

HEADSSS INTERVIEW ON SMOKING

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Clinicians need to improve their communication skills with adolescents. It is important for a clinician to gather information from the adolescent in order to deal with health issues that the adolescent may present with. The clinician must be able to provide information that will allow the adolescent to become an active participant in his own health care, with proper consideration of the developmental, emotional, and psychosocial level of development of the adolescent.

In general, the principles that the clinician must observe when interviewing an adolescent are:

PRINCIPLES:

1. Establish rapport with the adolescent
2. Ensure confidentiality
3. Avoid judgmental style of interview
4. Use a third person approach

The Psychosocial Interview

The HEADSSS interview is a mnemonic to easily recall the information that needs to be elicited during the interview. **H** - Home; **E** - Education, **E**-Employment, **E**-Eating problems; **A** - Activities; **D** - Drugs; **S**- Sexuality; **S** - Safety

We shall focus only on the questions on smoking. Needless to say, the interviewer needs to understand the adolescent, his history, environment, his beliefs, and his behaviors.

In interviewing the adolescent, *do not go directly to the SMOKING questions*, so that he does not suspect that that is the only reason why he is being interviewed.

He could be first asked questions about his home situation, friends, activities, exposure to other people who smoke, exposure in the environment.

This also gives the clinician a clue of the situation in which he functions. It can also give a clue why he smokes.

QUESTIONS:

1. There are a few questions I would like to ask you. I usually ask these questions to all my patients.
 - a. When you are with your friends, has anyone introduced you with smoking cigarettes, marijuana, or use of other substances?
 - b. Have you ever tried smoking _____?
 - c. If answer is NO, praise him for this behavior. You can reinforce him not to engage in smoking at all.

- d. If answer is YES, ask the following questions:
- How old were you when you first tried smoking cigarettes?
 - How many sticks of cigarettes a day do you smoke?
 - During what situations do you usually smoke?
 - Do you smoke alone? Or when in a group?
 - is there anyone in the house who also smokes cigarettes?
- e. Do you use other substances aside from cigarettes, like marijuana, shabu, hashish?
- f. Have you ever used E-cigarettes? How often do you use this?
- g. Have you ever thought about quitting smoking cigarettes?

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

PRECONTEMPLATION:

If he says he is contemplating to quit, you can use the following questions:

1. What steps have you made to quit smoking?
2. Who has helped you to quit smoking?
3. How difficult has it been to stop smoking?

If he still is ambivalent about smoking, use a reflective style of questioning to assist him in committing to stop smoking.

1. As you are telling me, you seem tired of people who tell you to stop smoking. Tell me more about this.
2. Have you weighed in / or considered what these people who asked you to quit smoking, are telling you to do? What difficulties are you having in quitting smoke?

DISCREPANCY:

Allow him to discover the discrepancies between his future goals and his current behavior on smoking.

1. Can you describe to me your goals in life? How does smoking fit into your plans for your future.

Usually in the first interview of the physician, this is enough data. Always close the conversation by giving a statement so that he will consider the discrepancy between having a good health so that he can fulfill his goals in life and continuing to smoke.

Ending statement: "The best thing you can do for your health is to stop smoking and I am here to help."

Ask him to return in 1 -2 weeks.

AVOIDING ARGUMENTS:

There are occasions when the teenager will continue to show that he is contemplating to stop but may give several reasons why he cannot stop. Avoid confronting him. Just repeat the statement that you are open to helping him to quit smoking.

ROLLING WITH RESISTANCE:

Encourage the adolescent to enumerate the stumbling blocks to quitting smoking. Ask him to enumerate the ways he has used or done to overcome this stumbling blocks.

“It seems like you have encountered quite a number of stumbling blocks to quit smoking. Can you tell me what solutions you can take to overcome these blocks?”

This empowers the adolescent to work around his environment. If none of this seems to attract to him, ask him to return for another session.

ENFORCING SELF-EFFICACY:

Praise him for identifying ways to overcome how he will quit smoking. Encourage him to rely on his own ability to change. Advise him to remove 1 or 2 cigarettes a day and to come back in 2 weeks. Tell him to give you feedback.

Reference:

1. Motivational Interviewing: Helping teenaged smokers to quit. William Adelman, Kathryn Myhre. Oct 1, 2013. Contemporary pediatrics.modernmedicine.com