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Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Expectancies in College Students With and Without a Substance-Dependent First-Degree Relative

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ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND MARIJUANA EXPECTANCIES IN COLLEGE STUDENTS
WITH AND WITHOUT A SUBSTANCE-DEPENDENT FIRST-DEGREE RELATIVE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Psychology

Quinne Leyden

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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Title: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Expectancies in College Students With and Without a Substance-Dependent First-Degree Relative

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to examine the positive and negative expectancies regarding the effects of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana, as well as substance use, in college students who do and do not report a family history of substance dependence.

Participants: 270 undergraduates (59.3% female and 39.6% male) between the ages of 18-25 enrolled in General Psychology at a rural mid-Atlantic university.

Methods: Participants completed paper-and-pencil questionnaires that measured both positive and negative expectancies about alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Participants also completed a questionnaire about family history and their own substance use. This measure contained open-ended questions designed for participants to provide more in-depth opinions about their family members' impact on their substance use decision-making.

Results: Students who reported having a parent who smokes cigarettes had significantly more positive expectancies regarding the effects of cigarettes than those who did not. These students also endorsed more frequent cigarette smoking than students whose parents did not smoke. Students who reported having a biological first-degree relative who is a habitual marijuana smoker had more positive expectancies about the effects of marijuana than those who did not. These students had higher rates of lifetime marijuana use than their counterparts without

a similar relative. Students who reported having at least one substance-dependent, biological first-degree relative had more negative same-day alcohol expectancies than those who did not. Hypothesized differences in positive alcohol expectancies were not found between students who reported having a substance-dependent biological first-degree relative and those who did not.

Conclusions: These findings have implications for designing education, prevention, and treatment programs specifically for college students with substance-dependent relatives who may be at higher risk for developing a substance use disorder than their counterparts without such family history.