

Smoking bans have helped cut childhood smoking uptake by a fifth

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Credit: Vera Kratochvil/public domain

New research suggests smoking bans across the UK have reduced the uptake of smoking by teenagers by roughly a fifth.

While smoke-free legislation has been a great success for [tobacco control](#), its impact on the smoking habits of adolescents was poorly understood.

Researchers at the University of Glasgow's MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit along with [colleagues](#) at the Welsh Government and the University of Stirling, looked at school-based surveys to see what effect comprehensive smoke-free policies has had on smoking uptake in [adolescents](#).

The study, which is published today in *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, discovered trends in the uptake of smoking amongst [teenagers](#) aged 13 and 15 differed substantially before and after the introduction of such legislation.

Dr Vittal Katikireddi, the lead author of the paper, said: "The results demonstrate a fairly big change

in the number of young people starting smoking – particularly in girls.

"For 15 year old girls in England the smoking rate reduced from 24% to 19% after the legislation. Of course, the [smoking bans](#) are quite recent; the longer term impact could be even greater."

Previous research has established that smoke-free legislation has led to many improvements in population health – including reductions in heart attack, stroke and asthma – however this new research demonstrates that comprehensive smoke-free legislation could help prevent future generations from taking up smoking.

More information: Katikireddi, S. (2016) Has childhood smoking reduced following smoke-free public places legislation? A segmented regression analysis of cross-sectional UK school-based surveys. *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*, (Accepted for Publication) eprints.gla.ac.uk/114213/

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