

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

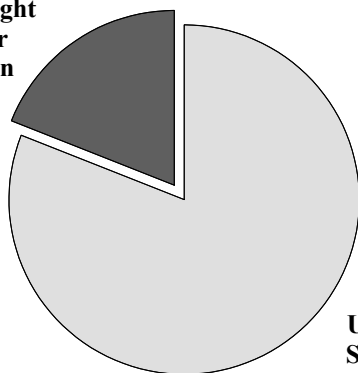
University of Maryland, College Park

One-Fifth of Underage Students Buy Their Own Cigarettes, Usually Without Proof of Age

Many students who smoke are able to purchase cigarettes without showing identification, according to a 2001 nationally representative survey of students in grades 9-12. During the 30 days before the survey, 19% of smoking students reported that they usually obtained their cigarettes by purchasing them from a store or gas station (as opposed to having someone else buy them for them, buying them from a vending machine, borrowing them from someone else, or taking them from a store or family member). Of these students, two-thirds (67%) did so without being asked to show proof of age. Since 1996, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories states have been required to have and enforce laws that prohibit the sale and distribution of tobacco products to people under 18 years of age.

One-Fifth of High School Students Who Smoke Usually Obtain Their Cigarettes at a Store or Gas Station . . .

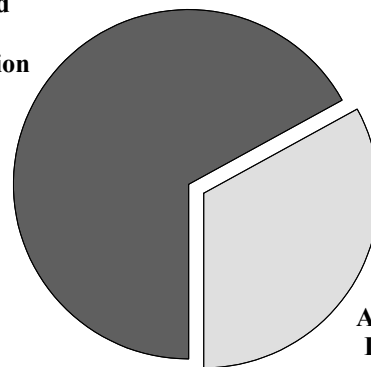
Usually Bought
at Store or
Gas Station
19%



Usually Obtained
Some Other Way
81%

And the Majority of These Smokers Were Not Asked to Show Proof of Age

Not Asked
to Show
Identification
67%



Asked to Show
Identification
33%

NOTE: The 2001 national school-based Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) employed a three-stage cluster sample design to produce a nationally representative sample of students in grades 9-12.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States, 2001," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 51(SS-4), June 28, 2002. Available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/ss/ss5104.pdf>.