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The theme of my investigation is «Smoking. Is it cool?» I have chosen this theme as it seems to be very acute in modern society. It is a big social issue in many countries. You can see lots of men, women and even teenagers smoking in the streets. It is the shortest way to bad health. Smoking ruins our health. Being the sick person, you cannot realize all your dreams and be successful in the modern world. It was proved that there is no such organ, which would not suffer from smoking. Tobacco is a drug. It is very addictive. Especially tobacco is very dangerous for the young because their organism is exposed to the influence of harmful substances more easily. Nevertheless, in spite of all that the number of smoking people is not diminish. What is more grievous, not only the teens but also the junior schoolchildren begin to smoke. Why? What ought to be done?

The main objectives of my work are as follows: to review the history of tobacco smoking, to indicate the harmful impact of tobacco smoking on human health, to analyze the main reasons encouraging teens to smoke, to carry out a poll among teens concerning tobacco smoking, to present the results of the investigation, to work out some measures that could be effective in the struggle with tobacco smoking, to emphasize a sense of collective responsibility for raising healthy younger generation, which involves both family and social institutions.

While working on the theme, I tried to find proper information, compare, investigate and conclude. Firstly, I have reviewed the historical perspective of tobacco smoking. Secondly, I have generalized health effects of tobacco smoking. Then I have analyzed main reasons for smoking. Next comes the most important part of my work where I have carried out the poll among my schoolmates and analyzed the results of the poll on the background of these results proposed some steps, which could assist in the struggle with smoking.

The people of America first used tobacco. Native Americans cultivated the plant and smoked it in pipes for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. The smoking of tobacco was used to achieve trances and to come into contact with the spirit world. In North America, the most common form of smoking was in pipes, which today is known as the peace pipes offered to other tribes as a gesture of good will and

diplomacy. Christopher Columbus brought a few tobacco leaves and seeds with him back to Europe but most Europeans did not get their first taste of tobacco until the 16-th century when adventures and diplomats like France's Jean Nicot – for whom nicotine is named began to popularize its use. From this time, the smoking cultivation and trading of tobacco quickly spread to all corners of the globe. Tobacco was introduced to France in 1556, Portugal in 1558, and Spain in 1559 and in England in 1565. Soon after its introduction to the old world, tobacco came under criticism from state and religious leaders. Murad IV, sultan of the Ottoman Empire 1623-40 was among the first who attempted a smoking ban. He claimed that tobacco was a threat to public moral and health. The Chinese emperor Chong Zhen also issued an addict banning smoking two years before his death. In 1634, the Patriarch of Moscow forbade the sale of tobacco and sentenced men who flaunted the ban to have their nostrils slit and their backs whipped until skin came off their backs. The Western Church leader Urban VII likewise condemned smoking INS papal bull of 1642. However, despite many efforts restrictions and bans were almost universally ignored. Later rulers realized the futility of smoking bans and turned tobacco trade into government monopolies.

Thus, tobacco conquered the globe and spread to all countries of the world. Now smoking is an activity that is practiced by some 11 billion people, and up to 1/3 of the adult population.

What is in tobacco smoke? Tobacco smoke contains the nicotine, which forms a strong physical and psychological addiction. Nicotine is claimed as a «very addictive drug that can be as addictive as heroin or cocaine. Inhaling tobacco smoke into the lungs is a quick and very effective way of delivering nicotine into the blood stream. It affects the user within seconds of the first inhalation. The inhaled tobacco triggers chemical reactions in nerve endings: in the brain, which are associated with sensations of pleasure. Tobacco smoke contains more than 4000 chemical compounds. Many of these chemicals are toxic and several are tumor initiators. Some of these compounds include tar, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, phenols, armorial, formaldehydes, benzene, nitrosamine and others. If we take a

look in our garage, basement or under a kitchen sink, we will find some of these things put into cigarettes. If we smoke these are just some things we are putting into our body. Tar see those yellow stains on a smoker's teeth? The same chemical is used to pave streets! Cyanide. This is used to make rat poison. Formaldehyde. This preserves dead bodies. Benzene. Helps our car run, because it's also used to make gasoline. Acetone. We can use it to take off our nail polish. Ammonia. We clean our houses with this chemical.

Thus, smoking is very dangerous. Cigarette smoking is one of the major killer in the world. However, the negative health effects of tobacco were not initially known. Only by the early 20-th century, with the growth in smoking articles about the health effects of smoking appear in scientific and medical journals. A statistical correlation between smoking and cancer had been demonstrated. In the USA 500,000 deaths per year are attributed to lung cancer. Smoking is also a leading cause of cancer of the mouth throat, bladder, pancreas, and kidney. Smoking kills about three million people every year. A smoker is 22 times more likely to die of lung cancer than a non-smoker is. In fact 30% of all cancer deaths are caused by smoking. Smoking can cause bronchitis, asthma, emphysema, heart disease and stroke. Smoking is particularly harmful for teens because their body is still growing and changing, become regular smokers. That's more than 1 million teens per year. Roughly, 1/3 of them will eventually die from a tobacco-related disease. The greatest increase is cigar smoking among the young women. Among the 13-year old smokers there are more girls than boys. Researches have shown that mothers who smoke while pregnant or before they got pregnant will face a lot of pregnancy risks. They may give birth to stillborn babies or babies with birth defects and underweight. Babies of women smokers are more likely to have mental disorders than babies of women-non-smokers. Babies with mothers who smoke develop more slowly during childhood. Smoking may prevent teens from playing sports. It's hard to play sports if you use tobacco. Smoking causes shortness of breath and dizziness. The cause of this is carbon monoxide, which is produced when we inhale tobacco smoke into the lungs. Carbon monoxide impairs the ability of blood to carry oxygen. The poisons in cigarettes can affect also your appearance. Smoking can dry your skin out and cause wrinkles. It may cause premature grey hair and hair loss. If you smoke, you have one or more of the following signs: wheezing, coughing, bad breath, smelly hair and clothes, yellow-stained teeth and fingers, frequent colds, decreased senses of smell and

taste, difficulty keeping up with sports and athletic activities.

So, if you smoke you cough and wheeze. You produce more phlegm. You have lungs that are damaged and actually smaller. You have weaker heart. You perform worse in physical fitness tests and competitive sports. Moreover, you get sick and miss school more often. Is it cool? I don't think so. For you smoking means disease and ever death. You'd have to be living on Mars not to know that smoking is dangerous. Yet statistics show that young people today smoke more, not less. Each day 6,000 young people will take their first puff on a cigarette and 3,000 will become regular smokers.

Smokers continue to use cigarettes even though they are aware of the health dangers in tobacco. Why?

The first reason is that nicotine contained in tobacco is highly addictive. Nicotine forms a strong physical and psychological addiction. About two-thirds of young smokers' say they want to quit smoking, and seven in ten say they regret having started. Three out of four teens who are daily smokers say they keep smoking because it's really hard to quit. When they do try to quit, they suffer withdrawal symptoms. Some of which include: irritability and anxiety, difficulty concentrating, tingles, aches and pains, weight gain, difficulty sleeping, headaches.

The second reason is that many teens think it is cool. The image of the smoker is very often associated with individuality and aloofness, modernity and masculinity.

The third reason is that smoking is popular among teenagers. They start smoking in order to be like everybody else.

The fourth reason is that teenagers want to become a grown up. Smoking can function as a first step out of childhood. Smoking is associated with power and masculinity.

The fifth reason: I think those who don't do her (his) best in study or school life, as a rule begin to smoke at the school age. They used smoking to construct identity and develop a self-image.

The sixth reason: sometimes a society cannot suggest anything worthwhile for teens. They are people with unexploited energy and talent. For teens, smoking is an act of rebellion against the adult world.

The seventh reason: more girls start smoking because a woman smoker is associated with seductive sexuality and modernity.

The eighth reason is that the enormous sums of money invested in advertising cigarettes. Tobacco companies spend millions to encourage the young to start or to continue smoking «The Marlboro Man», «Joe the Camel» and others do cool things and act

important while smoking just to get you to think that if you smoke you can do these things too. This isn't true. These people are not real and the things they do are make-up. Advertisements often portray signs as glamorous sophisticated.

The next reason is the diminished parental guidance and control. More than ten million children are now living with only one parent. The parents don't discuss the problem of tobacco smoking with their children. The young people are often allowed to do what they wish without strict parental control. Irresponsibility and indifference of parents for raising their children often lead to harmful habits of their children.

In the past few years, measures have been taken to reduce smoking. In a number of countries, the anti-smoking campaigns were launched. Now it is illegal to sell tobacco products to minors. Tobacco advertising was prohibited in any form including all broadcast advertising. Smoking was banned on all buses, trains, airline flights. Tobacco smoking was prohibited in restaurants and in bars and some public places. In addition, the restrictions were imposed on where smoking is allowed. At present tobacco companies have to warn the customers about the dangers of their products. Therefore, they have to produce cigarettes with numerous health warnings on cigarettes packages. Modern teenagers are told about the sad outcomes of smoking. Have these measures positive effect on teens? Yes, of course. Tobacco smoking has declined in recent years. However, statistics show that at least a quarter of people in our country continue to smoke, twenty percent teens are regular smokers, and there is no indication that smoking will go away completely.

What should we do to stop smoking? What about tobacco smoking among my classmates and schoolmates? We have carried out the research to find out who smokes among our schoolmates, why they start smoking, their attitude to tobacco smoking, what they know about the danger of smoking, etc.

We worked out several questions on the topic and had a poll among the pupils of our school. We had tobacco questionnaire among 11-12 years old. In our research, we discovered that girls start smoking earlier than boys do. 7, 7% percent of 11-12 years old girls smoke or tried to smoke. Percentage of boy- smokers is 4,3. The main reason for smoking for girls is that they want to be sexy and cool (30%).

The boys smoke because all their friends smoke (20%) or another reason is that they want to be like everybody else or smoking helps to relax (35%). Answering the question where they get cigarettes from, teens pointed out to their friends who share cigarettes with them (60%) or to adult smokers (25%).

The majority of teens (95%) are very well informed about the harm of smoking. However, only 4, 3% of boys tried to quit smoking. As for girls- smokers none of them have even tried to quit. It turned out that the main sources of information about tobacco smoking and it's dangerous results for teens are mass media (36%) and school (20%).

Our investigation showed that girl-nonsmokers are more tolerable to smokers than boy-nonsmokers (60% of girls and 35% of boys). They claim that they tolerant towards smokers as long as they don't smoke in their presence and it's no harm to them. While caring out our research it was interesting for us to find out what could help teens to avoid this fatal harmful habit. According to our poll: firstly it is sport -20%, secondly it is parental control-25%, thirdly assistant of psychologist -13%, next anti-advertising of tobacco smoking in mass media -8,8%. Among the main measures, teens also claimed high fines for smoking in public places -5, 5% and positive sample of adults and parents - 10%.

According to the results of our investigation, what steps should be taken to stop teens from the first cigar inhalation or to help them to quit smoking. To my mind and I share this point of view with my classmates- it is sport. I think various after- school programs should be adopted to engage teens in hobbies and different physical activities. There are no enough sport clubs for teens. Besides hobbies sports are expensive and teens can't afford them. Therefore, teens should have more free sport clubs and hobbies. Equal opportunities should be provided for teens of all social classes. Besides, we have two lessons of physical training once a week. I think that we must have more lessons of physical training than we have now. For example, American pupils have their PT lessons every day.

I think family should have full blame and responsibility for what the child does. Parents should control their children in after-school time and put some restrictions to their behavior. I think we can lie fault for child's tobacco smoking with parental indifference and irresponsibility. Non-smoking parents are the best sample to follow for teens. Love in childhood, love from parents is the main thing in the world we live in. The parents should be punished by high fines if their child smokes.

I think an aggressive anti-tobacco campaign should be launched on TV, in Internet, in Mass Media. I think anti-smoking posters, billboards should be installed everywhere: in shopping centers, at schools, in public places. More TV programs for teens about this harmful habit should be produced. To my mind, celebrities should take more active part in anti-smoking

campaigns. They should popularize healthy life, harmless habits, sport and claim teens to avoid fatal temptations as the first puff on a cigarette or the first sip of alcohol.

School should also accept a lot of more responsibility for raising healthy generation. Schools should run a series of lectures on the harm of smoking. The anti-smoking films and video should be shown. The role of the school psychologist is very important in the struggle with smoking. He can build up use tobacco free strategies, help to overcome effects of withdrawal. Here emphasis should be laid on the work with the child and his parents. Teen-smokers need emotional psychological support.

To curb the dangerous influence of tobacco smoking I propose:

1) To fine teens or even expel them from school for engagement teens in tobacco smoking;

2) To pass a law making it a crime for an adult smoker to share cigarettes with teens;

3) To adopt programs aimed to rid society of tobacco orientation;

4) To ban to show smoking on screen, in films in order to avoid encouraging smoking;

5) To ban music, songs that popularize smoking, giving positive associations;

6) The greatest increase in tobacco smoking is among girls and young women. Girls are particular vulnerable because of the mistaken idea that smoking is sexy and glamorous. I think girls should be more told about a very damaging effects on a woman's entire body and her reproductive health. Mass media should portray an image of a smoking woman as a negative one. It should not be associated with glamour and chic;

7) To ban sites in the Internet that advocate tobacco smoking;

8) To raise the cost of cigarettes. Some smokers will give up smoking because they can't afford and they'll save the family budget.

To sum it up, I can say that everyone comes across the idea of urgency of the struggle against smoking, as it is one of the most acute questions nowadays, due to the influence on public health. Besides, the review of the historical perspective of tobacco smoking and its impact on people, we've analyzed the motives for smoking and suggested concrete significant ways of solving this problem. We used not only naked facts; we have carried our investigation on children. Overall, the problem of tobacco smoking is far from solving as a great number of aspects doesn't depend on us – children. According to the results of our investigation, the teenagers are still greatly motivated for tobacco smoking. There is an urgent need for working out more effective

ways to diminish tobacco smoking among teens. Smoking is not a harmless pastime that can be given up without efforts. It is necessary to have the will power to stop smoking. I think that a complete ban on cigarettes is the only way to save smokers' lives. Smoking is a nuisance that needs to be ended. It not only harms the smoker, but it harms anybody around the smoker as well. That is why people must rise up against the sale of cigarettes and help to save not only smokers' lives, but also their own. So, I consider that there is no place to this habit in our life.

Appendix I (Tobacco questionnaire)

Form _____

Age _____

Sex – Male – Female

1. Do you smoke?

– Yes

– No

2. How often do you smoke?

– Often

– Seldom

– Sometimes (in difficult situation)

3. What do you think? Smoking is

– Normal

– Bad

– I don't know

4. You smoke at the age of

– 11-12

– 12-13

– 13-14

5. Children smoke because

– Cigarette helps to relax

– All their friends smoke

– Parents smoke

– They want to look old

6. How many cigarettes a day can you smoke?

– 1-3

– 1-5

– 10

7. Where can you get cigarettes?

– Buy on pocket money

– Ask parents

– Friends share cigarettes with

8. Do you try to quit smoking?

– Yes

– Once

– No

9. Do you know that smoking is a harmful habit?

– Yes

– No

10. You know that smoking is a harmful habit from

– Mass media

– School

– Parents

– Other resources

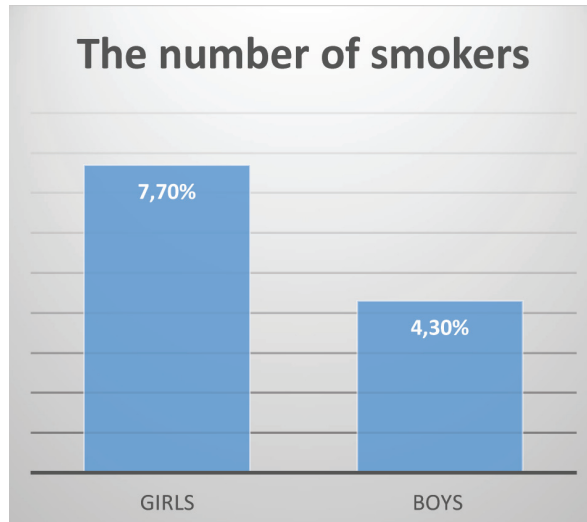


Fig. 1

The reasons for tobacco smoking

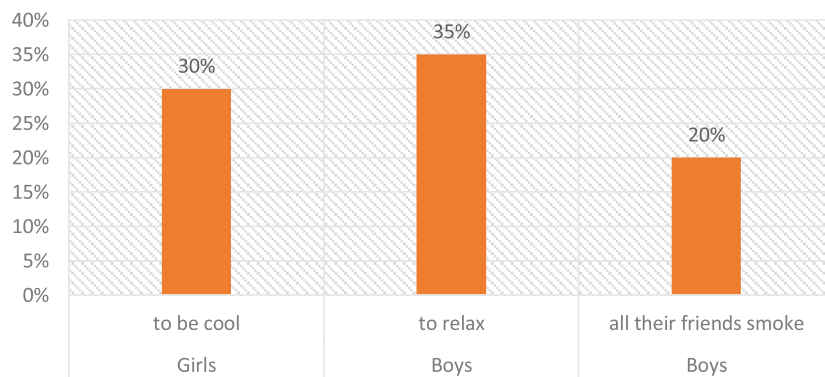


Fig. 2

WHERE THEY GET CIGARETTES FROM

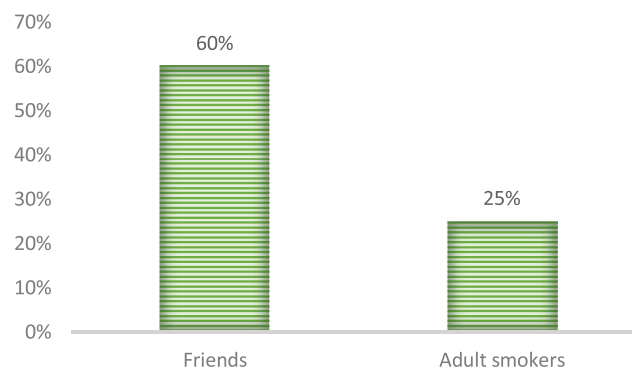


Fig. 3

The main sources of information

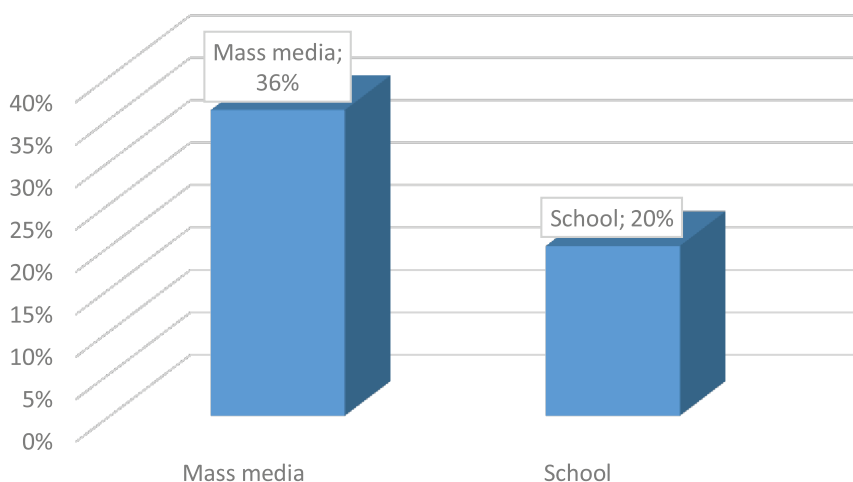


Fig. 4

What could help teens to avoid this fatal harmful habit

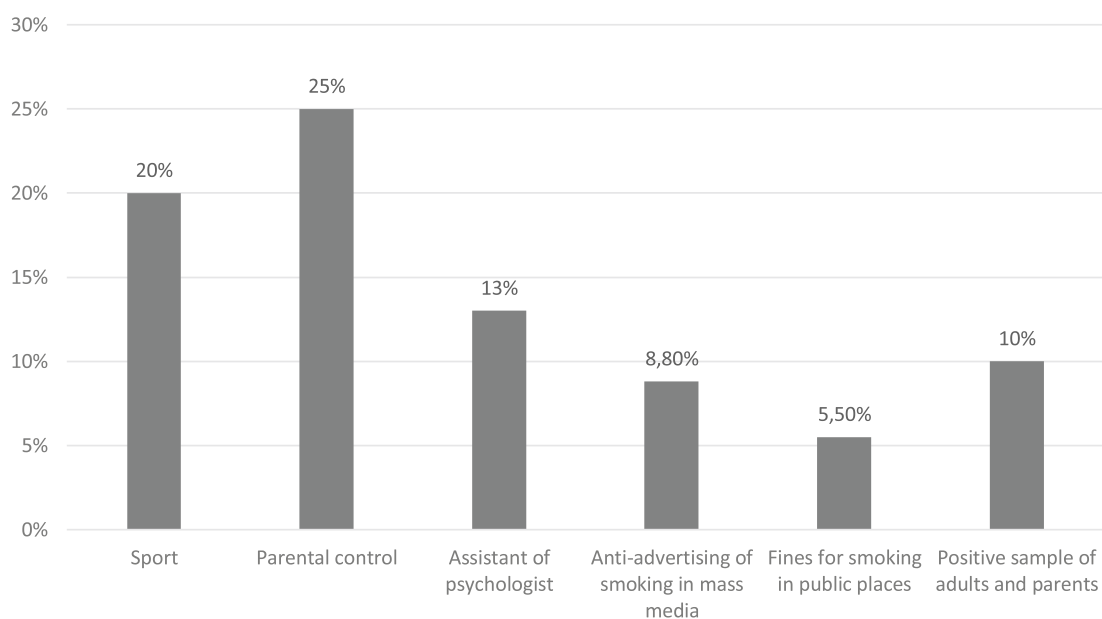


Fig. 5

11. Your attitude to people who smoke

- Negative
- Indifferent

12. What should we do to stop smoking?

- Parents must control children
- Do sports
- High fines
- Positive sample of adults and parents

- An aggressive anti-tobacco campaign should be launched

- The role of school psychologist is very important.

- More TV programs for teens about this harmful habit should be produce.

- Anti-smoking posters should be installed everywhere.

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