

Youth Smoking Status: Perceptions Versus Measurements

Todd L. Bottom, BA; Monica L. Adams, MPH; Leonard A. Jason, PhD;
Annie Topliff, MA

Objective: To determine whether youths who have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days perceive themselves as smokers. **Methods:** Sensitivity and specificity for 3 classifications were analyzed and compared to youths' perceptions of smoking status. **Results:** The common criterion of having smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days reflected youths' perceptions of their smoking status with modest accuracy al-

though adding a second criterion of having also smoked 100 or more cigarettes in a lifetime more accurately reflects youths' perceptions of their smoking status. **Conclusions:** Youths frequently determine smoking status based on behavioral criteria that differ from the standard criterion of 30-day point prevalence.

Key words: smoking, tobacco, youth, status, perception

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