

## More Alcohol In Kids' Movies

**Children and teenagers are seeing more situations with alcohol in movies today and fewer with tobacco smoking, says a study which carried out a thorough analysis of top box-office movies in the United States.**

The Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), which was entered in November 1998, required most tobacco brand manufacturers not to "take any action, directly or indirectly, to target Youth". Since this settlement the number of tobacco brand placements has declined.

The study, which was published by *JAMA Pediatrics*, examined trends of tobacco and alcohol use in movies. Elaina Bergamini, M.S., of the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth University, New Hampshire, and colleagues analyzed the 100 most popular movies in the U.S. from 1996 to 2009 (a total of 1,400 movies).

Children are impacted by the media and **there is substantial evidence to show that movies can influence substance use among teenagers.** Childhood exposure to movies showing tobacco or alcohol use have been linked to smoking and alcohol abuse.

It has been established and published in the journal *Pediatrics* that [the more teenagers watch movies that feature consumption of alcohol, the more likely they are to drink themselves.](#)

In addition, a previous report published in the 2009 July issue of *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* revealed that [exposure to movie smoking is associated with an increased risk of established smoking in youths.](#)

### **Tobacco appearances decline while alcohol appearances rise**

Since 1998, when the MSA was implemented, **the appearance of tobacco brand products declined by 7 percent each year.** Since 2006, there have been an average of 22 tobacco appearances per year. Tobacco screen time has fallen 42.3% in youth rated movies and 85.4% in adult rated movies.

**Alcohol appearances, on the other hand, have increased significantly.** In 1998 there were 80 alcohol brand product appearances in youth-rated movies - this number has jumped to 145 per year.

The study concluded:

"In summary, this study found dramatic declines in brand appearances for tobacco after such placements were prohibited by an externally monitored and enforced regulatory structure, even though such activity had already been prohibited in the self-regulatory structure a decade before.

During the same period, alcohol brand placements, subject only to self-regulation, increased significantly in movies rated acceptable for youth audiences, a trend that could have implications for teen drinking."

Other forms of alcohol exposure among teens have also been analyzed. A previous study by Dartmouth Medical School researchers found that [young adolescents who own t shirts, hats and other merchandise with an alcohol brand name on it are more likely to begin drinking compared to kids who do not own these items.](#)

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