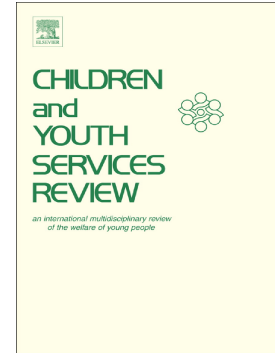


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## The relationship among school safety, school satisfaction, and students' cigarette smoking: based on a multilevel mediation model

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### ABSTRACT

**BACKGROUND:** School context greatly affects students' cigarette smoking. Based on the 'context-process-outcomes' model, this study investigated school safety as a context variable to explore how safety (at the school level) affects students' smoking behaviours.

**METHODS:** Hierarchical linear modelling was used to examine the link between school safety at the school level and students' cigarette smoking, with school satisfaction as a mediator. Data were obtained from the National Children's Study of China (2009), where 24,013 fourth- to ninth-grade students from 607 schools were recruited from 100 counties in 31 provinces (boys 52.9%, elementary school students 50.1%, middle school students 49.9%).

**RESULTS:** Student-level and school-level factors were associated with an increased likelihood of cigarette smoking. Multilevel mediation analyses showed that school safety problems increased the behaviour of cigarette smoking directly as well as indirectly through student's school satisfaction, controlling for both student- and school-level covariates; its direct effect was larger than its indirect effect. A gender difference also existed in the multilevel mediation model: for girls, school satisfaction fully mediated the relationship between school safety at the school level and cigarette smoking, but only partially for boys. There was no grade-stage difference in the

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