

---

# **Strengthening Civil Society's Capacity to Fight against Tobacco in Nicaragua in an Appropriate and Effective Manner: Achieving Smoke-Free Schools**

**Results from the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) study of students from 4 public schools in Managua**

**Executive summary**



**December 2008.**

---

## **Executive Summary**

The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study was implemented by the Instituto CentroAmericano de la Salud (ICAS) in four public secondary schools of Managua, during August to November 2008.

The main objective of the study was to identify the knowledge, attitudes and practices of students and school staff in relation to smoking and its consequences. This study will also serve as a baseline in order to evaluate the impact of the project. A second study will be implemented at the end of the project, through which we can compare the results before and after the intervention

The necessary coordination with the Ministry of Education was arranged and approval obtained to implement the study. Furthermore the study was coordinated with the directors of the different schools to facilitate participation of and interviews with school staff and students.

Through a process of random selection, a sample of 418 students aged 11 and 21 years was obtained from the different school grades of the four secondary schools as well as sample of 117 members from the school staff. The interviews took place in August 2008. Data were processed and analyzed.

Some of the main findings are that of the students surveyed 1 in 2 students had already experimented with smoking, this was mainly done in the age of 14 to 15 years (17%), followed by the age of 12 to 13 years (13.4%), while 3% of students even experimented at the age of 7 or younger. This result made us aware that the prevention of smoking initiation has to start at early age. Furthermore, we encountered that boys are smoking more than girls. Of the 18% who had smoked at least one cigarette during the last 6 months, 64% were boys and 36% girls. The cigarette brands which are preferred by students are Belmont and Casino.

The main reasons why young people experiment with smoking are “to feel part of the group” and “out of curiosity”. This are in general considered key reasons during adolescence to access or belong to a group.

While adolescents smoke in different environments such as public places and during social events, we found it striking that 2% also smoke at home, which clearly shows that parents accept smoking of their children. It is worth mentioning that parents have a great influence on their children, while we found that of 26% of students one or both parents are active smokers.

Finally we would like to mention that smoking is a serious problem in young people, but that there exists a great openness and interest on the part of school directors and teachers to discuss and address the issue. Schools represent and excellent opportunity to establish actions which contribute to delay or avoid smoking initiation in children and adolescents.

We invite to read the full report of this study.