

Marijuana & Tobacco Smoke Incursions in NYC Housing During the Pandemic

Systemic inequities have led to greater exposure to home indoor environmental hazards such as secondhand tobacco smoke, mold, and pests among low-income children. This study's objective was to characterize the presence, frequency, and change in tobacco and marijuana smoke incursions during the initial months of the pandemic among families who utilize pediatric practices within a NYC health system.



STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Eligible participants were caregivers of children aged 3 to 14 years who attended pediatric practices in the medical system between February 2019 - March 2020. Participants completed an online or telephone survey between May and July 2020.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Among the study participants, 22% lived in public housing, 23% reported tobacco incursions, 31% marijuana incursions, and 16% reported both tobacco and marijuana incursions.



TOBACCO SMOKE

Children living in public housing were more likely to experience tobacco smoke incursions.



Families in public housing were also more likely to report more frequent tobacco incursions (80% vs 42%), and an increase in incursions since the shutdown (37% vs 7%).

MARIJUANA SMOKE

Children living in public housing were also more likely to experience marijuana smoke incursions.



Families in public housing were also more likely to report more frequent marijuana incursions (83% vs 17%), and an increase in incursions since the pandemic shutdown (42.3% vs 10%).

More than half (52%) of families in public housing reported dual incursions compared with 11% in private housing.



PUBLIC HEALTH POLICIES

Better enforcement of existing regulations and implementation of additional policies to limit secondhand tobacco and marijuana exposure in children are needed. Such actions should prioritize equitable access to cessation and mental health services, and consider structural systems leading to poverty and health disparities.

Source: Zajac, L; Gallate, X; Gu, G; Liu, Bi, MS; Elaiho, C; Lin, E; Mogilner, L; Oliver, K; Vangeepuram, N; Wilson, K. Disparities in Marijuana and Tobacco Smoke Incursions Among New York City Families During Early Months of the COVID-19 Pandemic, J Public Health Manage Pract: May 2022, 28: 3, 248-257 doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000001440