

# YOUTH AND TOBACCO USE

*Youth use of tobacco in any form is unsafe.*

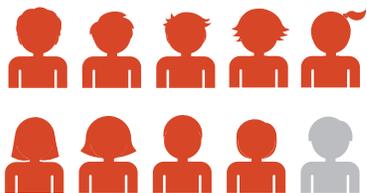


If smoking continues at the current rate among youth in this country, **5.6 million of today's Americans younger than 18 will die early from a smoking-related illness.**<sup>1</sup>



## BACKGROUND

**Preventing tobacco use among youth is critical** to ending the tobacco epidemic in the United States. Tobacco use is started and established primarily during adolescence.<sup>2,3</sup>

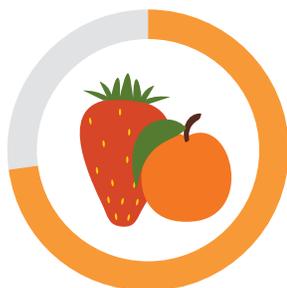


Nearly **9 out of 10** cigarette smokers first tried smoking by age 18, and 99% first try smoking by age 26.<sup>1,3</sup>



**Each day** in the United States, more than **3,200 youth aged 18 years or younger smoke their first cigarette**, and an additional 2,100 youth and young adults become daily cigarette smokers.<sup>3</sup>

**Flavorings in tobacco products** can make them more appealing to youth.<sup>4</sup>



**73%**  
of high school students



**56%**  
of middle school students

who used tobacco products in the past 30 days reported using a flavored tobacco product during that time.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

# ESTIMATES OF CURRENT TOBACCO USE AMONG YOUTH

Cigarette smoking has declined among U.S. youth in recent years, but the **use of some other tobacco products has increased.**<sup>5</sup>

## Cigarettes

From 2011 to 2015, current cigarette **smoking declined among middle and high school students.**<sup>5,6</sup>



About **2 of every 100 middle school students** (2.3%) reported in 2015 that they smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days

**decrease from 4.3% in 2011**

About **9 of every 100 high school students** (9.3%) reported in 2015 that they smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days

**decrease from 15.8% in 2011**

## Electronic cigarettes

Current **use of electronic cigarettes increased among middle and high school students** from 2011 to 2015.<sup>5,6</sup>



About **5 of every 100 middle school students** (5.3%) reported in 2015 that they used electronic cigarettes in the past 30 days

**increase from 0.6% in 2011**

**16 of every 100 high school students** (16.0%) reported in 2015 that they used electronic cigarettes in the past 30 days

**increase from 1.5% in 2011**

## Hookahs

From 2011 to 2015, current **use of hookahs increased among middle and high school students.**<sup>5,6</sup>



**2 of every 100 middle school students** (2.0%) reported in 2015 that they had used hookah in the past 30 days

**increase from 1.0% in 2011**

About **7 of every 100 high school students** (7.2%) reported in 2015 that they had used hookah in the past 30 days

**increase from 4.1% in 2011.**

## Smokeless Tobacco



Nearly **2 of every 100 middle school students** (1.8%) reported current use of smokeless tobacco.

**6 of every 100 high school students** (6.0%) reported current use of smokeless tobacco.

## All Tobacco Product Use



In 2015, about **7 of every 100 middle school students** used some type of tobacco product.<sup>5</sup>



**25 of every 100 high school students** used some type of tobacco product.<sup>5</sup>



In 2013, nearly **18 of every 100 middle school students** said they had ever tried a tobacco product.<sup>7</sup>



**Nearly half of high school students** said they had ever tried a tobacco product.<sup>7</sup>

## Use of multiple tobacco products is prevalent among youth.<sup>3</sup>



In 2015, about **3 of every 100 middle school students** and **13 of every 100 high school students** reported use of two or more tobacco products in the past 30 days.<sup>5</sup>



In 2013, more than **31 of every 100 high school students** said they had ever tried two or more tobacco products.<sup>7</sup>

**Youth who use multiple tobacco products are at higher risk for developing nicotine dependence and might be more likely to continue using tobacco into adulthood.<sup>7</sup>**



# FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTH TOBACCO USE

## Social and physical environments<sup>2,8</sup>



The way mass media show tobacco use as a normal activity can promote smoking among young people.



Youth are more likely to use tobacco if they see that tobacco use is acceptable or normal among their peers.

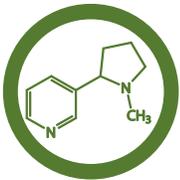


High school athletes are more likely to use smokeless tobacco than their peers who are non-athletes.<sup>9</sup>



Parental smoking may promote smoking among young people.

## Biological and genetic factors<sup>2</sup>



There is evidence that youth may be sensitive to nicotine and that teens can feel dependent on nicotine sooner than adults.



Genetic factors may make quitting smoking more difficult for young people.



A mother's smoking during pregnancy may increase the likelihood that her offspring will become regular smokers.

**MENTAL HEALTH: THERE IS A STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH SMOKING AND DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND STRESS.<sup>2</sup>**

**Personal perceptions:** Expectations of positive outcomes from smoking, such as coping with stress and controlling weight, are related to youth tobacco use.<sup>2</sup>

## Other influences that affect youth tobacco use include:<sup>2,8</sup>



Lower socioeconomic status, including lower income or education



Lack of skills to resist influences to tobacco use



Lack of support or involvement from parents



Accessibility, availability, and price of tobacco products



Low levels of academic achievement



Low self-image or self-esteem



Exposure to tobacco advertising



## REDUCING YOUTH TOBACCO USE

National, state, and local program activities have been shown to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use when implemented together. They include the following:



Higher costs for tobacco products (for example, through increased taxes)<sup>2,10,11</sup>



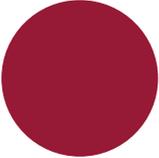
Prohibiting smoking in indoor areas of worksites and public places<sup>2,10,11</sup>



Raising the minimum age of sale for tobacco products to 21 years, which has recently emerged as a potential strategy for reducing youth tobacco use<sup>11</sup>



TV and radio commercials, posters, and other media messages targeted toward youth to counter tobacco product advertisements<sup>2,10</sup>



Community programs and school and college policies and interventions that encourage tobacco-free environments and lifestyles<sup>2,10</sup>



Community programs that reduce tobacco advertising, promotions, and availability of tobacco products<sup>2,10</sup>

Some social and environmental factors have been found to be related to lower smoking levels among youth. Among these are:<sup>2</sup>



Religious participation



Racial/ethnic pride and strong racial identity



Higher academic achievement and aspirations

**Continued efforts are needed to prevent and reduce the use of all forms of tobacco use among youth.**

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