

# Tobacco Use and Young People in New York

## TOBACCO USE BY YOUTH IN NEW YORK<sup>1</sup>

Current Smokers				
	2000	2002	2004	2006
<b>Middle School (grades 6-8)</b>	10.5%	6.3%	5.4%	4.1%
<b>High School (grades 9-12)</b>	27.1%	20.4%	18.5%	16.3%
Use of Other Tobacco Products*				
	2000	2002	2004	2006
<b>Middle School (grades 6-8)</b>	7.3%	7.3%	5.8%	4.3%
<b>High School (grades 9-12)</b>	18.1%	14.6%	12.7%	11.0%

\* Other Tobacco includes chewing tobacco, cigars/cigarillos, pipe tobacco, bidis, and clove cigarettes.

- ⊗ In 2006, the prevalence of youth smoking declined faster in New York than the country as a whole.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ Over 27,700 youths under age 18 in New York become new daily smokers each year.<sup>2</sup>
- ⊗ 40% of middle school and 54% of high school smokers say they want to quit smoking.<sup>3</sup>
- ⊗ 389,000 youth ages 0-17 are projected to die from smoking.<sup>4</sup>

## PHYSICAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF TOBACCO USE ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Many people think that the serious harm from smoking doesn't appear until at least middle age. But smoking by young people is associated with significant health problems including:<sup>5</sup>

- ⊗ Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, and lower tolerance for exercise;
- ⊗ More frequent sinus infections, colds, and pneumonias;
- ⊗ Wheezing, persistent coughs, asthma attacks, and increased phlegm production;
- ⊗ Bad breath, tooth decay, and gum disease;
- ⊗ Increased stress;
- ⊗ They are more likely to report their health as poor compared to non-smoking youth.

## MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF TOBACCO USE ON YOUNG PEOPLE

- ⊗ Emerging research indicates that nicotine in tobacco products can cause changes in the developing brain that make young people at risk for alcohol and other drug use as well as certain mental disorders.<sup>6</sup>
- ⊗ Compared to non-smokers, teens ages 12 to 17 who currently smoke are twice as likely to have had a major depressive episode in the past year.<sup>6</sup>

- ⊗ Individuals who initiated smoking at age 12 or younger are almost 2 times as likely to report psychological distress as those who initiated smoking at age 16 or older.<sup>6</sup>
- ⊗ Compared to nonsmokers, teens ages 12-17 who are current smokers are:<sup>6</sup>
  - 5 times more likely to be current drinkers;
  - Over 13 times more likely to use marijuana;
  - Over 7 times more likely to currently use an illicit drug other than marijuana.

## NICOTINE ADDICTION IN YOUTH

- ⊗ The younger people start smoking, the more likely they are to become addicted.<sup>5</sup>
- ⊗ Symptoms of addiction can occur before becoming a daily smoker.<sup>7</sup>
- ⊗ In New York, 38% of middle school smokers and almost 50% of high school smokers say they cannot go more than a day before feeling the need for a cigarette.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RTI International. (2007). *Independent Evaluation of New York's Tobacco Control Program Final Report 2007*. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International.

<sup>2</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. (2005). The toll of tobacco in New York. Retrieved on April 25, 2007 from [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org).

<sup>3</sup> New York State Department of Health. (2006). *New York State Youth Tobacco Survey 2006*. Albany, NY: Tobacco Control Program, New York State Department of Health. Unpublished data.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2007). *Best practices for comprehensive tobacco control programs*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. October, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1994). *Preventing tobacco use among young people—a report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>6</sup> National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. (2007). Tobacco: The Smoking Gun Prepared for The Citizens' Commission to Protect the Truth. A CASA\* White Paper. *The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University*. October, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> DiFranza, J.R., Rigotti, N.A., McNeill, A.D., Ockene, J.K., Savageau, J.A., St. Cyr, D, et al. (2000). Initial symptoms of nicotine dependence in adolescents. *Tobacco Control* 9, 313-19.