

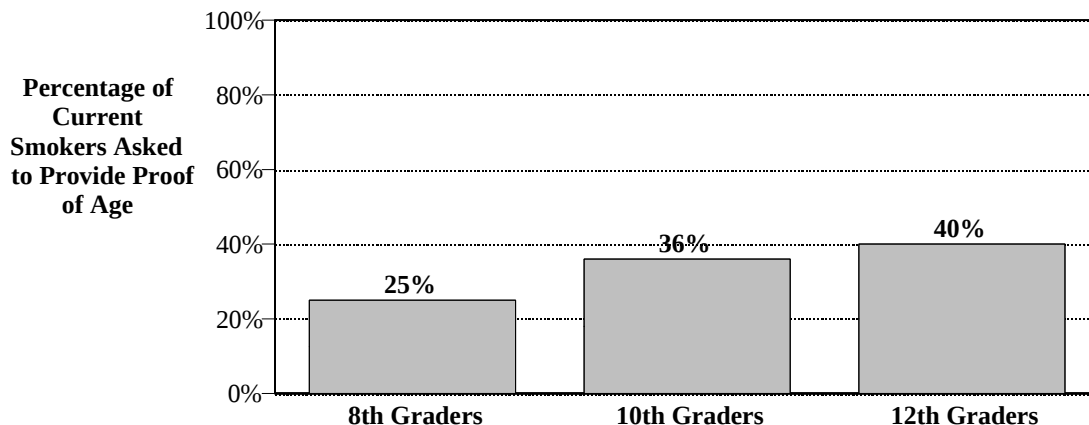
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

***Few Underage Smokers Asked to Provide Proof of Age When Purchasing Cigarettes;
Younger Smokers Least Likely to Be Carded***

Youth smokers in 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in the United States are rarely asked to provide proof of age when attempting to buy cigarettes, according to combined data from the 1997 to 2002 Monitoring the Future studies. Surprisingly, as the table below shows, the youngest smokers were least likely to be asked to provide identification, although the reasons for this are unclear (see box below). Since 1996, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories have been required to have and enforce laws that prohibit the sale and distribution of tobacco products to people under 18 years of age.

**Percentage of U.S. 8th, 10th, and 12th Grade Current Smokers
Asked to Provide Proof of Age at Their Last Cigarette Purchase Attempt,
1997 to 2002 Data Combined**



NOTES: Current smokers were asked "The last time that you tried to buy cigarettes in a store or gas station, were you asked for proof of age?" Current smokers are persons who had smoked at least once in the past 30 days.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P.M., and Terry-McElrath, Y.M. "Methods, locations, and ease of cigarette access for American youth, 1997-2002," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 27(4):267-276, 2004. For more information, contact Dr. Lloyd D. Johnston at (734) 763-5043.

Why Are Younger Youths Less Likely to Be Carded When Buying Cigarettes?

We would like to hear about any research findings as to why 8th grade students are least likely to be asked to provide proof of age when attempting to purchase cigarettes in stores or gas stations. Please email us at cesar@cesar.umd.edu with your comments. Thank you!

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