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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **Toddlers mimic smoking parents**

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**7 September, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Toddlers mimic smoking parents**

**BNE:** Smoking parents beware. Children are picking up on and mimicking all of your bad habits and assimilating them into what they perceive as normal behavior. This is the conclusion of a study conducted by Dartmouth College in the American state of New Hampshire. A research team used a variety of role-playing scenarios with dolls and imaginary shopping expeditions to gauge the attitudes, perceptions and expectations of kindergarten students. Two-year-old toddlers were "buying" alcohol and cigarettes as part of their grocery purchases because they recognized brands and products used in the home by their parents. Of 120 children aged two to six, 34 "bought" cigarettes and 74 purchased alcohol.

The study discovered that children were 3.9 times more likely to buy cigarettes if their parents smoked. Young children who were allowed to watch movies rated for teenagers were five times more likely to choose alcohol. Researcher Madeline Dalton said: "Children's play behavior suggests they are highly attentive to the use and enjoyment of alcohol and tobacco, and have well-established expectations about how cigarettes and alcohol fit in to social settings." Ms. Dalton added: "Children were also highly aware of cigarette brands, as illustrated by the six-year-old boy who was able to identify the brand of cigarettes he was buying as Marlboros, but could not identify the brand of his favourite cereal."

## WARM-UPS

**1. PARENTS:** You are a parent. Talk to the other “parents” in your class about the difficulties of parenting. Talk about the bad behavior of your children. Are you worried that your children are copying any of your bad habits?

**2. MIMICKING:** In pairs / groups, talk about which of the following behavior you would be worried about if you found your six-year-old child doing them. What would you tell him / her? Did you do any of these things as a child?

- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol
- Using foul language
- Looking at pornography
- Shoplifting
- Bullying
- Taking drugs
- Gambling

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Smoking / parents / bad habits / normal behavior / role plays / shopping / toddlers / alcohol / copying parent’s behavior / brands / breakfast cereal*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. ALCOHOL:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “alcohol”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. BAD INFLUENCE:** In pairs / groups, talk about whether the children in your country do any of the following, and if so, at what age do they start. Try to find reasons why they do these things. Might bad parenting be to blame?

- a. Smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol
- b. Take drugs
- c. Vandalism
- d. Graffiti
- e. Intimidating elderly people
- f. Burglary and robbery
- g. Physical assault or murder
- h. Under-age sex
- i. Gun crimes
- j. Blackmail and extortion

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think today’s children are getting out of control. Students B think today’s kids are the same as they were generations ago. Change partners often.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A study has discovered that many kindergarten students smoke. T / F
- b. Kindergarten students prefer shopping to playing with toys and dolls. T / F
- c. Two-year-olds bought cigarettes and alcohol in a shopping role play. T / F
- d. Ninety percent of the children in the role plays did not buy cigarettes. T / F
- e. Kids are 3.9 times likelier to buy cigarettes if their parents smoke. T / F
- f. Movies have a big impact on toddlers' perception of alcohol. T / F
- g. Young children understand that cigarettes are social lubricants. T / F
- h. One boy recognized cigarette brands but not breakfast cereal brands. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| a. beware       | measure       |
| b. mimicking    | view          |
| c. assimilating | aware         |
| d. gauge        | copying       |
| e. perceptions  | classified    |
| f. watch        | awareness     |
| g. rated        | environments  |
| h. attentive    | demonstrated  |
| i. settings     | take heed     |
| j. illustrated  | incorporating |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Children are picking up on and   | to the use and enjoyment of ...  |
| b. assimilating them into what they | scenarios                        |
| c. a variety of role-playing        | for teenagers                    |
| d. dolls and imaginary shopping     | fit in to social settings        |
| e. gauge the attitudes, perceptions | more likely to buy cigarettes    |
| f. children were 3.9 times          | and expectations of              |
| g. watch movies rated               | mimicking all of your bad habits |
| h. highly attentive                 | by the six-year-old boy who ...  |
| i. how cigarettes and alcohol       | perceive as normal behavior      |
| j. as illustrated                   | expeditions                      |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**WORD ORDER:** Put the underlined words back into the correct order.

### **Toddlers mimic smoking parents**

**BNE:** Smoking parents beware. Children picking on are up and mimicking all of your bad habits and assimilating them into they perceive as what normal behavior. This is the conclusion of a study conducted by Dartmouth College in the American state of New Hampshire. A research variety of a team used role-playing scenarios with dolls and imaginary shopping attitudes to gauge the expeditions, perceptions and expectations of kindergarten students. Two-year-old toddlers were "buying" alcohol and cigarettes of their part as grocery purchases because they recognized brands and products used in the home by their parents. Of 120 children aged two to six, 34 "bought" cigarettes and 74 purchased alcohol.

The study discovered that children likely times were more 3.9 to buy cigarettes if their parents smoked. Young children who were allowed to rated teenagers for watch movies were five times more likely to choose alcohol. Researcher Madeline Dalton said: "Children's play behavior suggests they are attentive to highly use the and enjoyment of alcohol and tobacco, and have well-established expectations about how cigarettes and social alcohol to fit in settings." Ms. Dalton added: "Children were also highly aware of cigarette brands, by the illustrated as six-year-old boy who was able to identify the brand of cigarettes he was buying as Marlboros, but could not identify the brand of his favourite cereal."

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'role'** and **'play'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WORD ORDER:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "GOOD PARENTING" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about parenting and its problems.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| • picking    | • 3.9         |
| • conclusion | • rated       |
| • dolls      | • attentive   |
| • gauge      | • settings    |
| • recognized | • illustrated |
| • 74         | • cereal      |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What adjectives would you use to describe your feelings about this article?
- d. What do you think about toddlers picking up on their parents' bad behavior?
- e. Did you pick up any bad habits from your parents?
- f. Is it OK for parents to drink and smoke in front of children?
- g. Do you think people should take lessons in how to be better parents?
- h. Do you love being with children?
- i. Are you good with kids?
- j. Is there anything new in what you read in this article?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Were you a little monster or a little angel when you were a toddler?
- d. Do you think strangers have a responsibility to encourage children to behave better?
- e. Do today's kids have things too easy?
- f. Did you or were you tempted to smoke as a child?
- g. What would you do if you saw a four-year-old smoking?
- h. Can you remember what you thought about cigarettes and alcohol when you were a child?
- i. Should parents think more about their behavior in front of kids?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

### PARENTING:

You are a member of the government's new Good Parenting Committee. You have to establish a series of guidelines on good parenting that all parents must follow. In pairs / groups, discuss the recommendations you wish to make, possible parental objections and your answer to these objections.

Guideline	Recommendation	Parental objection	Answer to objections
Smoking in front of children			
Drinking in front of children			
Hitting children to punish them			
Teaching children about God			
Establishing a "no raised voices" policy in the home			
Children and television			
Children, diet and exercise			

Change partners and explain your recommendations, etc. to your new partner(s). Give each other advice on how to improve your recommendations and provide better answers to parents.

Return to your original partners. Share feedback and revise your initial thoughts.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Toddlers mimic smoking parents**

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The study discovered that children were 3.9 \_\_\_\_\_ to buy cigarettes if their parents smoked. Young children who were allowed to watch movies \_\_\_\_\_ teenagers were five times more likely to choose alcohol. Researcher Madeline Dalton said: "Children's play behavior suggests they are \_\_\_\_\_ to the use and enjoyment of alcohol and tobacco, and have well-established expectations about how cigarettes and alcohol fit \_\_\_\_\_." Ms. Dalton added: "Children were also highly aware of cigarette brands, as \_\_\_\_\_ by the six-year-old boy who was able to identify the brand of cigarettes he was buying as Marlboros, but could not \_\_\_\_\_ the brand of his favourite cereal."

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on children and cigarettes. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. ADVICE SHEET:** Create an advice sheet for parents. Write down the top ten points of being a good parent. Show your advice sheets to your classmates in your next lesson. Did everyone have similar points?

**4. DIARY / JOURNAL ENTRY:** Imagine you are a four-year-old child (who can write very well). Write your diary / journal entry for one day in your life. Write about all the "bad" things your parents do and how they influence you. Read what you wrote to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. F      c. T      d. F      e. T      f. T      g. T      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| a. beware       | take heed     |
| b. mimicking    | copying       |
| c. assimilating | incorporating |
| d. gauge        | measure       |
| e. perceptions  | awareness     |
| f. watch        | view          |
| g. rated        | classified    |
| h. attentive    | aware         |
| i. settings     | environments  |
| j. illustrated  | demonstrated  |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Children are picking up on and   | mimicking all of your bad habits |
| b. assimilating them into what they | perceive as normal behavior      |
| c. a variety of role-playing        | scenarios                        |
| d. dolls and imaginary shopping     | expeditions                      |
| e. gauge the attitudes, perceptions | and expectations of              |
| f. children were 3.9 times          | more likely to buy cigarettes    |
| g. watch movies rated               | for teenagers                    |
| h. highly attentive                 | to the use and enjoyment of ...  |
| i. how cigarettes and alcohol       | fit in to social settings        |
| j. as illustrated                   | by the six-year-old boy who ...  |

### WORD ORDER:

#### Toddlers mimic smoking parents

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