

Smoke-free air policy: Subcultural shifts and secondary health effects among club-going young adults.

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Abstract

In March 2003, New York City implemented legislation that called for a ban of smoking in bars, restaurants, nightclubs, and other establishments. The express purpose of this legislation was to protect the health of employees and patrons from second-hand smoke. In addition to the stated goal of protection from second-hand smoke for employees, key secondary health effects of this law have emerged in the lives of club-going youth. This paper is based upon data derived from an ethnographic research project on club-related health issues in NYC. Drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork during the implementation of the ban and in-depth interviews with club-going youth, the paper provides a grounded analysis of youth reactions to the smoking ban and a descriptive profile of the secondary health effects of the smoking ban in nightclubs. It explores the attitudes of club-going youth towards the ban and the ways in which the legislation shapes the behaviours of habitual smokers, social smoking, and the use of drugs within bars and clubs. In particular, the data suggest a tension between the desire to remain subculturally involved and the desire to smoke. It also highlights the adaptive character of subcultures and the importance of social relations in behavioural

patterns. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2009 APA, all rights reserved) (from the journal abstract)

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