2006-2007
Smoking Statistics
and Trends in
Ontario

Youth Smoking Survey
2006-2007

Funding for this project was provided by:

Health Canada
Santé Canada

www.yss.uwaterloo.ca
The **Youth Smoking Survey** (YSS) is a Health Canada sponsored national survey of students in grades 5 through 12. Provincial-level feedback reports are being made available to all participating provinces. In addition to providing national data on youth smoking behaviours, the feedback report for the *Youth Smoking Survey* is intended to assist community leaders (educators, students, and public health workers) in planning interventions, by accurately measuring youth smoking rates and behaviours at the school level. This report also provides the most relevant and up-to-date literature and ideas on appropriate programs and services.

This survey was conducted by the SHAPES Team at the University of Waterloo. We are pleased to provide this report of results for Ontario and thank you for your participation.

Please note that in some cases results in table columns or rows and graphs may not add to 100% due to rounding.

We do encourage you to partner with your local health and voluntary organizations to take action on the findings reported here.

For more information on this report, or the research project associated with it, please contact:

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Scott Leatherdale, Ph.D.  
YSS Provincial Collaborator  
Scientist and Research Chair, Population Studies and Surveillance  
Cancer Care Ontario  
(416) 971-9800 ext. 3237  
Scott.Leatherdale@cancercare.on.ca

Katy Wong  
YSS Senior Project Manager  
Population Health Research Group  
University of Waterloo  
1-800-667-1804 ext. 1-36554  
yss@healthy.uwaterloo.ca

Steve Manske  
YSS Principal Investigator  
Centre for Behavioural Research & Program Evaluation  
University of Waterloo  
(519) 888-4518  
manske@healthy.uwaterloo.ca

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The Issue

Smoking is a School Issue

- Students who take up smoking show a decrease in academic achievement and motivation.¹

- Smoking is associated with an increased risk of dropping out of high school; smoking is more predictive of dropping out than marijuana use or alcohol use.²

- Starting smoking at an early age is predictive of a number of other risk behaviours; these include fighting, and drug use.³

Smoking is a Student Issue

- 85% of current smokers start smoking by the age of 19.⁴

- The average age at which students smoke their first whole cigarette is 11.⁵

- What starts as a bid for independence quickly becomes dependence on tobacco. Only 5% of students who smoke think that they will be smoking in 5 years; 5 years later, 80% of them smoke heavily.⁶

Smoking is a Community Issue

- 22% of all deaths (or approximately 45,200 deaths) in Canada are attributable to smoking.⁷,⁸ Smoking causes 4 times as many deaths as car accidents, suicides, homicides, and AIDS combined.⁹

Web Resources

- Health Canada
  www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/index_e.html
- Ministry of Health Promotion
  www.stupid.ca
- Lung Association
  www.lung.ca
- Canadian Cancer Society
  www.cancer.ca
- Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada
  www.smoke-free.ca
- Canadian Council for Tobacco Control
  www.cctc.ca

Schools Can Make a Difference...

School efforts linked with those of local health and community agencies can reduce problems related to youth smoking. Research has shown that successful efforts include education (coordinated curriculum), a supportive environment (e.g., clear, enforced rules about smoking, chances for youth engagement), services (e.g., cessation), and students who know people care. See the Youth Smoking Survey website (www.yss.uwaterloo.ca), for a list of useful resources and websites.
Our findings show that in Ontario 5% of students report that they are smokers. Overall, 25% of students surveyed report that they have “ever tried” smoking even just a few puffs. Fewer students report having smoked a whole cigarette (14%).

The *Youth Smoking Survey* (YSS) was first conducted in 1994 and has been repeated biennially since 2002. To help you understand how your province compares to the rest of Canada, the graph below compares your province’s results with national results from the 2006-07 *Youth Smoking Survey*.

### Definitions Used in this Report

- **Current Smoker**: Someone who has smoked at least 100 cigarettes in his/her lifetime, and who has smoked at least one whole cigarette during the past 30 days.
- **Non-smokers**: Someone who has not smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days or has never smoked 100 cigarettes in his/her lifetime.
- **Ever tried a cigarette**: Someone who has ever tried a cigarette, even a few puffs.
- **Susceptible Smoker**: Someone at high risk to begin smoking.
How Susceptible Students are to Smoking

There is a relatively small window in life when one is susceptible to becoming a smoker. Most established smokers start experimenting with cigarettes between the ages of 10 and 18. Once one becomes dependent it can be very difficult to quit. Therefore, it is important to intervene before students become dependent.

Students who feel strongly that they will not try smoking in the future and who feel they can resist peer pressure to smoke are less likely to begin smoking in the future.

We asked students in your province who have never smoked two questions about their intentions to remain smoke-free, “Do you think in the future you might try smoking cigarettes?” and “At any time during the next year do you think you will smoke a cigarette?” We also asked one question relating to their confidence in resisting peer pressure, “If one of your best friends were to offer you a cigarette, would you smoke it?” From their answers to these questions we determined that 31% of the students who have never smoked a cigarette have low-confidence in their ability to remain smoke-free in the future, and are thus at high risk to begin smoking. The chart above displays national data from the 2006-07 YSS and your province’s data from the 2006-07 YSS on the percent of students, by grade, who were deemed susceptible to smoking.

Quick Facts

The younger one starts to smoke the more likely one is to become strongly dependent on nicotine.

Susceptibility to Smoking of Students Who Have Never Smoked

![Graph showing percentage of students susceptible to smoking by grade.](chart)

† SHAPES Ontario 2004 data (These grades were not surveyed in the 2004-2005 YSS)

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Many experts agree that there are stages to smoking uptake including: (1) a preparation phase in which intentions and expectations regarding smoking shift, (2) early experimentation, (3) regular but non-daily smoking and (4) established smoking. Students whose attitudes and beliefs predispose them to smoking may soon start to experiment, or may have already begun. Even when smoking rates are low, smoking control efforts should focus on preventing students from becoming susceptible, preventing susceptible students from experimenting, as well as encouraging experimenters and established smokers to quit.
Peer and Family Influences

Students take up smoking for a variety of reasons. Peers and family members influence youth smoking. These influences are sometimes direct (peer pressure) but more often indirect (modelling). We asked students in your province a series of questions relating to peers and family.

All students were asked, “How many of your closest friends smoke cigarettes?” In your province 94% of smokers have friends who smoke compared to 25% of non-smokers. Non-smokers who have friends who smoke are the most susceptible to becoming smokers themselves.

Students were asked, “Do any of your parents, step-parents, or guardians smoke cigarettes?” and “Do any of your brothers or sisters smoke cigarettes?” Students who have family members who smoke face a higher risk of becoming smokers themselves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Friends who Smoke</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smokers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Members who Smoke</th>
<th>% of Students Responding “Yes”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents, step-parents, or guardians</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling(s)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quick Facts

Even when parents themselves smoke, banning smoking in the home and speaking against smoking reduces the likelihood that youth will smoke.12

Second-hand smoke is a health concern if a family member smokes in the home and/or car. In your province, 19% of students reported that at least one person smokes on a daily basis inside their home. As well, 24% of students rode in a car with someone smoking during the week preceding the survey. We asked students about smoking rules at home and 24% reported that there were no restrictions or only some restrictions regarding smoking in the home.

Household Rules for Smoking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restrictions</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No restrictions</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some restrictions</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ban</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Smoking often occurs in social situations among peers. Programs that help students to develop skills for resisting social influences can be helpful. The most successful programs teach refusal skills (through direct instruction, modelling, rehearsal, and reinforcement) and advocacy.13
Perceptions and Reality

We asked students, “Why do you think people your age start to smoke?” and offered a choice of responses. Many students believe smoking uptake is associated with peer pressure, the desire to seem popular and the perception that smoking is cool. This suggests that students perceive that others see social advantages to smoking. It is interesting to contrast this with how students themselves report their view of smoking. The charts below contrast the percentage of students who perceive their peers start smoking for social advantage with how students actually view smoking.

** Why do you think people your age start to smoke? **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s cool</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular kids smoke</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Student Opinions of Smoking **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s cool</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smokers become more popular</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice to date a smoker**</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Students were asked, “Is it nicer to date people who do not smoke?”; 9% responded, “no.”

We asked students, “How many people in your grade, from your school, do you think smoke cigarettes?” The results show that 58% of students believe that smoking is more prevalent than it actually is in your province. Students often underestimate how supportive their peers are of tobacco control initiatives. For example, 89% of students in your province responded “no” when asked if smoking should be allowed around kids at home. Similarly, 89% thought smoking should not be allowed around kids in cars.

** Schools Can Make a Difference... **

Correcting misperceptions can alter students’ attitudes about smoking, especially those related to the creation of “peer pressure.” Communicating these results in the school newspaper, on a bulletin board, in an assembly or in other ways may help to show students that smoking is not as well regarded or common as they think. Remember that repeated long-term exposure to these new ideas will be necessary to change attitudes and thoughts about smoking.
What Students Know & Think about Smoking

Tobacco Education at School, Community, & Home

Tobacco control education is necessary and important. Knowledge about smoking is most often learned at school and it is at school that attitudes are often developed. The survey showed that 52% of students reported having one or more classes, in the last 12 months, that talked about the effects of smoking.

We also asked students if, in the last 12 months, they had taken part in any other anti-smoking activities or events, either at school or in the community. The following shows the percentage of students who reported taking part in various anti-smoking activities or events.

- 23% School assembly or class with guest speaker
- 4% School health fair
- 8% Media production (poster, commercial, etc.)
- 3% Community event outside of school
- 2% Quit smoking contest
- 1% Smoking cessation counselling or program
- 61% I have not taken part in any of these activities or events in the last 12 months

Home is another important source of information; 75% of students reported that their parents, step-parents, or guardians had talked to them about not smoking.

Students’ Knowledge About the Health Implications of Smoking

Students reported the following knowledge about the health implications of tobacco use:

- 89% of students correctly indicated that smoking causes lung cancer
- 68% of students know that smoking causes heart problems
- 61% of students correctly reported that smoking triggers asthma
- 67% recognize that smoking reduces life expectancy
- 69% know you do not have to smoke for many years to harm your health
- 85% know that smoking is harmful to non-smokers
- 86% know that smoking is addictive
- 42% recognized that quitting smoking can reduce health damage

Quick Facts from the 2004-2005 YSS

Out of all youth who have “ever tried” smoking cigarettes, 50% have tried marijuana, whereas amongst those who have never tried smoking cigarettes, only 5% have tried marijuana. Similarly, students who have tried smoking are more likely to have tried alcohol than those who have never smoked (91% vs. 53%).
Exposing the Myths about Smoking

While many students are aware of the long-term health problems associated with smoking, this knowledge is not enough to prevent smoking. Some adolescents believe that smoking can benefit them in the short-term. We asked students in your province about some common myths about smoking.

- **Myth**: smoking helps people to relax (39% of students believe this and 36% “don’t know”).
  - **Fact**: nicotine is a stimulant and smoking causes rises in pulse rate and blood pressure. Considering the short and long term social and health consequences of smoking, smoking is likely to increase overall stress levels.

- **Myth**: smoking can help people stay slim (18% believe this and 39% “don’t know”).
  - **Fact**: research has shown that smokers gain as much weight as non-smokers in the same age range. This common misperception may especially influence young females to consider smoking.

- **Myth**: smokers can quit anytime (27% believe this and 17% “don’t know”).
  - **Fact**: nicotine is highly addictive and quitting is often very difficult even for youth and adults who are motivated to quit.

- **Myth**: smoking helps relieve boredom (17% of students believe this and 25% “don’t know”).
  - **Fact**: there are much healthier activities that are truly able to reduce boredom.

**Quick Facts from the 2004-2005 YSS**

Youth who have “ever tried” smoking are more likely than those who have “never tried” to believe that smoking:
- helps you to stay slim (25% vs. 16%)
- helps relieve boredom (22% vs. 10%)
- is cool (7% vs. 1%)

**Schools Can Make a Difference...**

...by addressing the social influences to smoke.
- Correct misconceptions about the benefits of smoking and emphasize the short-term downsides and negative social consequences of smoking.
- Consider focusing on media literacy and consumer savvy. Several successful youth led campaigns have focused on exposing tobacco industry tactics for attracting youth. See www.smokefreeottawa.com/exposedev and www.thetruth.com for examples of innovative programs.
- Provide an environment where smoking is clearly not acceptable, where smoking by older students is not visible and not convenient. Students are especially influenced by and often find a source of cigarettes in older peers.
- Encourage school staff and families to promote a non-smoking norm even if they are smokers themselves.
The School Environment

The school environment plays an important role in helping students stay smoke-free. Research shows that school-level factors influence smoking rates independent of family, economic and community factors. Schools are uniquely positioned to influence the health and well-being of students, ideally in partnership with home and community, but even independently.

One of the most obvious ways schools can support students to stay smoke-free is through tobacco control education. Considerable research has been done to determine the elements of successful smoking prevention curricula. Compare the curriculum and teaching time devoted to smoking prevention in your school with the elements in the box below and consider ways to improve or maintain your programs.

**Quick Facts**

Youth who participate in higher levels of physical activity are less likely to smoke, or they smoke fewer cigarettes. Team sport participation seems to be especially associated with decreased likelihood of smoking. Some schools have students sign contracts to not smoke while they are representing the school in a sporting event. Increasingly, sports organizations and athletic organizations are taking steps to implement tobacco-free sports policies and initiatives.

### School-based smoking prevention programs should:

- include at least 10 sessions devoted specifically to tobacco use prevention
- be delivered in at least two school years (sessions may be blocked or distributed over the year)
- begin immediately before the age when uptake of tobacco is highest, usually just before the transition to middle or secondary school
- focus on short-term health and social consequences (e.g., shortness of breath and smelly clothes)
- include training in refusal skills including modelling and practice of resistance skills
- include information on social influences on tobacco use especially peer, parent and media and demonstrate that smoking is not normative for adolescents
- involve students in the delivery of the program (teacher led with student involvement works best)
- include adequate teacher training and a high level of teacher commitment to the program

Source: Health Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society -- efficacy criteria used in the assessment of smoking prevention programs.
School Connectedness

In addition to tobacco control education, a sense of connection to the school and school rules can support students to make healthy choices. Students who feel an attachment to their school, and who consider their teachers to be supportive, are less likely to smoke or engage in other unhealthy or risky behaviours. Activities to build a positive school community are helpful in reducing and preventing smoking. Here is what students in your province said about their school environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</th>
<th>Percentage of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel close to people at my school.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I am part of my school.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy to be at my school.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the teachers at my school treat me fairly.</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe in my school.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Smoking Rules at Your School

We asked students in your province about their perceptions of school rules on smoking:

**At your school, what are the rules about smoking tobacco?**

- 4% I do not think there are any rules
- 8% Smoking is allowed in some areas on school property
- 66% Smoking is not allowed anywhere on school property
- 21% I do not know

**Do most students who smoke cigarettes obey the rules about smoking at your school?**

- 29% Yes
- 25% No
- 46% I do not know

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Increasing evidence demonstrates that when youth feel connected to their school and cared for by those at their school, they are less likely to use substances. As well, youth who experience a greater connectedness to their teachers are less likely to start smoking. Ways in which your school can create a sense of school connectedness include supporting extracurricular activities, providing opportunities for student involvement in peer-led activities and buddy programs, advocating a positive classroom atmosphere, and encouraging teacher mentorship. We would like to know about activities in your school that make youth feel more connected to their school. Visit www.yss.uwaterloo.ca, click on knowledge exchange, and share your ideas!
**What’s Important to Students in Your Province?**

Students were asked to rate the importance of certain aspects of school life. The following chart shows the percentage of students in your province who consider these aspects “very important” or “important”. Responses are reported by gender.

**What’s Important to Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of School Life</th>
<th>Percentage of students responding “important”/“very important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting good grades</td>
<td>Females: 97, Males: 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making friends</td>
<td>Females: 91, Males: 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in activities outside of class</td>
<td>Females: 71, Males: 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to class on time</td>
<td>Females: 86, Males: 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning new things</td>
<td>Females: 92, Males: 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing my opinion in class</td>
<td>Females: 74, Males: 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting involved in student council/similar groups</td>
<td>Females: 51, Males: 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Availability and Advertisement of Cigarettes in Stores Near Your School**

In your province, 53% of students reported visiting retail stores (e.g., convenience stores, supermarkets, grocery stores, gas stations) near their school at least once a week. In addition, 62% of students indicated that most or all of these stores sell cigarettes and 77% reported seeing cigarette advertisements in these stores.

**Stores Near Your School that Sell Cigarettes**

- All: Females 26, Males 29
- Most: Females 36, Males 29
- Few: Females 9, Males 9
- None: Females 9, Males 9

**How Often Students See Cigarette Advertisements in Stores Near School**

- Often: Females 20, Males 27
- Sometimes: Females 27, Males 30
- Rarely: Females 10, Males 23
- Never: Females 0, Males 0

Note: These graphs exclude those students who do not visit stores near their school.
Smoking Habits in Your Province

Where Smokers Smoke
When asked how often smokers smoke tobacco, they responded “always” or “often” to the following places:

Smoking Around School
- Walking to/from school – 57%
- At school but off school property – 65%
- At school on school property – 31%

Smoking Away from School
- At home – 45%
- At parties – 81%
- At my friend’s house – 61%
- In a vehicle – 53%

With Whom Smokers Smoke
When asked with whom smokers smoke tobacco, they responded smoking “always” or “often” with:
- their friends – 87%
- their parents – 20%
- other family members – 31%
- by themselves – 64%

Quick Facts
Most youth obtain cigarettes from social sources such as siblings, parents or friends. This is even more pronounced among younger students.

Obtaining Cigarettes
Many smokers usually obtain cigarettes from social sources: 11% indicated “a friend or someone else gives them to me” and 6% indicated they were given cigarettes by their parents or siblings. Smokers also reported asking someone else to buy cigarettes for them (21%) or buying them from a friend or someone else (11%). As well, 21% said they have asked a stranger to buy them cigarettes in the last 30 days. Moreover, 38% of students felt it would be “easy” to get cigarettes if they wanted to smoke.
Other Student Findings

The *Youth Smoking Survey* includes many other questions directly or indirectly related to smoking. Below is a sample of some additional findings from your province.

**Self Esteem**

We asked students a series of questions about how they feel about themselves. The percentage of students who reported that the following statements were “true” or “mostly true” is listed:

- *In general, I like the way I am* (81%)
- *When I do something, I do it well* (72%)
- *I like the way I look* (74%)

**Spending Money**

We asked students in your province about the amount of money they usually have each week to spend on themselves or to save. Here’s how they responded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of money per week</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1 - 10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11 - 20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21 - 40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41 or more</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Television Viewing**

Watching a lot of television has been linked to increases in smoking uptake in youth.\(^{22}\) TV is also incompatible with healthier, more active choices for leisure time activities. In your province, 43% of students reported that they typically watch more than 2 hours of television per day.

**Reading for Leisure**

Leisure time reading has well known benefits to students. We asked students in your province how often they read for fun (not for school). The chart below shows how students responded.

**Hours Spent Watching TV per Day**

**How Often Students Read for Leisure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 4 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2006-2007 Smoking Statistics and Trends in Ontario
Truancy/Absenteeism

Students in your province were asked how many classes they skipped when they were not supposed to in the last 4 weeks. The table to the right shows the percentage of students who reported skipping classes by the number of classes skipped.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of classes skipped</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 classes</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 classes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 classes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more classes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking is not an easy process for adults or for youth. Many smokers would like to quit smoking cigarettes. In your province, 81% of smokers believe they would be able to quit smoking cigarettes if they wanted to; however, 68% have tried to quit at least once, and failed.
- 24% have tried to quit once
- 44% have tried to quit 2 or more times

Other Tobacco Products

Some students have tried tobacco products other than just cigarettes. The following list provides the percentage of students who report ever trying tobacco products other than just cigarettes.
- 3% Pipe tobacco
- 13% Cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars (plain or flavoured)
- 4% Chewing tobacco
- 2% Other tobacco products (e.g., bidis, nasal snuff, oral snuff, etc.)

Alcohol

Students in grades 7 and above were asked about alcohol use. In your province, 67% of students reported having had a drink of alcohol that was more than just a sip. The ages at which these students first had five drinks or more of alcohol on one occasion are shown in the chart to the right.

These students were also asked how often they drank alcohol in the last 12 months. In your province, 43% reported drinking less than once a month; 15% drank once per month; 23% drank 2 or 3 times a month; and 19% reported drinking once a week or more often.

Quick Facts

The Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) indicates that 16% of youth aged 15-19 in Ontario smoke. Considering the majority of smokers take up smoking in their teenage years, actions to prevent or even delay the onset of smoking will help keep students at your school healthy in the short and long-term.
Marijuana

Students in grades 7 and above were asked about marijuana use. In your province, 27% of students reported having ever used or tried marijuana. The ages at which these students first used marijuana were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of Students Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 or younger</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 or older</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Students could not report trying marijuana at an age older than their chronological age.

Students who have used marijuana were also asked how often they used it in the last 12 months. In your province, 40% reported using marijuana 1 to 5 times; 18% reported using it 6 to 19 times; 29% reported using it 20 or more times in the past 12 months.

In your province, 8% of students who have not already tried marijuana said they would “probably” or “definitely” try it in the future. As well, 46% of students said it would be “easy” to get marijuana if they wanted to use it.
How to Use this Report

Use this report to identify areas of strength to build on or areas that can be addressed concerning student health and health promotional activities. Share the results with students, school staff, parents, and community members to help identify challenges regarding the health and well-being of students at your school. Involvement empowers and fosters relationships to deal with issues at hand (and future concerns). We encourage users of this report to find the ingenuity and resources for solutions. Overall, student wellness can be improved through contributions at many levels:

Students can:
- Explore ways to take action on areas of concern through student government and other student-led groups.
- Engage teachers and administrators in dialogue about the results to better understand the issues, seek solutions and create student-driven action plans.
- Join a school-based action team or student club dedicated to healthy living.
- Organize new initiatives at school (e.g. intramural sports program, recognition/awards program for people who have made a difference in promoting healthy living, initiate student/staff healthy living challenge, organize a health fair).
- Connect with students from other schools in the district to share what has been done and explore partnership opportunities.

School Staff can use the report data to:
- Support recommendations within school improvement plans.
- Plan and deliver health, physical education or other related curricula.
- Develop opportunities for staff to model healthy behaviours.
- Initiate new partnerships with parents/community resources to promote healthy living.
- Advocate for new community programs or resources and support requests for funding (e.g. grant programs).
- Enhance implementation of health policies.
- Enhance delivery of services or programs for students (e.g. counselling, school cafeteria).
- Share data with local public health units and/or school boards to identify potential areas for collective action among schools and/or follow-up and evaluate implemented actions.
- Look for opportunities to engage students in problem solving and planning.
- Advocate for increased emphasis on health as a priority in school activities and curricula.

Parents/Families and the Community can:
- Plan activities with school council or parent council.
- Consider hosting a forum or approaching media to gain support for healthy living initiatives.
- Create opportunities to model healthy behaviours at home.
- Support the school! Share skills, talents or resources to help address the issues identified in the report.
- Participate in an open house where community groups can share health and wellness programs.
Change is more likely to succeed when schools…

- Engage all stakeholders, especially students. By genuinely considering various perspectives and voices in your planning, you can expect increased support for solutions. You will also build capacity and improve your ability to achieve your main objective. Consider adding parents, community and health organizations.

- Use a comprehensive school health approach to promote healthy behaviours. This includes activities that address all of the following: (1) A healthy physical environment, (2) Instruction and programs (3) A supportive social environment and (4) Community partnerships. Communication through education is necessary but not sufficient for achieving change. To facilitate healthy behaviours, consider all components of a comprehensive school health approach. Promote environments that make the healthy choice the easy choice.

- Link with other resources (people and/or programs in the community).

- Communicate, coordinate, and collaborate.

- Evaluate results.

More About this Report:

The School Health Action Planning and Evaluation System (SHAPES) is a data collection and feedback system designed to support population–based intervention planning, evaluation, and field research related to youth. SHAPES is developed by the Centre for Behaviour Research and Program Evaluation (CBRPE) at the University of Waterloo.

The development of report content was a collaborative effort between several groups including:

- The Population Health Research Group (PHR) at the University of Waterloo
- The Centre for Behaviour Research and Program Evaluation (CBRPE) at the University of Waterloo

SHAPES generates individual school reports from survey data. This year, each of the schools participating in the Youth Smoking Survey will be receiving School Feedback Reports detailing smoking and other related behaviours. Through a largely automated system with quality control and editing procedures we can ensure that the data you receive are accurate and returned to your school in a timely manner.

We value your input and would welcome your feedback on this report and/or on your school’s participation in this project. Please contact us on the web at [www.yss.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.yss.uwaterloo.ca) or by e-mail at [yss@healthy.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:yss@healthy.uwaterloo.ca).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.
References