

# DOUGLAS COUNTY

## Results from the 2005/2006 Kansas Youth Tobacco Survey

The Kansas Youth Tobacco Survey contains in-depth information on the use of tobacco products, knowledge/beliefs of the impact of tobacco use, attitudes surrounding tobacco, and exposure to secondhand smoke. It is conducted every two years among students in grades 6-8 (Middle School/MS) and 9-12 (High School/HS) throughout the state. The results are used in program evaluation as well as in program planning. This document will contain major highlights of the 2005/2006 Youth Tobacco Survey.

### Current Trends in Tobacco Use

#### Cigarette Use

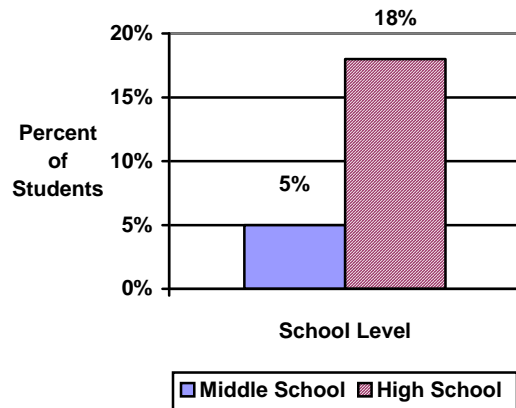
It is estimated that 50% of all cigarette smokers will die from their addiction.

- 5% of MS students say they are current smokers. This number was higher for HS (18%) which is 3 times higher than MS estimate.

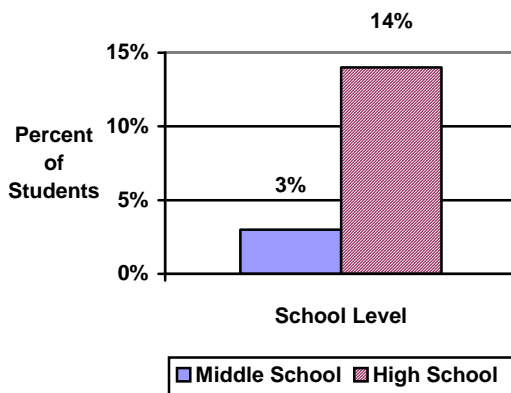
The addiction to nicotine is difficult to break, however an increased willingness to quit increases cessation success.

- 47% of current MS smokers and 51% of current HS smokers say they want to quit.
- Yet only 35% of the MS smokers who have tried to quit have stayed off cigarettes for 30 days or more, and 40% of HS smokers have had the same results. Increased success in quitting decreases the probability of relapsing in the future.

Percentage of Current Smokers, 2005/2006



Percentage of Current Smokeless Tobacco Users - Males Only, 2005/2006



#### Smokeless Tobacco Use: Chewing Tobacco, Snuff, or Dip

Cigarettes are not the only tobacco product being used by Douglas County youth.

- 3% of male MS students claim to be current smokeless tobacco users. By HS this number increases to become 14%.

Our youth are being misled or misunderstand the harms of smokeless tobacco.

- 7% of MS students and 10% of HS students think smokeless tobacco is a safe alternative to smoking.

## Social Acceptance of Tobacco Use

Social acceptance and other social views can often be reasons for smoking among youth in MS and HS. Many kids will start smoking to fit in, but possibly more surprisingly, more kids *continue* smoking hoping they are keeping their friends.

- Of all the current smokers in MS, 44% of them believe smokers have more friends than non-smokers whereas only 12% of *all* students think smokers have more friends.
- Of the current smokers in HS, 36% believe they have more friends than non-smokers. Only 17% of *all* students think smokers have more friends.

As compared to MS students, a higher proportion of all HS students believe that smokers have more friends. This represents a higher social acceptance of smoking.

Participation in anti-smoking events represents willingness by youth to act upon their personal belief systems. By increasing this activism, more positive peer-to-peer anti-smoking reinforcement occurs to counter-market pro-tobacco messages.

- 18% of MS students and 16% of HS students have participated in *any* anti-smoking event.

The Kansas TASK program is a youth empowerment group sponsored by KDHE. The focus is on developing youth leadership to drive local change.

- 4% of MS students and 7% of HS students have participated in a TASK led anti-smoking event.
- 12% of MS students and 13% of HS students have seen or heard a TASK ad in the past 12 months.

## Knowledge of Harm of Tobacco Use

Overall, students are aware of the harm tobacco can cause, but the kids who are smoking seem to know the least about the dangers of tobacco use.

- 10% of *all* MS students think it is safe to smoke for just a year or two, however among MS smokers, 40% of them think it is safe.

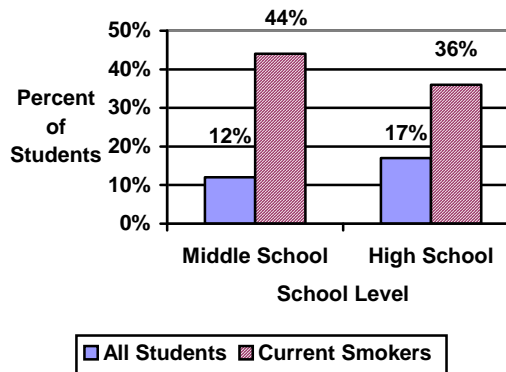
It is much the same for high school.

- 16% of *all* HS students think it is safe to smoke for just a year or two, whereas 34% of *just* the HS smokers think it is safe to smoke for this period of time.

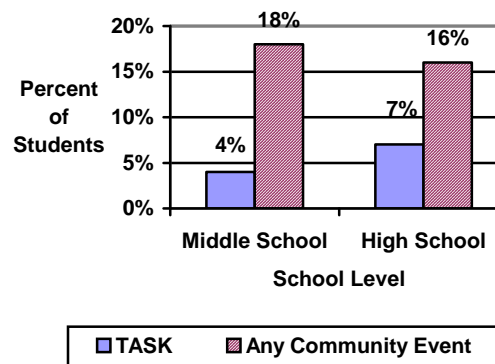
It seems our youth cease being warned about the dangers of tobacco as they enter their high school years.

- 74% of MS students are taught about the dangers of tobacco at school, but only 35% of HS students are taught these important lessons.

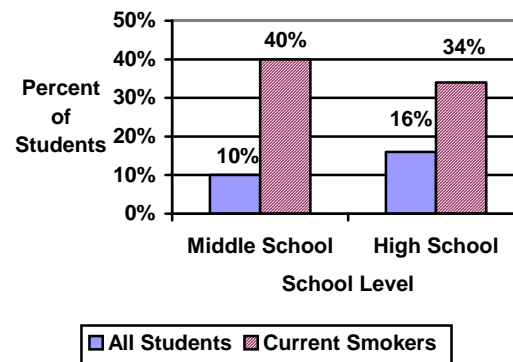
**Percentage of Youth Who Think Smokers Have More Friends, 2005/2006**



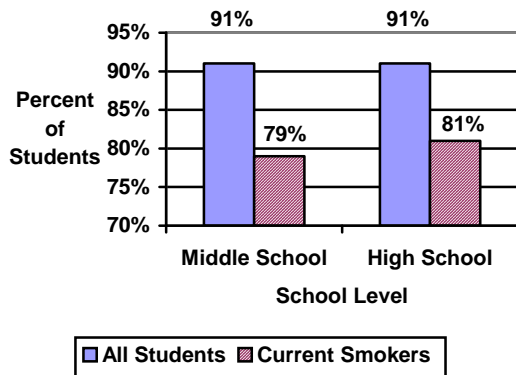
**Percentage of Youth Who have Participated in an Anti-Smoking Event, 2005/2006**



**Percentage of Youth Who Think it is Safe to Smoke a Year or Two, 2005/2006**



**Percentage of Youth Who Believe Secondhand Smoke is Harmful, 2005/2006**

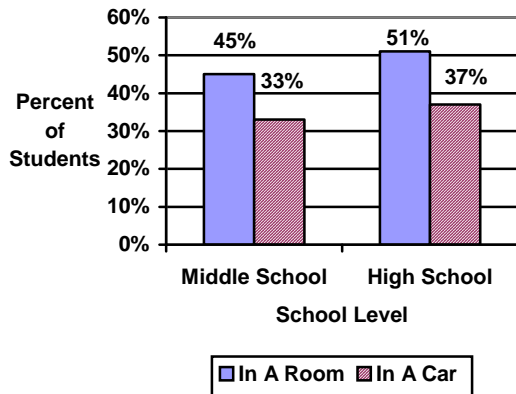


**Exposure to Secondhand Smoke**

Secondhand smoke affects everyone. Friends, family, pets, neighbors, and the environment are all endangered. Those who know the dangers of secondhand smoke appear to be those who are non-smokers, and fewer smokers believe secondhand smoke is harmful.

- 91% of *all* MS students and 91% of *all* HS students believe secondhand smoke is harmful.
- Yet only 79% of current MS smokers and 81% of current HS smokers believe secondhand smoke is harmful.

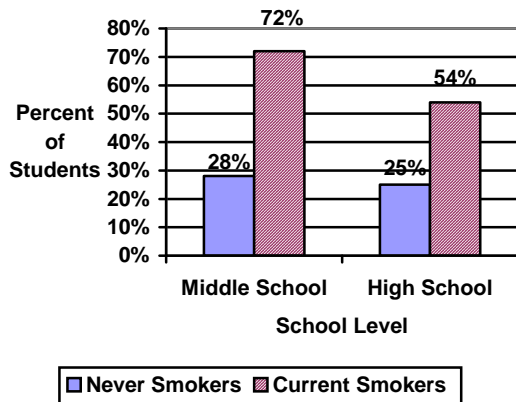
**Percentage of Youth Exposed to Secondhand Smoke, 2005/2006**



Even though a majority of MS and HS students believe secondhand smoke is harmful, too many youth are still exposed to secondhand smoke everyday.

- 45% of MS students and 51% of HS students are exposed to secondhand smoke in a room over the past 7 days.
- 33% of MS students and 37% of HS students are exposed to secondhand smoke in a car over the past 7 days.
- 50% of MS students and 55% of HS students are exposed to secondhand smoke in a car *or* room in the past 7 days.

**Percent of Youth Who Live with Someone Who Smokes, 2005/2006**



**Other Key Results**

Living with someone who smokes plays a huge role in whether or not a youth will become a smoker.

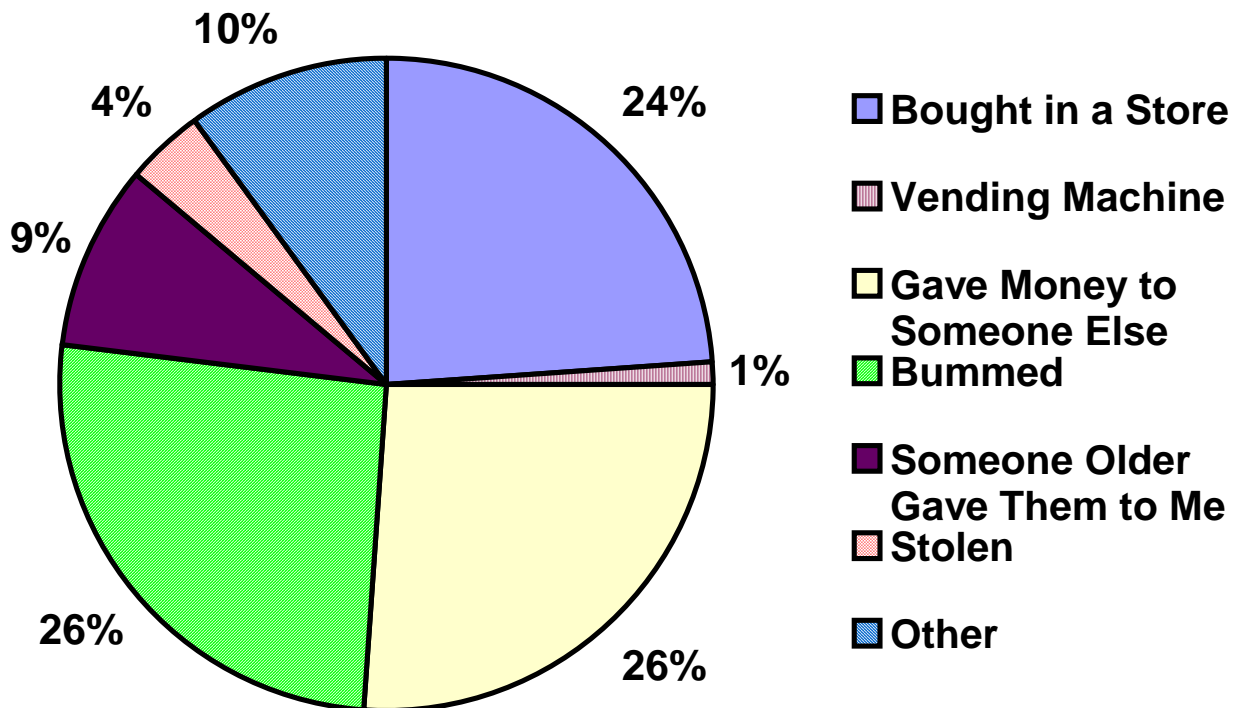
- 72% of current MS smokers and 54% of current HS smokers live with someone who smokes whereas *only* 28% of MS never smokers and 25% of HS never smokers live with someone who does smoke.

## Youth Access to Tobacco Products

Although it is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy/be sold cigarettes, they still report relatively easy access. Most students who smoke can name a time and place to get cigarettes or tobacco without being asked for identification (ID).

- Increased enforcement of current tobacco laws can reduce youth access to tobacco products. 24% of HS youth report buying cigarettes in a store.
- Social sources (gave money to someone else, bummed, someone older gave them to me) account for 61% of youth access to cigarettes.
- 63% of youth were not asked for ID when they purchased cigarettes.
- 67% of youth were not refused a sale of cigarettes because of their age.
- 43% of current smokeless tobacco users who purchased smokeless tobacco did so in a store.

## How do High School youth usually get their cigarettes?



Brought to you by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Tobacco Use Prevention Program in partnership with the Douglas County Tobacco Use Prevention Program. For further information or questions, please contact the Douglas County Community Health Improvement Project at 785.843.3060.