Abstract

Background: No studies have been published to date which analyze the degree of compliance with the no-smoking laws in Spanish schools, hence we have undertaken to ascertain the degree of compliance with the official no-smoking legislation at schools and the impact this is having on the percentage of students who smoke. Method: A survey was conducted among 3,050 Spanish school principals, who were queried regarding different aspects of compliance of the official no-smoking legislation at their schools and regarding the main characteristics of the smoking at the same. Results: Eighty point nine percent (80.9%) of the school principals surveyed stated that compliance with the law is compulsory at their schools, and 64.9% have posted non-smoking signs. Eight-two point two percent (82.2%) of the schools at which compliance with the law is compulsory are said to be educating to counter smoking, and 64.8% of the schools at which this legislation is not compulsory. The school principals surveyed estimate that 5.9% of teachers smoke in the presence of the students at the schools where the legislation is compulsory, and that 12.9% do so at those schools where the laws are not observed. At the schools where students are educated to counter smoking, they believed that 19% of the students have tried smoking, as compared to the 31% they believe have done so at the schools where no education to counter smoking is provided (p<0.001). Conclusions: Observance of the laws currently in force is insufficient. As those in charge of ensuring that the official non-smoking laws are observed at their schools, school principals must demand that these laws be obeyed, given that this measure is effective for improving the overall functioning of the schools and for lowering the percentages of students and teachers who smoke.

Keywords

Smoking; School Health; Legislation; Teachers.