

# How Parents Substance Use Effects their Children's Social Interactions and Awareness

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## Abstract

Household substance use affects the child's home environment in many ways, including emotional, physical, and mental health of the child. Children who have parents with substance issues are more likely to have difficulties with interactions outside of the home. This study explores how having a caregiver who uses substances such as tobacco, drugs, or alcohol negatively impacts the child's relationships with their peers.

The purpose of this research is to examine how household substance use impacts the child's ability to play with others and make friends.

## Hypothesis

H: Caregiver substance use is negatively correlated with a child being able to play well with others and making friends.

## Data and Methods

Data analyzed was from the 2022 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)

- Random National Sample of American Caregivers
- Fielded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration
- N= 54,103

Multivariate Logistic Ordinal Regression were conducted to adjust for age, gender, race/ethnicity and household income

## Dependent Variable

Measure of Child's Socialization

How much difficulty does this child have making or keeping friends?

1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

How often does this child play well with others? 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree)

## Independent Variable

Measure of Substance Use

Lived with anyone who had a problem with alcohol or drugs?

1 = Yes

0 = No

Does anyone living in your household use cigarettes, cigars, or pipe or tobacco?

1= Yes

0= No

## Control Variable

**For the child**

Medical Needs

- Does this child have any kind of emotional, developmental, or behavior problem for which they need treatment or counseling?

Medical Accessibility

- Does this child need more medical care, mental health, or educational services than is usual for most children of the same age?

Gender: Female

Race/Ethnicity: Black, Native American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Mixed Race, and Hispanic

**For the caregiver**

Marital Status

- What is your marital status?

Employment

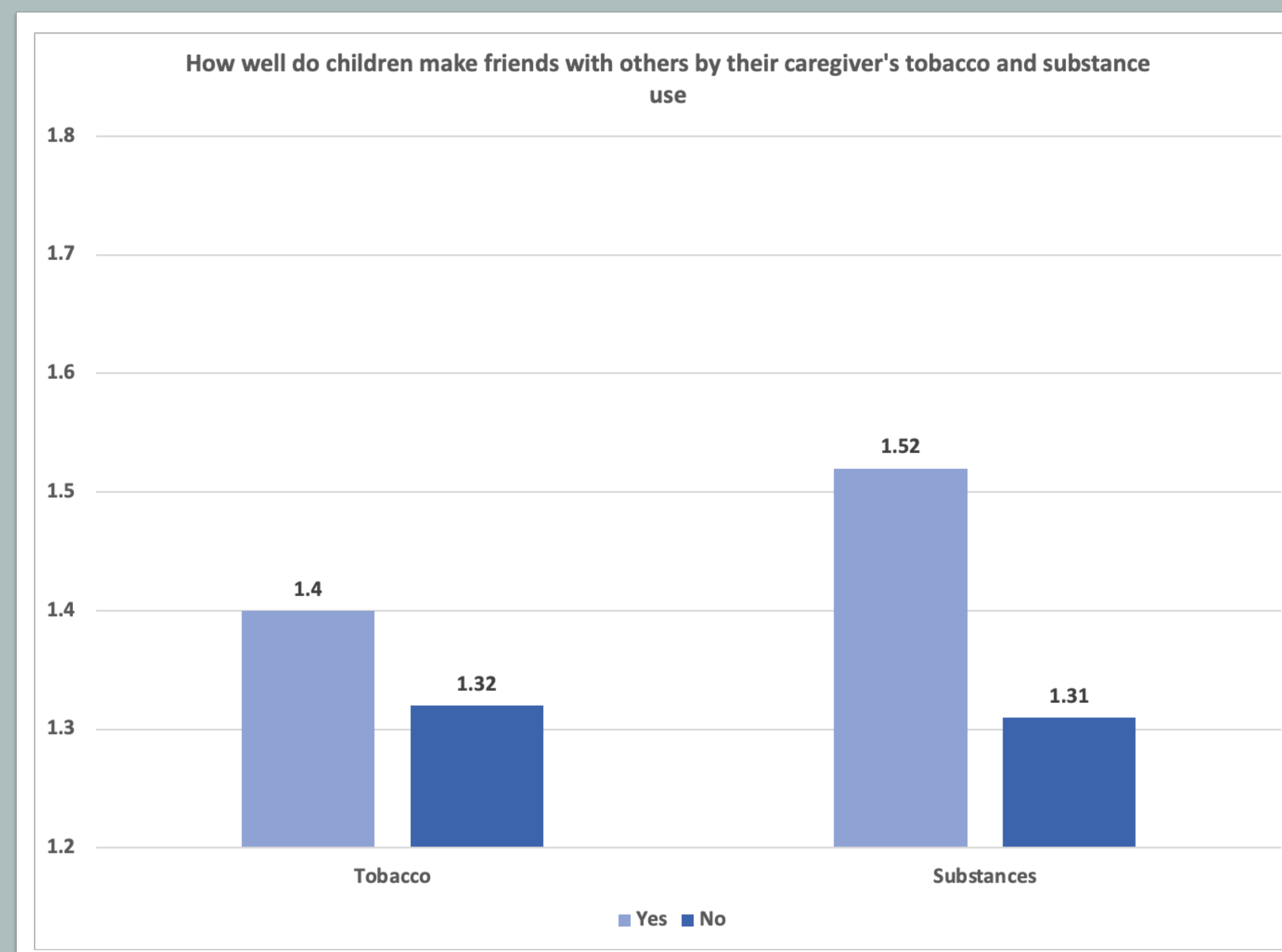
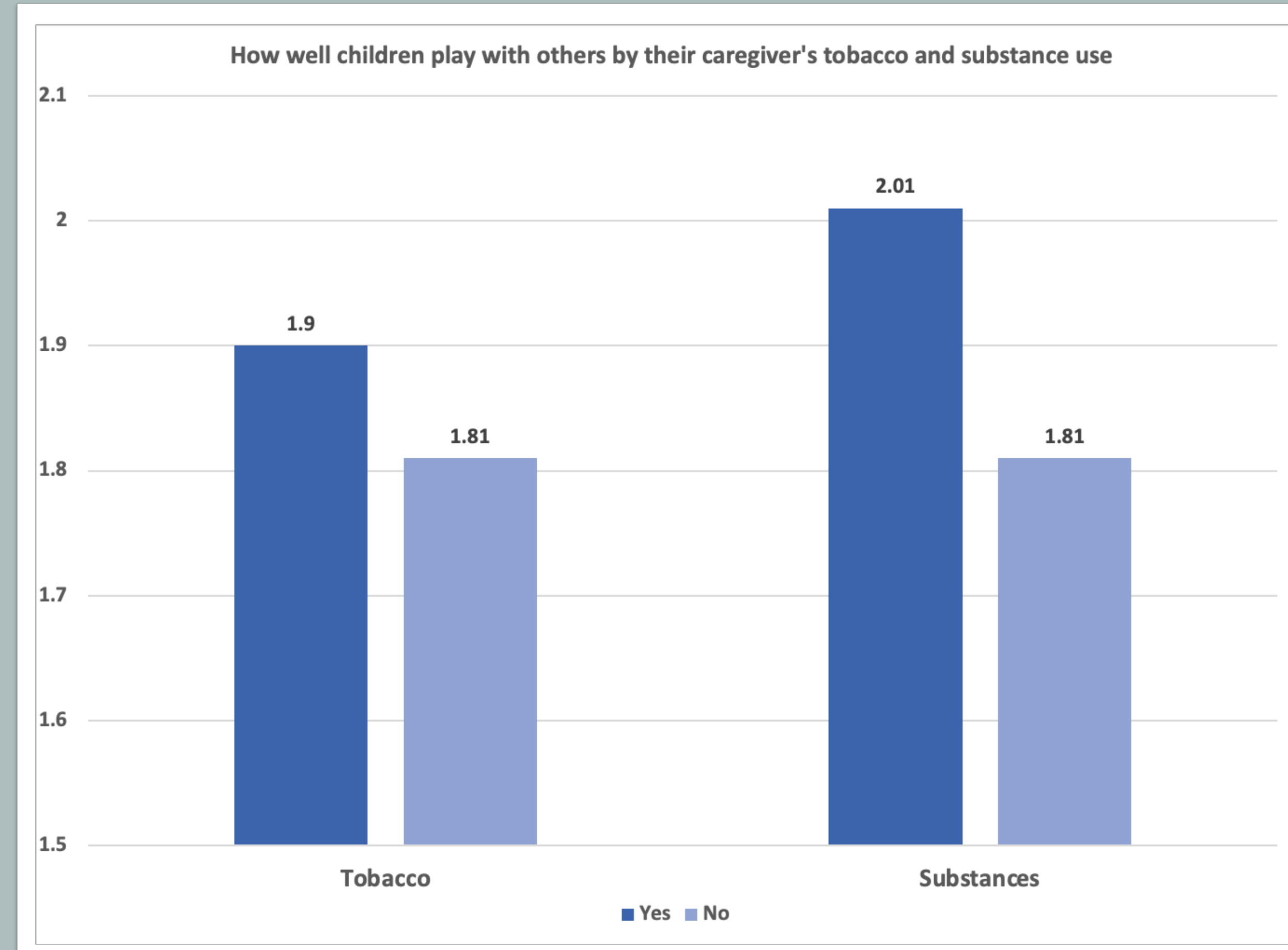
- Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Level of Education

- What is the highest grade or level of school you have completed?

## Tables and Graphs

Descriptive Statistics Variable	Mean/proportion	Standard Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Plays well with others	1.81	0.813	1	5
Makes friends with others	1.33	0.580	1	3
Tobacco Use	0.11	0.317	0	1
Substance Use	0.09	0.281	0	1
White	0.64	0.479	0	1
Black	0.06	0.239	0	1
Hispanic	0.15	0.362	0	1
AAPI	0.06	0.244	0	1
Native American	0.01	0.04	0	1
Multi-Racial	0.07	0.260	0	1
Needs More Care	0.16	0.363	0	1
Needs Counseling	0.14	0.342	0	1
Married	0.776	0.416	0	1
Employed	0.679	0.466	0	1
College Graduate	0.574	0.495	0	1



## Results

- On average, children tend to play well with others, with a mean score of 1.81 out of 5, and they make friends with a mean score of 1.33 out of 3. These scores indicate a generally positive social disposition among the children in the sample.
- The Descriptive Statistics chart shows 11% of children live in households where their caregiver uses tobacco and 9% use drugs or alcohol.
- Figure 1 shows that children who live in a household with either an tobacco or substance user are significantly more likely to have difficulty playing with others. Additionally, in Figure 2 it shows a similar significant relationship with regards to making friends.
- Differences between households with and without tobacco are non significant in multivariate OLS regressions with all the controls variables .
- Differences between households with and without substance use remain significantly different even when accounting for potential spurious variables.

## Discussion and Conclusion

We can infer from the data examined for this study that there is a significant negative relationship between a child's socialization and substance use, meaning if the care giver is a substance user or smokes tobacco, they are more likely to affect their child's ability to develop social skills to interact with others. There is not a favorable relationship between the growth of a child and the presence of a substance-using caregiver, also a significant association between the child's sex and the measure of needing greater health was proven. Although there are many factors in the caregiver's life that influence the use of substance use and tobacco, from this study we gain an understanding of the negative effects of the relation between caregiver habits and the social development of a child.

## References

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