Most substance prevention scholars agree that “friends” play an important role in adolescents’ smoking behaviors. Recent research has begun to specify this relationship, suggesting peer networks are particularly important. To extend this new direction, meta-analysis procedures were utilized to investigate the relationship between social positional status (e.g., group members vs. isolates vs. liaisons) in friendship networks and smoking behaviors. The results showed that, in fact, adolescents with fewer friendships (i.e., isolates) are more likely to report smoking behaviors than those with more friends (i.e., group members) and those with more interactions with diverse groups (i.e., liaisons), although this relationship varies across studies. The results were also heterogeneous, suggesting that moderators in this relationship exist. Additionally, there was a trend demonstrating that the number of isolated smokers has decreased over the years; thus, historical trends should also be considered for the future research.

### Methods

**Sampling Procedures:**
1. Searched with PsychINFO, ProQuest, & Google Scholar for Journal, book chapters, and dissertations
2. Tracking: reference list

**Keywords:** (a) social network, adolescent, and substance and their synonyms (e.g., teen/age/ager/s); (b) social position; (c) smoking behavior

**Sample:** Eight friendship networks in six studies (N = 5067)

**Meta-analysis:** Fixed Model (Hedges & Vevea, 1998)

### Results

**A. Isolates vs. Group members vs. Liaisons**

**B. The increased odds of smokers who smoke in the isolated network position decreases over time:**

### Discussion

A. Why do adolescents in the isolated network position smoke more? Possible explanations:
1. Less opportunity to learn other mechanisms to cope with stress
2. Less opportunity to learn how to connect with other adolescents

B. Why does the increased odds of isolated smokers decrease over time? Possible explanations:
1. Coping: Other activities
2. Bonding: Restriction policy

### References