

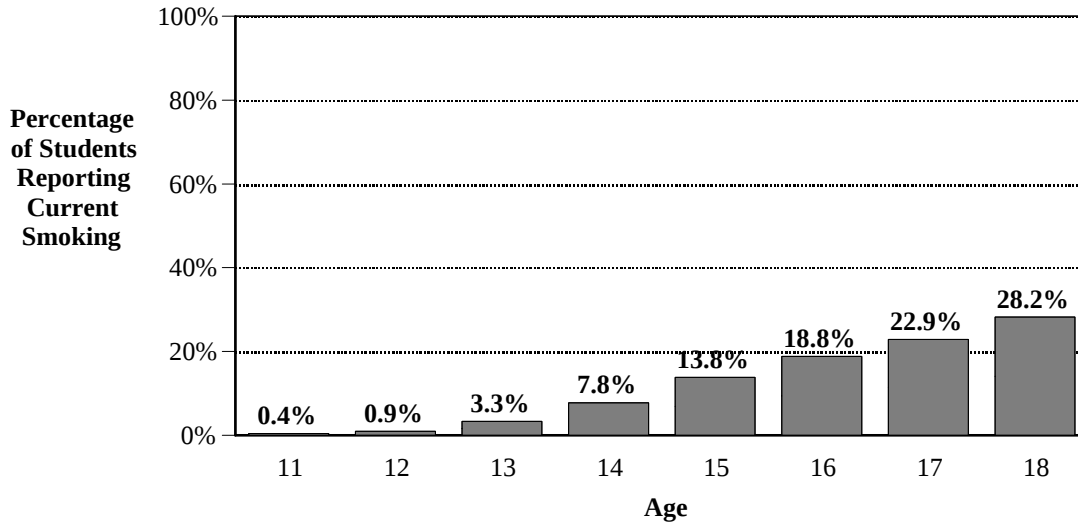
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Smoking Among Middle and High School Students Associated With Age

Age is strongly associated with the likelihood of current smoking, according to data from the 1999 and 2000 National Youth Tobacco Surveys (NYTS) of students in 455 middle and high schools across the U.S. Less than 1% of 11-year-old students reported that they were current smokers,* compared to 14% of 15-year-olds and 28% of 18-year-olds. Furthermore, approximately 40% of students aged 14 and older were not current smokers but reported experimenting with smoking (i.e. they had tried cigarettes but had smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their life), compared to 14% to 35% of younger students (data not shown). Additional analyses suggested that “exposure to smoking at home, peer smoking, and tobacco industry marketing are important risk factors for established smoking” and that “parental influences and school antismoking classes can slow or prevent progression to established smoking” (p. 336).

**Percentage of U.S. Middle and High School Students
Reporting Current Smoking, by Age, 1999 and 2000 Data Combined**
(N = 47,097)



*Current smokers are students who smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their life and have smoked on at least one of the past 30 days.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Mowery, P., Farrelly, M., Haviland, L., Gable, J., and Wells, H., “Progression to Established Smoking Among US Youths,” *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(2):331-337, 2004. For more information, contact Paul Mowery at pdm@rti.org.