

Assessment of level of compliance with Tobacco free educational institution guidelines in Educational Institutions of Rishikesh – A Cross-Sectional Study: Reg ID: 248

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The tobacco-free educational institution (ToFEI) guidelines were introduced by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) in 2008. All Indian educational institutions (EIs) are required to adhere to these standards. In 2009, the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) revealed that 14.6% of 13 to 15-year-old school-age youngsters reported using tobacco. Due to the rapidly rising prevalence of tobacco use among school-age adolescents, it is imperative that these standards be strictly followed. **Methods:** This observational cross-sectional study assessed the level of compliance with ToFEI guidelines among 50 EIs in Rishikesh, selected through universal sampling from the list provided by the State Education Department, Dehradun (14 government, 36 private). The study was conducted over a period of six months (Dec 2024–May 2025). Data were collected through on-site school visits using the 9-criteria evaluation scorecard developed by MoH&FW. Mean, standard deviation, and proportions were calculated to describe the compliance scores. The institutions achieving a compliance score of $\geq 90/100$ were classified as Tobacco-Free EIs. **Result:** The mean score for adherence was 20.94 (± 12.22). The observed score ranged from 9 to 68, with 68 being the highest. These results show that the institutions assessed generally adhered poorly to the ToFEI guidelines, with a broad range of compliance levels. **Conclusion:** The EIs in Rishikesh need to adhere to the ToFEI recommendations more strictly, tighten their tobacco control policies, and include tobacco control initiatives into their EI-based programs.

KEYWORDS

Tobacco free educational institution (ToFEI) guidelines, Tobacco-Free Schools/Educational Institutions, Tobacco Prevalence