



## SMOKING AND KIDS

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- Each day, about 1,600 kids in the United States try their first cigarette; and another 235 additional kids under 18 years of age become new regular, daily smokers. That's more than 86,000 new underage daily smokers in this country each year.<sup>1</sup>
- The addiction rate for smoking is higher than the addiction rates for marijuana, alcohol, or cocaine; and symptoms of serious nicotine addiction often occur only weeks or even just days after youth "experimentation" with smoking first begins.<sup>2</sup> Because adolescence is a critical period of growth and development, exposure to nicotine may have lasting, adverse consequences on brain development.<sup>3</sup>
- Ninety percent of adult smokers begin while in their teens, or earlier; and two-thirds become regular, daily smokers before they reach the age of 19.<sup>4</sup>
- 4.1 percent of high school students are current smokers by the time they leave high school.<sup>5</sup>
- 4.6 percent of all high school students (grades 9–12) are current smokers. White high school students have the highest smoking rate (5.3%), followed by Hispanics (4.6%), and Black students (2.8%).<sup>6</sup>
- If current smoking rates persist, 5.6 million children alive today will die prematurely from smoking.<sup>7</sup>
- Roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from smoking-caused disease.<sup>8</sup>
- Smoking can seriously harm kids while they are still young. Aside from the immediate bad breath, irritated eyes and throat and increased heartbeat and blood pressure, short-term harms from youth smoking include respiratory problems, reduced immune function, increased illness, tooth decay, gum disease and pre-cancerous gene mutations.<sup>9</sup>
- The tobacco companies spend \$8.4 billion each year to promote their deadly products—over \$23 million every day—and much of that marketing directly reaches and influences kids.<sup>10</sup>
- Kids are more susceptible to cigarette advertising and marketing than adults.<sup>11</sup> Youth smokers (12–17) continue to report Marlboro, Newport and Camel (the three most heavily advertised brands) as the product they smoked most often in the past 30 days.<sup>12</sup> For example, between 1989 and 1993, spending on the Joe Camel ad campaign jumped from \$27 million to \$43 million, which prompted a 50 percent increase in Camel's share of the youth market but had no impact at all on its adult market share.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, a survey conducted in March 2012 showed that kids were significantly more likely than adults to recall tobacco advertising. While only 25 percent of all adults recalled seeing a tobacco ad in the two weeks prior to the survey, 45 percent of kids aged 12 to 17 reported seeing tobacco ads.<sup>14</sup>
- A *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* study found that teens were more likely to be influenced to smoke by cigarette marketing than by peer pressure.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, a *Journal of the American Medical Association* study found that as much as one-third of underage experimentation with smoking was attributable to tobacco company marketing efforts.<sup>16</sup> In 2014, the U.S. Surgeon General reported that "tobacco industry advertising and promotion cause youth and young adults to start smoking, and nicotine addiction keeps people smoking past those ages."<sup>17</sup>

*Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, December 15, 2021*

More information on kids and tobacco use is available at  
<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/fact-sheets/tobaccos-toll-health-harms-and-cost/tobacco-and-kids>.

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- <sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), HHS, *Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH: Detailed Tables*, 2019, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2019-nsduh-detailed-tables>.
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Symptoms of Substance Dependence Associated with Use of Cigarettes, Alcohol, and Illicit Drugs—United States 1991-1992," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* 44(44):830-831,837-839, November 10, 1995, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00039501.htm>. DiFranza, JR, et al., "Initial Symptoms of Nicotine Dependence in Adolescents," *Tobacco Control* 9:313-19, September 2000. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (TFK) factsheet, *The Path to Smoking Addiction Starts at Very Young Ages*, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0127.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/>. See also, HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/index.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> SAMHSA. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2016. See also, HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012. HHS, *Youth and Tobacco: Preventing Tobacco Use among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 1994, <http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/ /nncbft.pdf> (pg 49).
- <sup>5</sup> University of Michigan, Monitoring the Future Study, 2021, <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/21data/Cigarettes/Cigarette.jsFigures.htm>.
- <sup>6</sup> CDC, "Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2020," *MMWR*, 69, December 18, 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6950a1-H.pdf>.
- <sup>7</sup> HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/>.
- <sup>8</sup> CDC, "Projected Smoking-Related Deaths Among Youth-United States," *MMWR* 45(44):971-974, November 8, 1996, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm4544.pdf>.
- <sup>9</sup> HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 1994, <http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/NN/B/C/F/T/ /nncbft.pdf>. See also, HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/index.html>. TFK factsheet, *Smoking's Immediate Effects on the Body*, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0264.pdf>.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), *Cigarette Report for 2020*, October 2021, <https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/reports/federal-trade-commission-cigarette-report-2020-smokeless-tobacco-report-2020/p114508fy20cigarettereport.pdf> [data for top 5 manufacturers only]; FTC, *Smokeless Tobacco Report for 2020*, October 2021, <https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/reports/federal-trade-commission-cigarette-report-2020-smokeless-tobacco-report-2020/p114508fy20smokelesstobacco.pdf> [data for top 5 manufacturers only].
- <sup>11</sup> Pollay, R, et al., "The Last Straw? Cigarette Advertising and Realized Market Shares Among Youths and Adults," *Journal of Marketing* 60(2):1-16, April 1996.
- <sup>12</sup> 2019 NSDUH brand analysis, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s public online data analysis system (PDAS), analysis run August 10, 2021. Another survey, the 2016 NYTS, found that 78.7% of high school students prefer these three brands. CDC, "Cigarette Brand Preference and Pro-Tobacco Advertising Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2012-2016," *MMWR*, 67(4): 119-124, February 2, 2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/pdfs/mm6704a3-H.pdf>.
- <sup>13</sup> CDC, "Changes in the Cigarette Brand Preference of Adolescent Smokers, U.S. 1989-1993," *MMWR* 43(32):577-581, August, 1994, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00032326.htm>.
- <sup>14</sup> National telephone survey of 536 teens aged 12-17 conducted March 14-20, 2012 and 1,004 adults conducted March 14-20, 2012 by International Communications Research and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.2 percentage points for the teen survey and 3.1 percentage points for the adult survey.
- <sup>15</sup> Evans, N, et al., "Influence of Tobacco Marketing and Exposure to Smokers on Adolescent Susceptibility to Smoking," *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, October 1995.
- <sup>16</sup> Pierce JP, et al., "Tobacco Industry Promotion of Cigarettes and Adolescent Smoking," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 279(7):511-505, February 1998 [with erratum in *JAMA* 280(5):422, August 1998].
- <sup>17</sup> HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/>.