



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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HAWAI'I PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORT SMOKING LESS

HONOLULU – Lt. Governor James R. “Duke” Aiona, Jr. and the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Program today released a study that shows fewer youth identifying themselves as smokers. The Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) also found fewer youth experimenting with cigarettes as well as being exposed to second-hand smoke.

“I’m very proud that more of our Hawai'i youth are making the right decision not to smoke,” said Lt. Governor Aiona. “The data demonstrates that the work of our statewide network of tobacco prevention and control partners is making a positive difference.”

The survey, administered jointly by the Department of Health and Department of Education to public school students in grades 6 - 12, is conducted every two years.

“After the dramatic reductions in youth smoking from the 2003 YTS data, we are really pleased to see that our progress continues,” said Deputy Director of Health Resources Morgan Barrett, M.D. “When we started collecting data on youth smoking in 1993, youth smoking rates for high school were 28.2 percent; now they are less than one third that number (9.7 percent).”

While the YTS results are positive, there is still concern that younger people who smoke are reporting more diverse ways to obtain cigarettes, including using the Internet. Therefore, parents need to be watchful of their children's online activities.

Additionally, the tobacco industry is increasing the marketing of smokeless tobacco products and other tobacco products that appeal to youth. The smokeless tobacco rates among Hawai'i's youth has slightly increased from 2005 and DOH will continue to closely monitor these rates.

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Program initiatives over the past decade that represent the state's comprehensive approach to tobacco control include: increases in the price of cigarettes; the creation and enforcement of laws preventing youth access to tobacco products; the adoption of smoke-free indoor air laws and policies on school campuses and in workplaces; conducting an aggressive youth-focused anti-tobacco media and counter-marketing campaign; improvements in school curriculum; enhanced data collection, surveillance and program evaluation; youth involvement in tobacco prevention and control; and the implementation of a smoking cessation Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW.)

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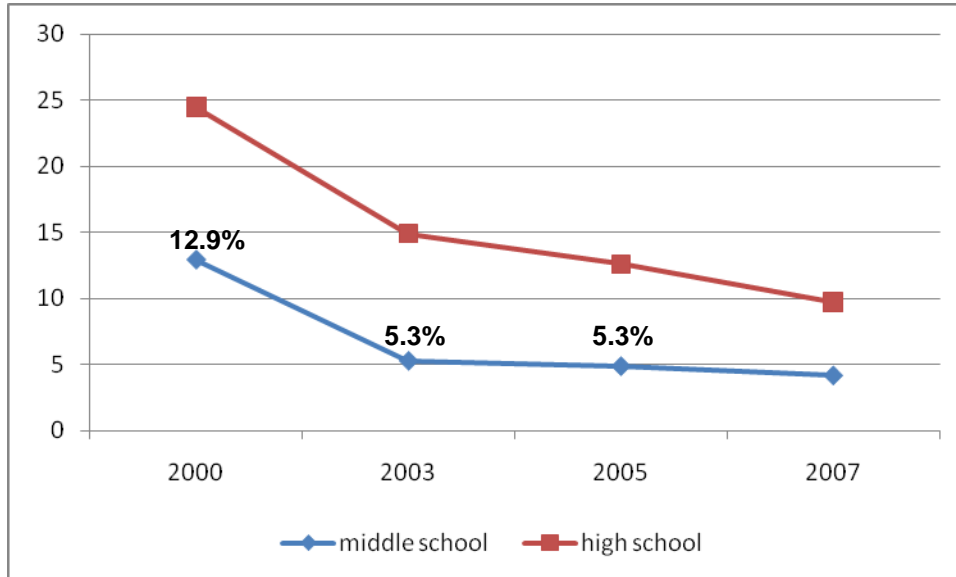
Tobacco Fact Sheet

The Hawaii Youth Tobacco Survey is a bi-annual survey administered by the Departments of Health and Education to public school students in grades 6 - 12. In all, 1,172 students from 27 schools participated in the middle school survey and 1,211 students from 27 schools participated in the high school survey. The survey results are weighted to be representative of the public school population in Hawaii.

Results from the survey, conducted in the fall of 2007, revealed that:

- **Fewer young people report experimenting with cigarettes**, with the proportions ever trying cigarettes plummeting from 38.4% in 2000 to only 14.7% in 2007 among middle school students and from 63.3% in 2000 to 38.3% in 2007 among high school students.
- **Fewer young people report being current smokers** (those who have smoked on at least one of the past 30 days). Only 9.7% of high school students reporting current smoking (down from 24.5% in 2000) and only 4.2% of middle school students reporting current smoking (down from 12.9% in 2000).
- **Fewer young people report being exposed to secondhand smoke (SHS)**, with only about one-third (35.5%) of middle school students reporting being exposed to SHS in a room in the past week (down from 53.7% in 2000) and 45.5% of high school students reporting SHS exposure (down from 68% in 2000).
- However, **young people who smoke are reporting more diverse ways to obtain tobacco**. There has been an increase in both middle and high school students reporting obtaining cigarettes from non-usual sources, including the internet.

Current Smoking Among Hawaii Youth, YTS, 2000-2007:



Prevalence of selected tobacco indicators by public school type, Hawaii Youth Tobacco Survey 2000, 2003, 2005 and 2007								
Tobacco Indicator	Middle School				High School			
	2000 %	2003 %	2005 %	2007 %	2000 %	2003 %	2005 %	2007 %
Ever smoked cigarettes (even 1 or 2 puffs)	38.4	21.1	20.1	14.7	63.3	47.8	43.5	38.3
Currently smoke cigarettes (in the past month)	12.9	5.3	4.9	4.2	24.5	14.9	12.6	9.7
Students reporting "some other way" to obtain tobacco (not from stores, family members , borrowing them etc.)	25.9	25.1	25.0	33.9	10.8	16.6	13.2	18.5
Students reporting most recent purchase of tobacco from the internet	2.7	1.2	1.5	7.0	0.7	1.2	1.6	2.7
Exposed to secondhand smoke in a room in the past week (among students who never smoked)	53.7	40.0	39.6	35.5	68.0	57.6	56.4	45.4

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