

# Tobacco Use

In the United States, one out of four high school seniors smokes cigarettes. Moreover, every day close to 4,000 youth under the age of eighteen try their first cigarette. However, cigarettes are not the only threat; both smokeless tobacco and cigars jeopardize the health of adolescents as well. On average, those who use tobacco die approximately thirteen years earlier than their non-tobacco-using counterparts. <sup>1</sup>

## Youth Initiation of Tobacco Use

Almost all smokers start at a young age. The younger a person is when they start using tobacco, the more likely they are to use it as an adult. Unfortunately those who start regularly using tobacco when they are younger are also more likely to have trouble quitting than people who start later in life.

According to the 2012 Surgeon General's Report<sup>1</sup>, very few people start smoking after 25 years of age: Ninety-nine percent of adult smokers first smoked by age 26. Nearly nine out of 10 adult smokers had their first smoke by age 18.

## Why Should We Be Concerned?

Tobacco use has many negative health consequences. Adolescents and young adults who regularly use tobacco products have such problems as:

- Coughing spells
- Shortness of breath, even when not exercising
- Wheezing or gasping
- More frequent headaches
- Respiratory illnesses that are worse and happen more often
- Worse cold and flu symptoms
- Reduced physical fitness
- Poor lung growth and function
- Worse overall health

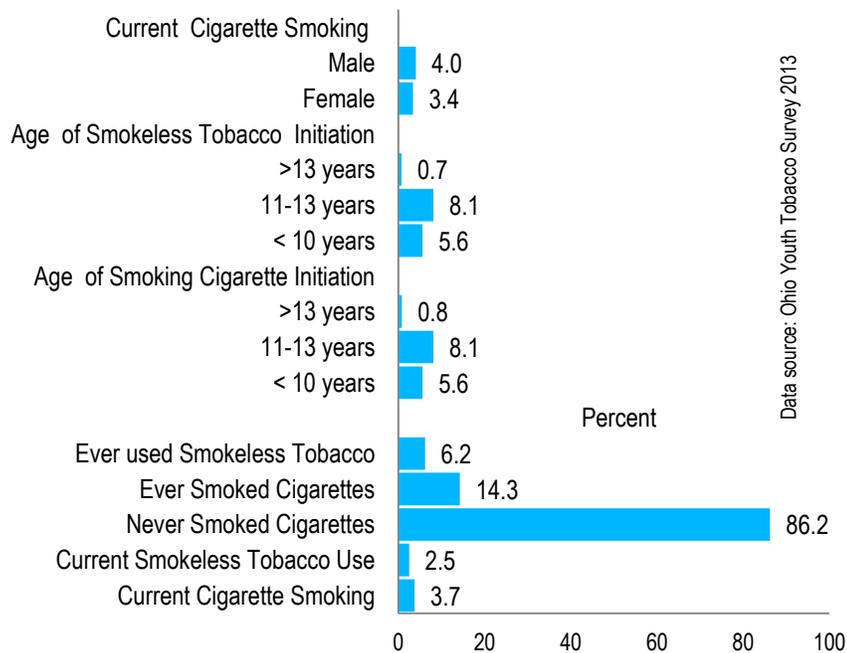
## How Does Ohio Compare With the Rest of the Nation?

The majority of Ohio's youth do not use tobacco products. In 2013, 86.2 percent of youth in grades 6 through 8 did not use tobacco. Similarly, in 2011 less than one-third, (27.9 percent), of teens in grades 9 through 12 reported using tobacco in the past month.<sup>2</sup>

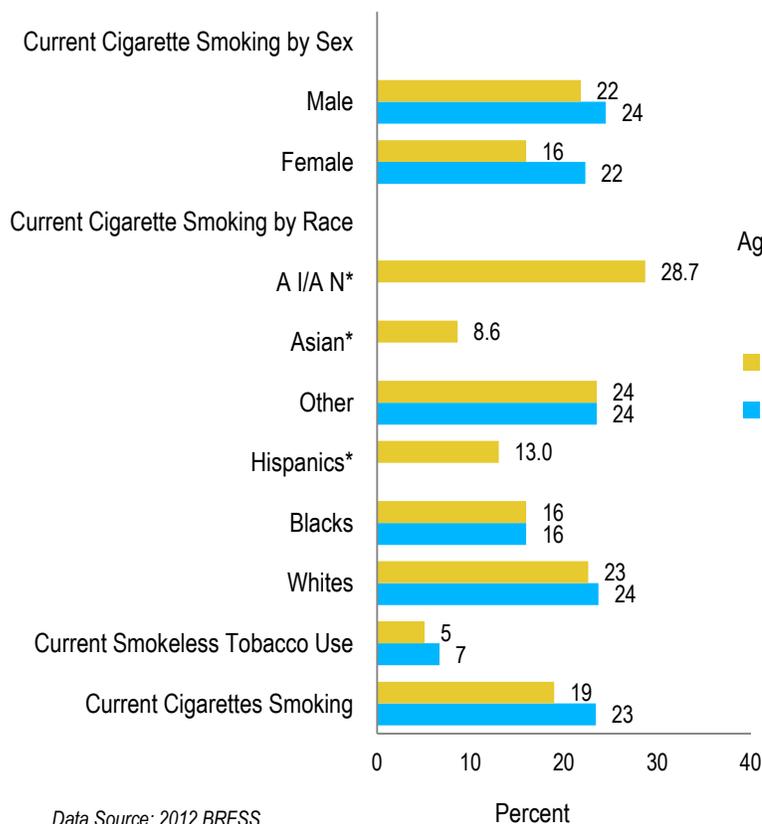
However Ohio exceeds the nation in some types of tobacco use:<sup>3</sup>

- Age of initiation - Ohio teens were more likely to start smoking before age 13 (14.2 percent) compared to the rest of the nation (10.3 percent).
- Heavier smoking - 9.5 percent of Ohio teens reported smoking cigarettes on 20 or more of the past 30 days the compared to 6.4 percent nationally.
- Smokeless tobacco – 12.2 percent of Ohio teens reported chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip in the past 30 days compared to 7.7 percent in the rest of the nation. This rate put's Ohio adolescent's smokeless tobacco use at nearly double the Healthy People 2020 objective of 6.9 percent.

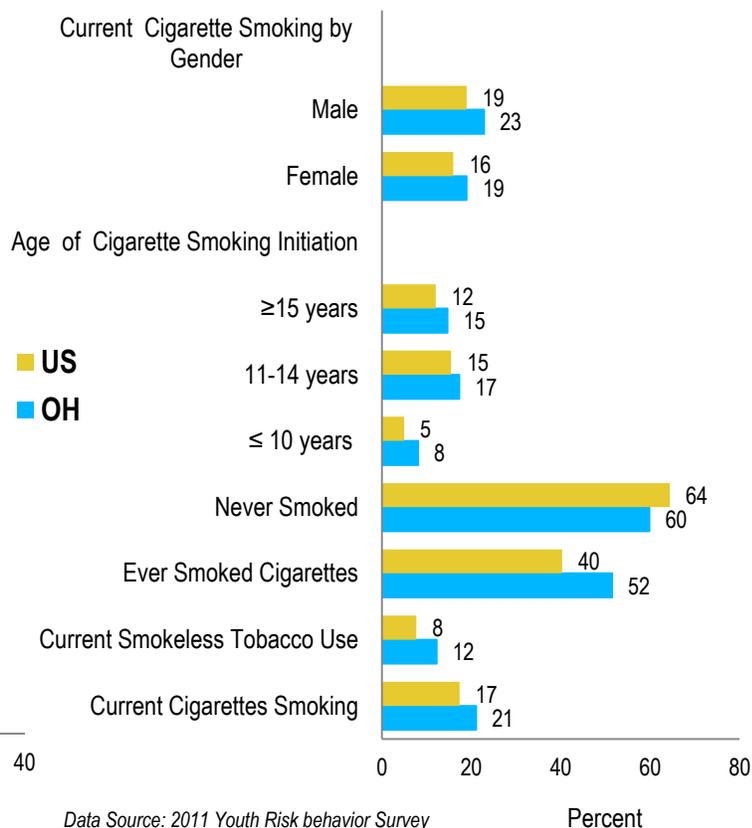
## Percentage of Ohio Middle School Students Who Used Tobacco, 2013



## Percentage of Current Smoker Young Adults (Ages 18-44), Ohio and US, 2012



## Percentage of High School Students Who Used Tobacco, Ohio and US, 2011



## What Is Being Done in Ohio to Reduce Youth Tobacco Use?

The Ohio Department of Health Tobacco Program is dedicated to reducing the burden of tobacco use in Ohio and to reducing associated health effects of Tobacco by working with partners to accomplish three major goals:

1. Prevent youth initiation of tobacco use.
  - Encourage schools and college campuses to develop and implement tobacco-free policies on their campuses
  - Monitors youth tobacco use rates through various statewide and national surveys
2. Promote cessation of tobacco use among current tobacco users.
  - Ohio Tobacco Quit Line (1-800-QUIT-NOW) provides free telephone counseling and nicotine replacement therapy to eligible callers
  - Work to increase eligibility for the Quit Line by coordinating the Ohio Tobacco Collaborative, a public-private partnership to engage employers and health insurance companies in promoting tobacco cessation
  - Media campaigns to increase calls to the Quit Line and QuitLogix, a free online cessation program available to all Ohioans
3. Reduce the presence and impact of secondhand smoke in the environment.
  - Enforcement of Ohio's Smoke Free Workplace Law
  - Encourage adoption of smoke-free multi-unit housing policies and tobacco-free schools and colleges
  - Funding for the Tobacco Program comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health and from State of Ohio general revenue funds.

\*Data Note: No adequate reportable sample size for Asian, American Indian, Alaska Natives and Hispanics for Ohio

### References

1. Surgeon General. (2012). *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults*. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
2. <http://healthyohioprogram.org/healthylife/cppw/cppwtobacco/cppwtob.aspx>
3. [http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/chss/ad\\_hlth/YouthRsk/youthrsk1.aspx](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/chss/ad_hlth/YouthRsk/youthrsk1.aspx)
4. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/tobacco/facts.htm>
5. [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/bp\\_userguide\\_youth/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/bp_userguide_youth/index.htm)

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