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Sociodemographic Factors and Health-Risk Behaviors Associated with Recent Utilization of Dental Services Among South-Central Appalachian Adolescents

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Socio-demographic and Health-Risk Behaviors Associated with Recent Utilization of Dental Services in South-Central Appalachian Adolescents

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BACKGROUND

- Oral Health is crucial for overall health of the youth
- Preventative dental health services is lower than the national goals¹
- It has been observed that lower rates of utilization are seen among families facing health disparities²
- Youth characteristics have been associated with utilization of oral health services, particularly older youth of high school age³
- Adolescents may engage in risky behaviors oblivious to the parents while experiencing a period of development⁴
- The objective of the study is to assess the association between socio-demographic factors and youth characteristics associated with recent dental services utilization

METHODS

- Three counties of South-Central were surveyed (Gate City, Rye Cove, Twin Springs)
- A structured questionnaire was administered to the high school students
- Sample size of 385 students with ages ranging from 16-19 years
- The survey had a question on dental visit and a visit to the dentist in past 12 months was defined as a recent dental visit
- The outcome variable was recent dental visit and the independent variables were socio-demographic and health-risk behaviors
- Chi-square statistics was used to test the association of independent variables with recent dental visit
- Analysis was performed using SAS 9.4

RESULTS

TABLE 1-DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND HEALTHRISK BEHAVIORS WITH RECENT DENTAL VISIT

	Visited Dentist during the past 12 months			p-value
	Overall (n) Wt. (%)	No (n) Wt. (%)	Yes (n) Wt. (%)	
Age				
16 YEARS	53 (15.1%)	6 (11.3%)	47 (88.3%)	0.43
17 YEARS	165 (47.1%)	26 (15.7%)	139 (84.2%)	
18 YEARS	125 (35.7%)	23 (18.4%)	102 (81.6%)	
19 YEARS	7 (2.00%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)	
Sex				0.06
Male	158 (45.1%)	31 (19.6%)	127 (80.3%)	
Female	192 (54.8%)	24 (12.5%)	168 (87.5%)	
Race				0.54
White	331 (94.5%)	51 (15.4%)	280 (84.5%)	
Black	4 (1.1%)	1 (2.5%)	3 (7.5%)	
Hispanic	4 (1.1%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	
Other	11 (3.1%)	3 (27.2%)	8 (72.7%)	
Free or Reduced Lunch				0.23
No	210 (60.0%)	29 (13.8%)	181 (86.9%)	
Yes	140 (40.0%)	26 (18.5%)	114 (81.4%)	
Alcohol use				0.18
No	162 (46.2%)	30 (18.5%)	132 (81.4%)	
Yes	188 (53.7%)	25 (13.3%)	163 (86.7%)	
Tobacco use				0.04
No	89 (54.0%)	23 (12.7%)	166 (87.8%)	
Yes	161 (46.0%)	32 (19.8%)	129 (80.1%)	
Marijuana use				0.12
No	264 (75.4%)	37 (14.0%)	227 (85.9%)	
Yes	86 (24.5%)	18 (20.9%)	68 (79.1%)	
Seat belt use while driving				0.26
No	245 (70.0%)	35 (14.2%)	210 (85.7%)	
Yes	105 (30.0%)	20 (19.0%)	85 (80.9%)	
Seat belt use when driven by others				0.79
No	309 (88.2%)	48 (15.5%)	261 (88.4%)	
Yes	41 (11.7%)	7 (17.0%)	34 (82.9%)	
Texting while driving				0.26
No	173 (49.4%)	31 (17.9%)	142 (82.0%)	
Yes	177 (50.5%)	24 (13.5%)	153 (86.4%)	
Sniffed glue, or inhaled aerosol spray				0.41
No	337 (96.2%)	54 (16.0%)	283 (95.9%)	
Yes	13 (3.7%)	1 (7.6%)	12 (92.3%)	
Used Pills such as Codeine without doctor's prescription				0.28
No	324 (92.5%)	49 (15.1%)	275 (84.8%)	
Yes	26 (7.4%)	6 (23.0%)	20 (76.9%)	

N-number of participants
Wt% -Weight percentage

TABLE 2 ODDS RATIO AND 95% CI FOR TOBACCOUSE

	ADJUSTED OR	95% CI
TOBACCOUSE NO VS YES	0.55	0.31-1.00

OR-ODDS RATIO
CI CONFIDENCE INTERVAL

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- This is the first study to assess the association between recent dental utilization and health behaviors among South-Central adolescents
- The findings among youth smokers shine a spotlight on discussing the significance of detrimental effects of smoking on oral health
- Findings from the study can serve as basis for future studies with a larger sample size on dental care utilization for the at-risk population

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