



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

COPIES - Perry

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January 18, 1982

TO: Cheryl Perry
FROM: Henry Blackburn
SUBJECT: High School Smoking Prevention

I enjoyed reading your well-written article on high school smoking prevention. I haven't read the reference that claims that smoking is the most significant health-related behavior. If you're happy with it, fine. It would make the same point if it were described as "among the more prevalent behaviors linked to . . ." and so forth. In your second sentence (since I don't have the reference here), I thought Maury Mittelmark had posed a substantial question about data suggesting decreased smoking in adolescents. I'm also a bit surprised by your negative attitude about adults quitting in the light of very significant positive experiences of the last five years and successful programs in which various motivations resulted in substantial success. Maybe it's a different concept of what "marginal" might be. In light of the experience of your colleagues here with a more positive experience, you might want to refer to that, without detracting from your argument. Also, I thought we'd made considerable progress here in your studies with Dave Murray on identifying components of the young adolescent programs, particularly the peer model as being particularly effective. You say it is not established?

With respect to the results, we come repeatedly back to the same issue of the lack of power of most health behavioral experiments to detect differences. I question the appropriateness of extrapolating from that to there being "no differences."

Your conclusions about an increased incidence of smoking appears contradictory with your statement in the introduction about decreased prevalence of smoking.

There's a typo in your last line.

I would have thought that the literature about the fear approach would be sufficient to refute it and that the results of your study are not sufficiently strong to seriously suggest that the approach be re-awakened or any time spent in re-evaluating it. So I guess I would just question your last statement.

I wish we could all put our studies into as concise and clear form as this one.

Many thanks.

HB/jml