

Part 1: Current tobacco smoking behaviour

A key indicator of tobacco smoking uptake is experience of smoking – whether or not students had ever smoked a cigarette, even 'just one or two puffs'. Early smoking initiation (smoking/trying first cigarette before the age of 10) is a predictor of risk for tobacco use later in life. This section describes the prevalence of students who had 'ever smoked', those who initiated tobacco smoking before the age of 10, and 'current smokers'. Further analyses were conducted using the sub-sample of students who smoke at least daily, weekly or monthly ('current smokers') to explore specific smoking behaviours related to settings, preferred type of cigarettes and tobacco access and supply.

'Ever smoked' a cigarette, even just a few puffs

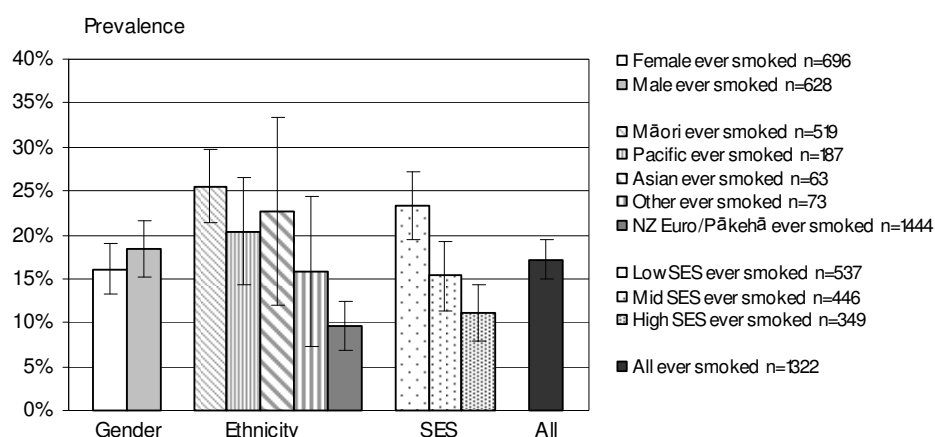
Over two in five students (44.0%) had 'ever smoked' a cigarette, 'even just one or two puffs'. A higher proportion of Māori students had 'ever smoked', compared with Pacific and New Zealand European/Pākehā students (68.4%, 52.4% and 36.6%, respectively). There was a higher proportion of female Māori students who had 'ever smoked' a cigarette, compared with male Māori students (75.3% and 62.0%, respectively). Students from low decile schools were more likely to have 'ever smoked' a cigarette than students from mid or high decile schools (57.3%, 33.3% and 44.0%, respectively).

Age of smoking initiation

Close to one in five students (17.2%), who had 'ever smoked' a cigarette had their first cigarette before 10 years of age (See Figure 1.1). Māori students were more likely to report having tried their first cigarette before the age of 10 than New Zealand European/Pākehā students (25.5% and 9.6%, respectively). A higher proportion of students from low decile schools had initiated smoking before the age of 10, compared with students from high decile schools (23.3% and 11.0%, respectively).

¹ Important note: While overall smoking prevalence is measured in the YIS, the official statistics for youth smoking prevalence are reported in the ASH Year 10 Snapshot survey. The official statistics in 2008 are that two in five students have 'ever smoked' (39.5%; 12.0% are regular smokers) and three in five have never smoked (60.5%).

Figure 1.1 Early smoking initiation (before age 10) – all students who had 'ever smoked' a cigarette by gender, ethnicity and SES (using school decile)



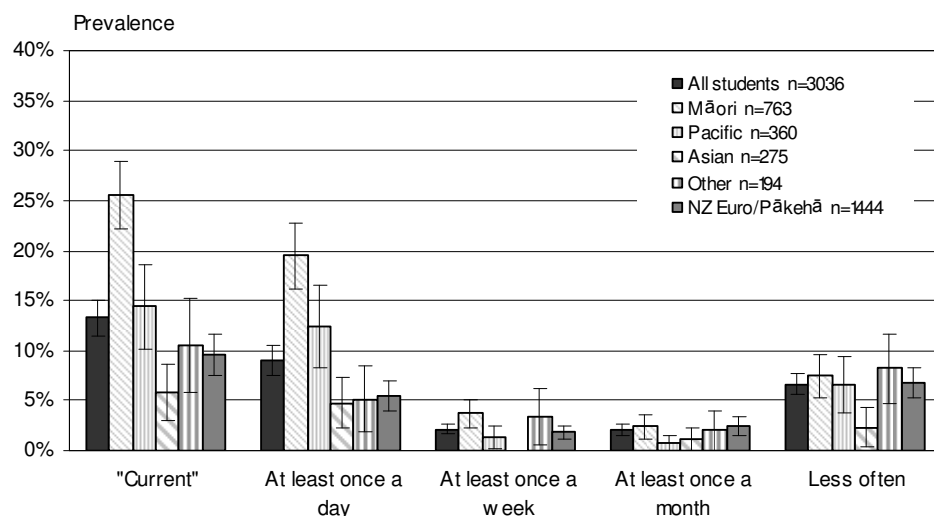
Frequency of smoking behaviour at time of survey

When asked how often they smoked at the time of the survey, most students said they had either never smoked a cigarette or did not smoke 'now' (80.1%, Figure 1.2).

Over one in ten students (13.3%) were classified as 'current smokers', reporting that they smoke at least *once a day* (9.0%), *once a week* (2.1%), or *once a month* (2.1%). Around one-quarter (25.5%) of Māori students said that they currently smoke compared with Pacific and New Zealand European/Pākehā students (14.4% and 9.6%, respectively). A higher proportion of female students were 'current smokers', compared with male students (16.0% and 10.8%, respectively). A lower proportion of students from high decile schools were 'current smokers', compared with students from low decile schools (8.1% and 19.8%, respectively).

Fewer than one in ten students (9.0%) indicated that they smoke *at least once a day*, with higher prevalence of daily smoking among Māori and Pacific students than among New Zealand European/Pākehā students (19.5%, 12.4% and 5.4%, respectively). The prevalence of daily smoking was particularly high among Māori female students (28.6%).

Figure 1.2 Frequency of smoking behaviour at time of survey – all students by ethnicity



'Current smokers' - students who reported that they smoke at least daily, weekly, or monthly. The chart excludes students who reported that they had never smoked a cigarette, or were not smokers at the time of the survey (80.1%)

Behaviour of 'current smokers'

The remainder of Part 1 describes additional findings for 'current smokers' (students who reported that they smoke at least daily, weekly or monthly; n=420). Due to the small denominator for sub-group analyses such as ethnicity, confidence intervals are often large and significant differences cannot be established. These findings, therefore, should be interpreted with caution.

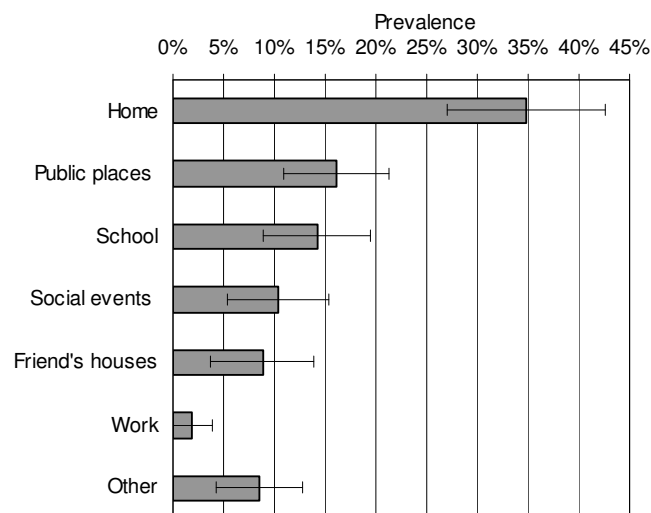
Setting for smoking behaviour

Overall, 'current smokers' usually smoked *at home* (34.8%), *at public places* (16.2%), *at school* (14.2%), *at social events* (10.4%) or *at friend's houses* (8.8%) See Figure 1.3.

Usual cigarette type

Students were asked to indicate the type of cigarette that they usually smoke. Over one-half of students (56.5%) who reported that they currently smoke usually smoked *roll-your-own* cigarettes and almost one-third of students (32.1%) usually smoked *ready-made* cigarettes. Māori students were more likely to smoke *roll-your-own* cigarettes, compared with Pacific students (67.5% and 41.6%, respectively). Conversely, one-half of Pacific students usually smoked *ready-made* cigarettes, compared with under a quarter of Māori students (49.6% and 23.0%, respectively).

Figure 1.3 'Usual' setting for smoking behaviour – all 'current smokers' (n = 420)



Preferred tobacco type

Students were asked to indicate what type of tobacco they *prefer* to smoke, and could select as many types as applied to them. Close to six in ten 'current smokers' (61.9%) prefer *regular* tobacco, just under one-quarter (22.7%) prefer *menthol* and a smaller proportion of students (18.6%) prefer *light, low tar or mild* tobacco.

The use of *any form of tobacco products other than cigarettes* (e.g., *chewing tobacco, snuff, dip cigars, cigarillos, little cigars, a pipe*) in the month prior to the survey was rare among participating students (6.9%), although over one-quarter of 'current smokers' had used other tobacco products in the month prior to the survey (27.6%).

Tobacco access and supply

In New Zealand, the sale of tobacco to anyone younger than 18 years of age is restricted by legislation. Asking students about their usual source of cigarettes gives an indication of the level of compliance with restrictions on tobacco sales, since participants in this survey (14 to 15-year-olds) are well below the legal age of purchase in New Zealand. In addition, building understanding of social supply from adults and peers is important for strategies to reduce young people's access to tobacco.

Usual source of cigarettes

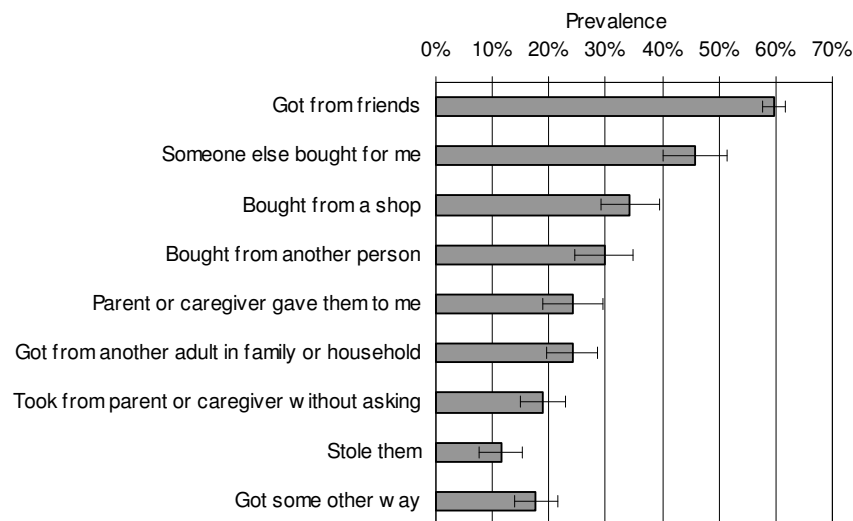
Students were asked to indicate all the places they got their own cigarettes in the month prior to the survey. 'Current smokers' said that they got their cigarettes *from friends* (59.8%, Figure 1.4), *someone else had bought them for me* (45.7%), they *bought them from a shop* themselves (34.3%) or they *bought them from another person* (29.8%).

A higher proportion of female students said that they got their cigarettes *from friends*, compared with male students (66.9% and 49.7%, respectively).

Almost one-quarter of 'current smokers' said that a *parent or caregiver gave them* cigarettes (24.2%) or that they *got them from another adult in the family or household* (24.1%). Māori students were more likely to report that they got their cigarettes *from another adult in the family or household*, compared with New Zealand European/Pākehā students (33.7% and 13.7%, respectively).

Just over one in ten 'current smokers' (11.5%) said that they *stole* cigarettes. A higher proportion of male students said that they *stole* cigarettes, compared with female students (18.0% and 6.9%, respectively).

Figure 1.4 Source of cigarettes – all 'current smokers' (n=420)



Access through retail sale

Responses to the previous question show that around one-third of 'current smokers' (34.3%) obtained their cigarettes by purchasing them from a shop. Students were asked to indicate which places they bought cigarettes from in the month prior to the survey, and how often they had done so for each retail outlet type.

Close to two-thirds of 'current smokers' (64.0%) reported that they bought cigarettes from a dairy in the month prior to the survey - either *four times or more* (21.6%) or *two to three times* (23.7%) or *once* (18.7%). Close to one quarter of the 'current smokers' (24.7%) reported that they had brought cigarettes from a liquor store or hotel in the month prior to the survey - either *four times or more* (8.3%), or *two to three times* (5.1%) or *once* (11.3%).

Around three in ten 'current smokers' reported buying cigarettes at least once from either a service station (31.9%) or from a supermarket (28.4%) in the month prior to the survey. However, most 'current smokers' had *never* bought cigarettes from a takeaway shop (88.1%) or a vending machine (86.3%) in the month prior to the survey. Female students were more likely to not have purchased cigarettes from a takeaway shop or a vending machine (94.3% and 93.5%, respectively), when compared to male students (77.6% and 74.2%, respectively).

Although the average age of students in this survey was four years below the legal age of purchase for tobacco, close to two in five 'current smokers' (38.2%) reported that they had *not been refused a sale of cigarettes because of their age* in the month prior to the survey. Over one in ten students (14.8%) said a retailer *had refused to sell them cigarettes* in the month prior to the survey because of their age. Less than one-half of 'current smokers' (47.0%) reported that they had *not tried to buy cigarettes* in the month prior to the survey.

Female students were more likely than male students to say that they had *not tried to buy cigarettes* in the month prior to the survey (53.8% and 37.5%, respectively). Māori students were also more likely than non-Māori students to say that they had *not tried to buy cigarettes* in the month prior to the survey (55.3% and 40.8%, respectively).

More than one-half of 'current smokers' (53.5%) had *not tried to buy cigarettes* in a store, in the month prior to the survey. Female students were more likely than male students to say that they had *not tried to buy cigarettes in a store*, in the month prior to the survey (61.3% and 42.9%, respectively).

One-third of 'current smokers' (33.3%) reported that they had *not been asked to show proof of age ID* when trying to buy cigarettes in a store, in the month prior to the survey, while just over one in ten (13.2%) had been *asked to show proof of age ID*.