



SMOKING AND KIDS

- Each day, over 1,400 kids in the United States try their first cigarette; and about 90 additional kids under 18 years of age become new regular, daily smokers. That's approximately 33,000 new underage daily smokers in this country each year.¹
- 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.² Because adolescence is a critical period of growth and development, exposure to nicotine may have lasting, adverse consequences on brain development.³
- 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 19.⁴
- 2.9 percent of high school students are current smokers by the time they leave high school.⁵
- 1.9 percent (290,000) of all high school students (grades 9–12) are current smokers.⁶
- Roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from smoking-caused disease.⁷
- 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.⁸
- The tobacco companies spend over \$8.0 billion each year to promote their cigarettes—almost \$22 million every day—and much of that marketing directly reaches and influences kids.⁹
- Kids are more susceptible to cigarette advertising and marketing than adults.¹⁰ The heavily advertised brands, Marlboro, Camel, Natural American Spirit, and Newport are also overwhelmingly the most popular brands that youth smokers (12-17) report using in the past 30 days.¹¹ 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.¹² 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.¹³
- 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.¹⁴ 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.¹⁵ 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."¹⁶

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, December 14, 2023 / Hope Neuling

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>.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), HHS, *Results from the 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, NSDUH: Detailed Tables*, Table 4.10A, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2022-nsduh-detailed-tables>.

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- ² 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>.
- ³ 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, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK179276/pdf/Bookshelf_NBK179276.pdf. See also, HHS, *Prevention Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK99237/>.
- ⁴ 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, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK99237/> (p. 49).
- ⁵ University of Michigan, Monitoring the Future Study, 2023, <https://monitoringthefuture.org/data/bx-by/drug-prevalence/#drug=%22Cigarettes%22>
- ⁶ Birdsey, J, et al., "Tobacco Product Use Among U.S. Middle and High School Students — National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2023." *MMWR* 72(44):1173–1182, November 3, 2023, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/pdfs/mm7244a1-H.pdf>.
- ⁷ 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>.
- ⁸ HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 1994. See also, HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK99237/>. TFK factsheet, *Smoking's Immediate Effects on the Body*, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0264.pdf>.
- ⁹ U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), *Cigarette Report for 2022*, October 2023, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/2022-Cigarette-Report.pdf [data for top 4 manufacturers only].
- ¹⁰ HHS, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2012, <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sqr/2012/index.htm>. National Cancer Institute (NCI), *The Role of the Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use, Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No. 19*, 2008, http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/19/m19_complete.pdf.
- ¹¹ 2021 NSDUH brand analysis. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s public online data analysis system (PDAS), analysis run May 12, 2023.
- ¹² 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>.
- ¹³ 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.
- ¹⁴ 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.
- ¹⁵ 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].
- ¹⁶ HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2014, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK179276/pdf/Bookshelf_NBK179276.pdf.