Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) - Delhi

Globally everyday about 80,000-1,00,000 youth initiate smoking, most of them are from developing countries(1). About one-fifth of all worldwide deaths attributed to tobacco occur in India(2). Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) was a global study of tobacco use habits and related determinants among youth (13-15 years) around the world(3). A total of 1731 out of 2183 randomly sampled students participated in the Delhi GYTS survey, from 50 sampled schools. Major findings are summarized below:

One in 10 students (10%) had ever used tobacco in any form. Proportion of students currently using any tobacco product was 4.5% (boys: 5.5%; girls: 3.1%). Of these, the proportion of students who had chewed pan masala, gutkha or zarda in the past 30 days was 1.3%. Among them, boys had a higher prevalence than girls (boys: 2.3%; girls: 0.3%).

Less than 6 in 10 reported having learnt about the dangers of smoking and the effects of tobacco use.

Over 3 in 10 students and significantly more boys than girls were exposed to smoke from others (passive smoking) in their home in the past 7 days.

Over 2 out of 10 students believed that boys who use tobacco have more friends. About 3 in 10 students thought smoking or chewing make boys look more attractive and over 1 in 10 students felt this for girls. However a significantly higher proportion of boys than girls felt that girls look more attractive with tobacco use.

More than 8 in 10 students had seen an advertisement or media message about cigarettes, gutkha/ pan masala or bidis on television, roadside outside on hoardings, bus or railway facilities, and shops in the past 30 days.

Only 26% of students were certain that smoking is harmful to their health.

About 4 in 10 current tobacco users reported freely purchasing tobacco products in a store.

The prevalence of tobacco use in any form among both boys and girls in this age group is in agreement with earlier published findings(4). The results indicate a definite need for including tobacco related information in the school curriculum. High exposure rates to

REFERENCES

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passive smoking require immediate policy interventions and programs to generate awareness among the public. The findings, on free access and availability of tobacco products to youth, despite there being a law in Delhi banning sale of tobacco products to anyone below the age of 18, are alarming.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the help of Mira B. Aghi, a freelance communication expert.

Monika Arora, *K. Srinath Reddy,
HRIDAY (Health Related Information Dissemination Amongst Youth), New Delhi and *Department of Cardiology,
All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Executive Director- HRIDAY,
New Delhi, India.

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