

## **A Qualitative Study of How Young Scottish Smokers Living in Disadvantaged Communities Get Their Cigarettes.**

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### **A Qualitative Study of How Young Scottish Smokers Living in Disadvantaged Communities Get Their Cigarettes.**

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#### **Source**

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#### **Abstract**

##### **INTRODUCTION:**

Reducing access to cigarettes is an important element of youth smoking prevention strategies. This is particularly so in disadvantaged communities that have high rates of youth smoking. In 2010, Scotland banned proxy sales of tobacco products to under 18-year-olds who were getting older people to purchase cigarettes on their behalf.

##### **METHODS:**

A qualitative study using 24 small single-sex friendship groups. Eighty young people, mostly aged 14-16, of whom 57 were smokers, were recruited in 2012 from community youth groups in 3 socially disadvantaged areas of Scotland.

##### **RESULTS:**

Participants' main sources of cigarettes were proxy sales, family, and peers and friends. Younger smokers were more likely to purchase single cigarettes from older smokers at school and to steal cigarettes from family members. Older and regular smokers were more likely to obtain cigarettes through proxy purchases. Proxy purchases were often facilitated by problem drug users who were willing to buy cigarettes for a small monetary reward. Direct purchases in shops were less commonly reported but appeared to involve complicit action by some retailers. Few reported that they bought blackmarket cigarettes, although they were available in these communities.

##### **CONCLUSIONS:**

Young people in areas of deprivation are still able to circumvent the age-of-sale legislation on selling cigarettes. Even though proxy sales have been banned, they are an important source of cigarettes for disadvantaged young smokers.

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