

Tobacco Use

The following report is based on a portion of self-reported data from the 2002 Hamilton County Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), conducted among 2,752 Hamilton County students in grades 9 through 12. A total of 19 schools, including 16 public and 3 private schools, participated in the survey. The questionnaire was designed by the Centers for Disease Control with eight questions generated by the Chattanooga Hamilton County Regional Health Council. The questionnaire included 96 questions addressing behaviors concerning personal safety, violence, depression and suicidal thoughts, tobacco use, alcohol and drug use, sexual behaviors, diet, and exercise. Within the analysis, all discussions of differences between respondent groups are based on differences which are statistically significant.

The survey was administered in the classroom and relies on anonymous, self-reported responses.

Executive Summary

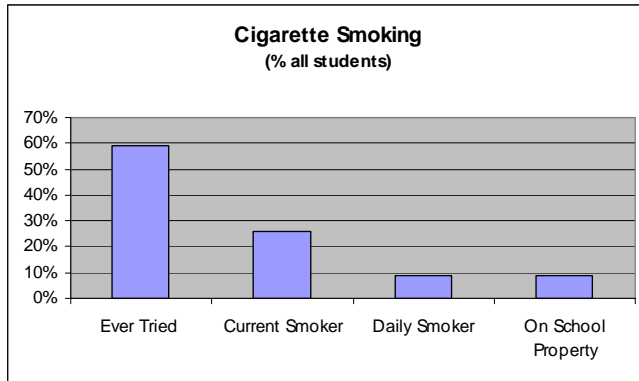
- ▼ Overall, 27% of respondents were current smokers. Sixteen percent of students had smoked a cigar, and 12% had used spit tobacco within the past month. In total, 35% of all students surveyed had either used cigarettes, spit tobacco, or cigars within the past month.
- ▼ Usage of each of the three types of tobacco products was significantly higher among males than females and among white students than black students. The differences were most striking when looking at spit tobacco, where males were over six times likely to use than females (20% vs. 3%) and white students were three times more likely to use than black students (13% vs. 4%).
- ▼ Twenty-three percent of students participating in team sports smoked cigarettes.
- ▼ One-third of smokers smoke less than one cigarette per day, and may be considered light smokers. Light smokers tended to be younger students. Over 40% of 9th grade smokers were light smokers, compared with 22% of 12th grade smokers.
- ▼ Both the incidence of smoking and the quantity of cigarettes smoked per day increased with grade level. Cigarette smoking increased from 23% of 9th grade students to 33% of 12th grade students. The percentage of smokers who were heavy smokers (more than ten cigarettes per day) increased from 11% in 9th grade to 21% in 12th grade. Heavy smokers comprised 16% of all smokers.
- ▼ Fifty-seven percent of current smokers surveyed have unsuccessfully tried to quit within the past year. However, 5% of all students surveyed have quit a daily smoking habit. There were no statistically significant differences by sex, race, or grade in school between the quitters and those who have attempted to quit.
- ▼ The three most common ways students obtained cigarettes were having someone else purchase them (28%), purchasing them on their own (27%), and borrowing them (22%). Other methods for obtaining cigarettes included: stealing (4%), getting from people age 18 or older (2%), vending machine (1%), or some other unspecified way (10%). Of the 363 students who had recently purchased or tried to purchase cigarettes, 57% were asked to show proof of age.
- ▼ Both smokers and non-smokers engaged in other risky behaviors, although smokers did so at higher rates. Most notably, smokers were 13 times more likely to have used cocaine (26% vs. 2%), ten times more likely to have used methamphetamine (30%

vs. 3%), nine times more likely to have used ecstasy (28% vs. 3%), and almost six times more likely to use marijuana in the past month (58% vs. 10%).

I. Cigarette Use

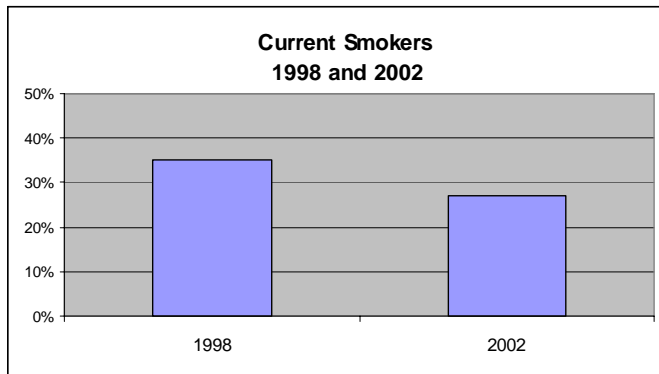
A. General

About six out of ten students have ever tried cigarette smoking. Twenty-six percent of students smoked at least one cigarette in the past month, and are considered current smokers. Nine percent of all students were daily smokers, having smoked on each of the past thirty days. Nine percent of students reported smoking on school property one or more times in the past month.



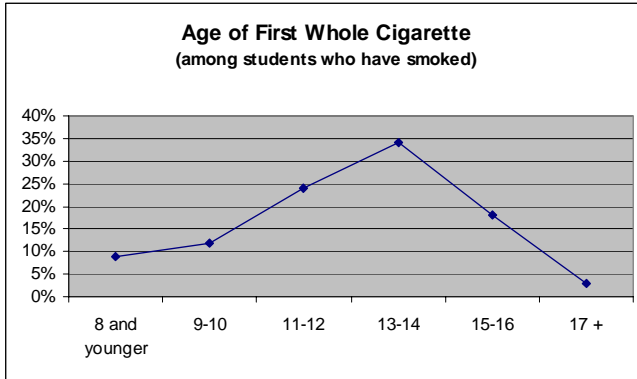
B. Comparison to 1998 YRBS

The relative number of students who smoked cigarettes on one or more of the previous thirty days (current smokers) declined eight percentage points since the 1998 survey (from 35% to 27%).



C. Initiation of Smoking

Seventy-nine percent of students who ever smoked cigarettes smoked their first whole cigarette by age fourteen.

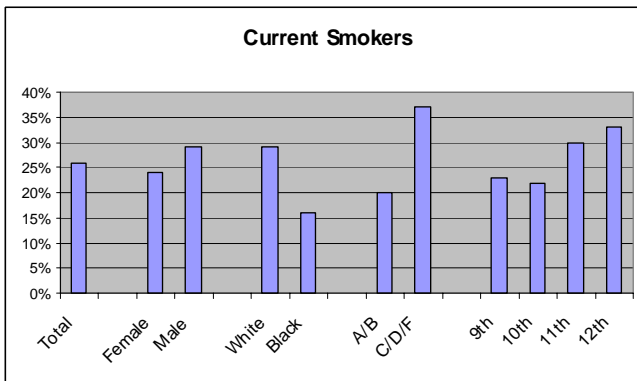


D. Current Smokers

1. Demographics

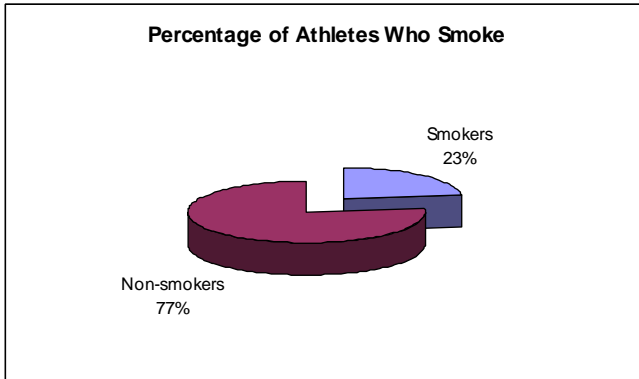
Twenty-six percent of all students are current smokers. Smoking is more common among:

- ▼ Male students than female students (29% vs. 24%)
- ▼ White students black students (29% vs. 16%)
- ▼ Poorer performing students (mostly C's, D's, or F's) than better performing students (mostly A's and B's) (37% vs. 20%)
- ▼ 12th grade students, and decreases with grade level (12th – 33%; 11th – 30%; 10th – 22%; 9th – 23%).



2. Smoking and Athletics

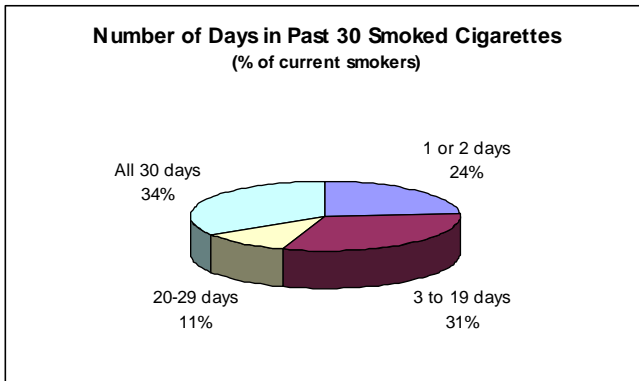
Twenty-three percent of students playing one or more team sports are current smokers.



E. Frequency and Amount of Smoking

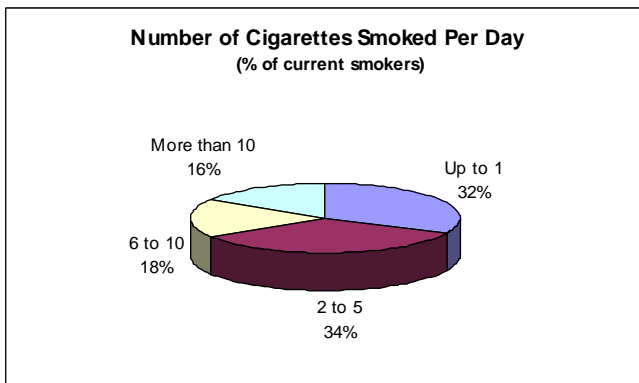
1. Frequency

One-fourth of current smokers smoked on only one or two days in the previous month. Thirty-four percent of smokers smoked all 30 days.



2. Number Cigarettes Smoked Per Day

A third of current smokers reported smoking no more than one cigarette per day on the days they smoked. Sixteen percent of smokers smoked more than ten cigarettes per day on the days they smoked.

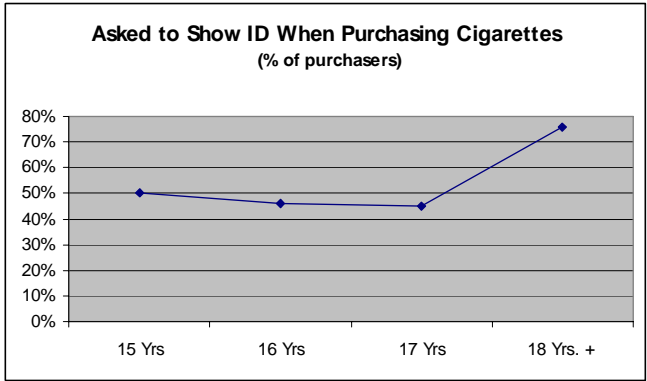


F. Access to Cigarettes and Proof of Age

When asked how they usually got their own cigarettes, the most frequent response was having someone else buy them (28%), followed by purchasing in a store (27%), borrowing (22%), getting from someone age eighteen or older (8%), stealing (4%), and vending machines (1%).

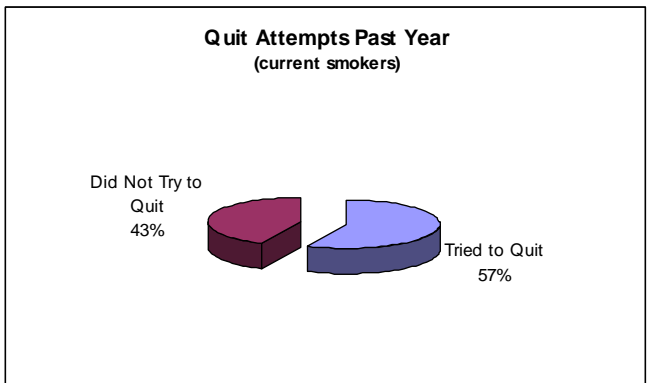
How Usually Get Cigarettes	%
Had someone buy for me	28%
I bought in a store	27%
Borrowed them	22%
Stole them	4%
Person 18+ gave to me	2%
Vending machine	1%
Other	10%

Of the 363 students who bought or tried to buy cigarettes in a store in the past thirty days, 57% were asked to provide proof of age. Ironically, as a student gets older, his chance of being asked to show proof of age increases, from 50% of fifteen year olds, to 76% of students age 18 or older. Younger students probably know which stores don't ask for identification and shop there. Students of legal age may purchase cigarettes anywhere and probably patronize establishment who routinely ask for identification.



G. Quitting Attempts

Fifty seven percent of current smokers have tried to quit within the past year.



H. Successful Quitters

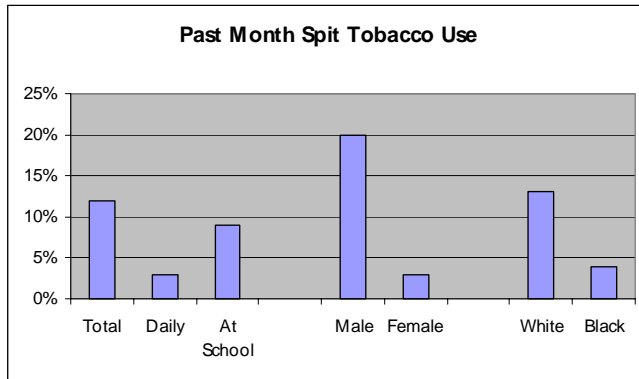
One out of four students who had ever been a daily smoker has quit smoking. These successful quitters make up 5% of the students surveyed.

II. Other Tobacco Products

A. Spit Tobacco

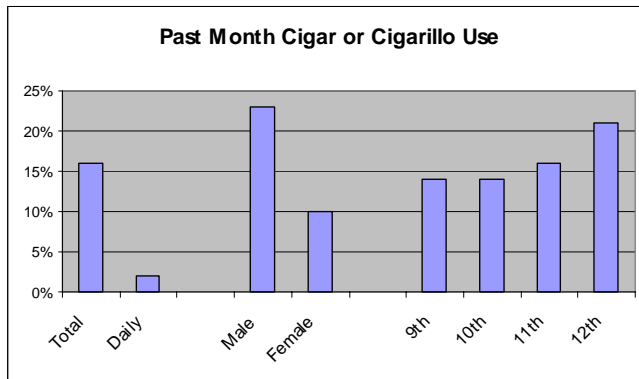
Overall, 12% of students reported using spit tobacco within the past month, with 3% of students using it daily. Seven percent of all students used spit tobacco on school property within the past month. Spit tobacco use was more common among:

- ▼ Males than females (20% vs. 3%)
- ▼ White students than black students (13% vs. 4%)



B. Cigar Use

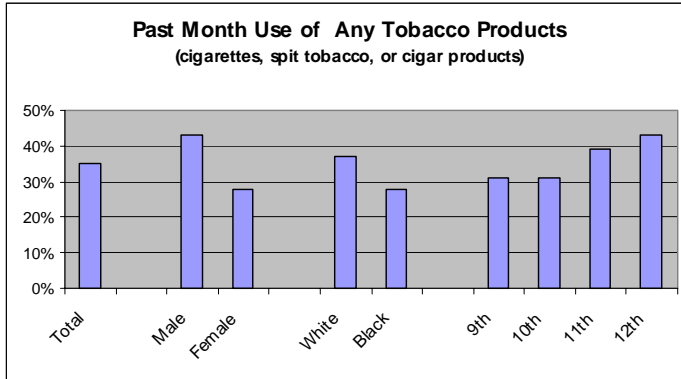
Overall, 16% of students reported smoking a cigar, cigarillos, or little cigars within the past month, with 2% of students smoking daily. Cigar smoking is more prevalent among male students than among female students (23% vs. 10%). Cigar use among 9th through 11th grade students hovers around 15% and increases to 21% among 12th grade students.



C. Total Tobacco Use

Overall, 35% of students reported using cigarettes, spit tobacco, or cigars within the past 30 days. Tobacco products use was higher among:

- ▼ Males than females (43% vs. 28%)
- ▼ White students than black students (37% vs. 28%)
- ▼ 12th grade students, and decreases by grade (12th – 43%; 11th – 39%; 10th – 31%; 9th 31%)



III. Cigarette Use and Other Risky Behaviors

Students who smoke cigarettes are significantly more likely than non-smokers to engage in each of the risk behaviors studied. Some of the more notable behaviors are listed below. It is important to recognize, however, that non-smokers also engage in risky behaviors, albeit at lower levels.

<u>Risk</u>	<u>Smoker</u>	<u>Non-Smoker</u>
Alcohol Use (past month)	76%	25%
Sexual Intercourse (past 3 months)	73%	34%
Participated in Oral Sex (ever)	72%	35%
Marijuana Use (past month)	58%	10%
Riding With Drinking Driver (past month)	49%	18%
Methamphetamine Use (ever)	30%	3%
Ecstasy Use (ever)	28%	3%
Cocaine Use (ever)	26%	2%
Huffing (past month)	12%	2%