

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

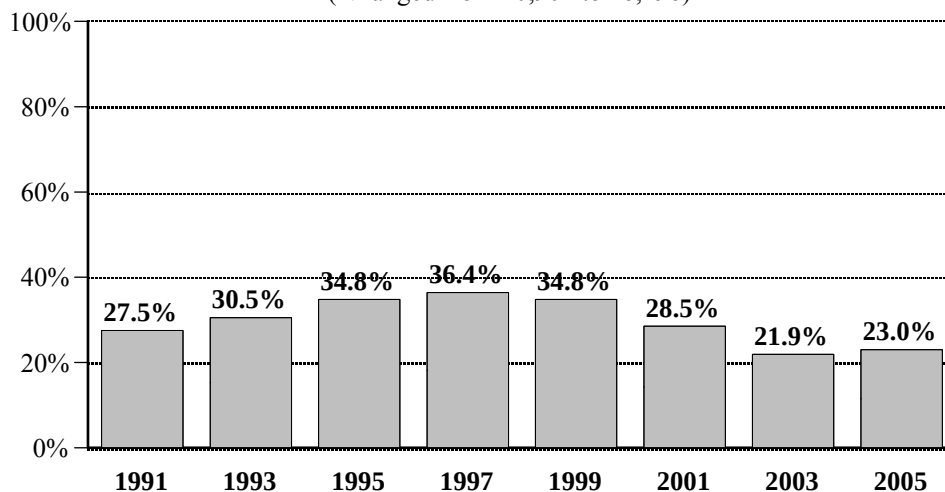
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***After Several Years of Decline,
Smoking Rates Among High School Students May Have Stalled***

“[T]he national decline in youth smoking observed during 1997–2003 might have stalled,” according to a recent CDC analysis of data from the national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (p. 725). While the prevalence of current cigarette use declined significantly from 36.4% in 1997 to 21.9% in 2003, there was no statistically significant difference in use from 2003 to 2005, which is consistent with trends observed in other national school-based surveys. According to the authors, factors that may have contributed to this lack of a continued decline include smaller annual increases in the prices of cigarettes, less youth exposure to and/or funding for smoking-prevention campaigns and programs, and substantial increases in spending by the tobacco industry on advertising and promotion. The authors note that “[t]he national health objective for 2010 of reducing current cigarette smoking among high school students to $\leq 16\%$. . . can be achieved only if the annual rate of decline observed during 1997–2003 resumes” (p. 726).

**Percentage of U.S. High School Students (Grades 9 to 12)
Who Reported Current Cigarette Use, 1991 to 2005**

(N ranged from 10,904 to 16,296)



NOTE: The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey uses independent, three-stage cluster samples to obtain cross-sectional data representative of public and private school students in grades 9 to 12 in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey is an anonymous, self-administered questionnaire.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “Cigarette Use Among High School Students—United States, 1991–2005,” *Morbidity and Mortality Monthly Report* 55(26)724–726, 2006. Available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5526a2.htm>.

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