking in the home is important. Secondhand smoke can have long term health effects leading to chronic illnesses. In Indonesia, about 54% of secondhand smoke exposure occur in the home and nearly 80% of children 15 years and older have had tobacco exposure at home.⁸

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