

FACTSHEET: YOUTH TOBACCO USE



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Tobacco Use Among High School Students in 2017

	Florida ¹	National ²
Current use of cigarettes	4.2 percent	7.6 percent
Current use of cigars	4.8 percent	7.7 percent
Current use of smokeless tobacco	2.8 percent	5.5 percent
Current use of hookah	6.2 percent	3.3 percent
Current use of electronic vaping (aka e-cigarette use)	15.7 percent	11.7 percent
Current tobacco users who reported using two or more products	47.5 percent	46.8 percent

* Current use is defined as having used a tobacco product in the past 30 days.

Progress in Florida

- Since the launch of the Tobacco Free Florida campaign, fewer teens have started smoking. The cigarette-smoking rate among Florida high school students dropped from 14.5 percent in 2007³ to 4.2 percent in 2017¹ – an astounding 71 percent decrease.
- In 2017, the cigarette-smoking rate among Florida high school students, which was 4.2 percent,¹ was significantly lower than the national rate of 7.6 percent.²
- In Florida, teen use of other traditional tobacco products has also seen significant declines.
 - The cigar use rate among Florida high school students dropped from 13.5 percent in 2007³ to 4.8 percent in 2017¹ – a 64.4 percent decrease.
 - The smokeless tobacco use rate among Florida high school students dropped from 5.7 percent in 2007³ to 2.8 percent in 2017¹ – an astounding 50.9 percent decrease.

Alarming Trends

- Nationally and in Florida, almost half of the high school students who were current tobacco users reported using two more tobacco products.^{1,2} Youth who use multiple tobacco products are at higher risk for developing nicotine dependence and might be more likely to continue using tobacco into adulthood.⁴
- E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among youth, surpassing conventional cigarettes in 2014 in Florida.¹
- In recent years, e-cigarette use (or electronic vaping) saw a rapid increase among Florida high school students, reaching up to 18 percent in 2016.⁵ The 2017 data was the first year

we saw a decline. However, the current e-cigarette use rate among Florida high school students was 15.7 percent in 2017 – far higher than any other tobacco product.¹

- E-cigarette use is associated with the use of other tobacco products among youth and young adults, including cigarettes and other burned tobacco products.⁶
- According to the 2012 Surgeon General’s Report on tobacco use among youth and young adults, tobacco product advertising causes young people to start using tobacco products. Much of today’s e-cigarette marketing uses a wide variety of media channels and approaches that have been used in the past for promoting conventional tobacco products to youth and young adults.⁷
- E-cigarettes are marketed by promoting flavors, including many that are especially appealing to youth. According to the 2016 Surgeon General’s Report on e-cigarette use among youth and young adults, more than 85 percent of e-cigarette users ages 12-17 use flavored e-cigarettes, and flavors are the leading reason for youth use.⁸
- Except for menthol, cigarettes can no longer contain flavoring that appeal to youth. However, tobacco companies can still include fruit and candy flavors in cigarette-sized cigars.⁹ Cigarette-sized cigars are also known as “little cigars” or “filtered cigars.”
- About as many Florida high school students currently smoke cigars as smoke cigarettes. In 2017, 4.8 percent of Florida high school students reported currently using cigars while 4.2 percent reported currently using cigarettes.¹
- It is important to note that cigars that are small, cheap, flavored, and shaped and sized like cigarettes contain the same deadly poisons as cigarettes and are just as addictive.¹⁰
- Hookah is the second most commonly used tobacco product among teens, after e-cigarettes. In 2017, 6.2 percent of Florida high school students reported currently using hookah.¹
- Although many users think it is less harmful, hookah smoking has many of the same health risks as cigarette smoking, according to the American Lung Association.^{11,12}

Preventing Youth Tobacco Use

- Preventing nicotine addiction among young people is critical to ending the tobacco epidemic.⁷ Tobacco use and addiction most often begin during youth and young adulthood. Nearly nine out of 10 cigarette smokers start by age 18.¹³
- Nicotine addiction is the fundamental reason people persist in using tobacco,¹⁴ which remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death.¹⁵
- Nicotine use among young people is a serious public health issue. Brain development continues until the early to mid-20s. Nicotine exposure during periods of significant brain development, such as adolescence, can disrupt the growth of brain circuits that control attention, learning, and susceptibility to addiction.¹⁶
- Cigarette smoking by youth can cause serious and potentially deadly health issues immediately and into adulthood. Young people who smoke are in danger of reduced lung function, reduced lung growth, and early cardiovascular damage.¹⁷

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- ¹ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2017.
- ² Wang TW, Gentzke A, Sharapova S, Cullen KA, Ambrose BK, Jamal A. Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2018;67:629–633. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6722a3>
- ³ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2007.
- ⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tobacco Use Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2013. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 2014;63(45):1021–6 [accessed 2015 Oct 14].
- ⁵ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2016.
- ⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.
- ⁷ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2012.
- ⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.
- ⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking —50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.
- ¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking —50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.
- ¹¹ American Lung Association. An Emerging Deadly Trend: Waterpipe Tobacco Use. Washington: American Lung Association, 2007 [accessed 2018 June 7].
- ¹² American Lung Association. Hookah Smoking: A Growing Threat to Public Health Issue Brief. Smokefree Communities Project, 2011 [accessed 2018 June 7].
- ¹³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2012.
- ¹⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2010.
- ¹⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking —50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.
- ¹⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.
- ¹⁷ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2012.