

Pennsylvania's Youth Tobacco Survey: A Tool for Promoting Student Health and Achievement

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Background

- People who smoke cigarettes are more likely to develop and die from certain diseases than people who don't smoke.
- Every day more than 3,200 children younger than 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette while another 2,100 youth and young adults become daily smokers due to tobacco industry marketing and other influences.
- The Pennsylvania Youth Tobacco Survey (PA YTS) is a tool used by the PA Department of Health (DOH) to collect data from students in grades 6-12 and enhances the capacity to design, implement, and evaluate tobacco prevention and control programs.
- Nearly all tobacco use begins during youth and if smoking continues at current rates, 5.6 million of today's children will ultimately die prematurely from a smoking-related illness. In Pennsylvania, an estimated 244,000 children and youth, ages 0-17, will become smokers and die prematurely as adults because of a smoking-related illness.

Purpose

- The PA YTS evaluates youth's knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco use, exposure to media and advertising, information on the enforcement of minors' access to tobacco products, presence of tobacco programs in school curricula, cessation attempts and successes, second-hand exposure, and use of other tobacco products.
- The PA YTS gives planners information to determine programs and policymakers and other stakeholders a way of monitoring outcomes.

Methods

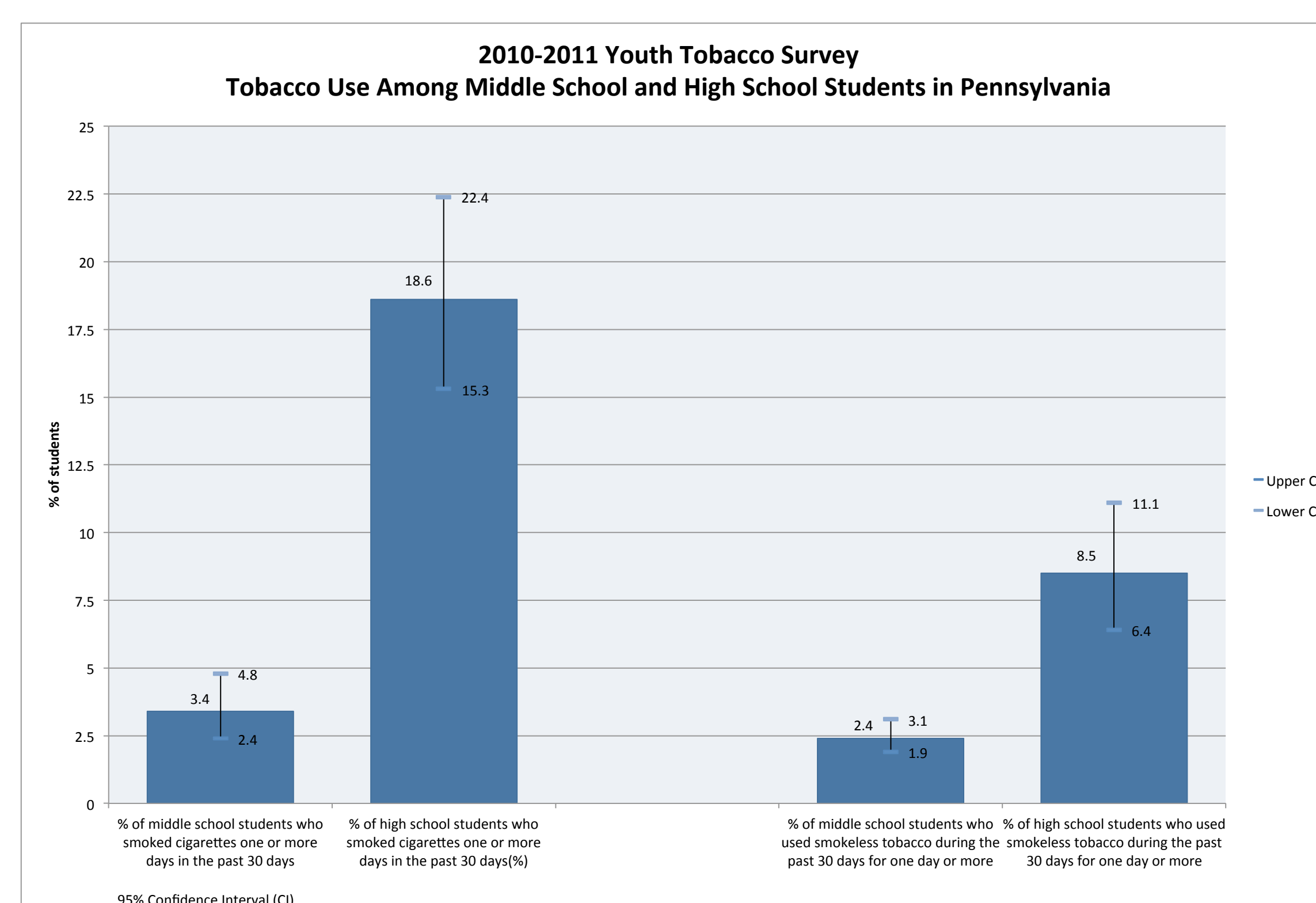
- The PA YTS was conducted during the fall and winter of the 2010-2011 school year and included 81 questions.
- Respondents for the 2010-2011 PA YTS were selected using a two-stage cluster sampling design to obtain a representative sample of public school students at the state level in grades 6-8 and grades 9-12.
- From the sample frames, 87 eligible high schools (HS) and 87 eligible middle schools (MS) were selected.
- Lists of classes were obtained from each participating school, and one to four classes were selected randomly from these class rosters.

School and Student Response Rates

	School			Student			Overall Participation Rate
	Selected	Participated	Participation Rate	Selected	Participated	Participation Rate	
Middle	87	66	75.9%	2,931	2,519	85.9%	65.2%
High	87	66	75.9%	2,844	2,320	81.6%	61.9%

Results

- The overall response rate for middle school was 65.2% and the overall response rate for high school was 61.9% (an overall response rate of 60% is required by CDC to represent all students in grades 6-12).
- 3.4% of youth in middle school and 18.6% of high school students smoked cigarettes for one or more days in the past 30 days.
- 2.4% of youth in middle school and 8.5% of high school students used smokeless tobacco for one or more days in the past 30 days.
- 67.4% of youth in middle school and 52.4% of high school students who smoked tried to quit one or more times in the past year.



52.4% HS

67.4% MS

Percent of Students who smoke and tried to quit one or more times in past year

Conclusions and Implications

- These findings improved program development, informed funding decisions, facilitated program monitoring, and supported health-related policies and legislation.
- Collaboration with the PA Department of Education is ongoing and includes combined administration of the 2014-2015 PA YTS and PA Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
- The collaborative efforts to collect data from a coordinated sample of Pennsylvania schools are expected to result in a more effective description of risk behaviors and school health policies and practices.
- Lessons learned from coordinated survey implementation can inform future partnerships.

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References

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