

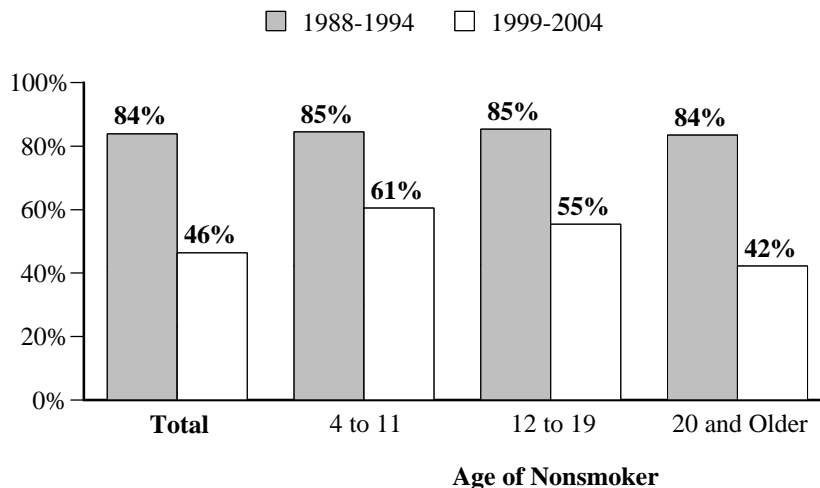
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

***Secondhand Smoke Exposure Decreases by Nearly Half Over Past Decade;
Smallest Decreases Seen in Young Children***

Fewer people were exposed to secondhand smoke (SHS) during the period from 1999 to 2004 than a decade earlier, according to a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Less than half (46%) of U.S. nonsmokers had a detectable serum cotinine level (a biological indicator of SHS exposure) during 1999-2004, compared to 84% in 1988-1994. The majority of this decrease stemmed from the change in SHS exposure among nonsmokers ages 20 and older (from 84% to 42%). Young children ages 4 to 11 had the smallest decreases in SHS exposure over the period (from 85% to 61%). According to the authors, these findings “underscore the need to continue surveillance of SHS exposure and to focus on strategies to reduce children’s SHS exposure” (p. 745), such as reducing parental smoking in the home.

Percentage of U.S. Nonsmokers with a Detectable Serum Cotinine Level



NOTES: Data are from the 1988-1994 and the 1999-2004 National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES). The sample size for nonsmokers in the 1988-1994 survey was 17,261 (ages 4 to 11 n=3,926; ages 12 to 19 n=2,508; ages 20 and older n=10,827). The sample size for nonsmokers in the 1999-2004 survey was 17,931 (ages 4 to 11 n=3,395; ages 12 to 19 n=5,127; ages 20 and older n=9,409).

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Disparities in Secondhand Smoke Exposure—United States, 1988-1994 and 1999-2004,” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports* 57(27):744-747, July 11, 2008. Available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5727.pdf>.