In Brief: Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Use in Ontario and Canada, Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey

Lasted Updated: March 15, 2018

The Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS; formerly the Youth Smoking Survey (YSS)) is a biennial school-based survey of Canadian students in grades 6-12. The Propel Centre for Population Health Impact has led the implementation of CSTADS since 2004. Additional information about the survey can be found at cstads.ca.

Tobacco Use in Ontario and Canada, 2008/2009 - 2014/2015 CSTADS

The following table displays tobacco use rates in Ontario and Canada using a variety of standard measures. In Ontario, rates of ever trying cigarettes, use of e-cigarettes in the past 30 days, and use of little cigars or cigarillos in the past 30 days are significantly lower than the national rates in 2014/2015. Additionally, the 2014/2015 results show a statistically significant decrease in having ever tried cigarettes since 2012/2013.

Table 1: Tobacco Use (percentage) in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 Students, 2008/2009 - 2014/2015 Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current smoking (cigarettes)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.0$</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ever tried cigarettes</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarette use (past 30 days)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-cigarette use (past 30 days)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Menthol cigarette use (past 30 days) *</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.0$</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little cigars or cigarillos use (past 30 days) †</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8$</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any tobacco product use (past 30 days) †‡</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Includes respondents who indicated they used menthol in the last 30 days among all respondents in 2012/2013 and 2010/2011.
‡ Includes cigarettes, pipe, little cigars or cigarillos, cigars, roll-your-own, bidis, smokeless, water-pipe, and blunt wraps. Bidis, blunt wraps and water-pipe were not included on the 2008/2009 questionnaire and pipe was not included in the 2014/2015 questionnaire.

Note: The 2014/2015 results reported for ever trying cigarettes, use of e-cigarettes in the past 30 days, and use of little cigars in ON are statistically significantly lower than the 2014/2015 results for the rest of Canada.

§ Moderate sampling variability, interpret with caution.
Figure 1: Current Smoking in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

Figure 2: Ever Tried Smoking in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

Figure 3: Cigarette Use in the past 30 days in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

†Moderate sampling variability, interpret with caution.
Figure 4: Menthol Cigarette Use in the past 30 days in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2010-2014/15 CSTADS

- Menthol Cigarette Use (past 30 days) ON: 2.3% in 2010/2011, 2.4% in 2012/2013, 2.7% in 2014/2015
- Menthol Cigarette Use (past 30 days) Canada: 2.0% in 2010/2011, 2.8% in 2012/2013, 2.7% in 2014/2015

Figure 5: Little Cigar or Cigarillos Use in the past 30 days in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

- Use of little cigars or cigarillos (past 30 days) ON: 5.8% in 2008/2009, 3.4% in 2010/2011, 3.8% in 2012/2013, 3.1% in 2014/2015
- Use of little cigars or cigarillos (past 30 days) Canada: 9.1% in 2008/2009, 5.3% in 2010/2011, 4.6% in 2012/2013, 4.0% in 2014/2015

Figure 6: Use of Any Tobacco Product in the past 30 days in Ontario and Canada, Grade 6-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

- Use of any tobacco product (past 30 days) ON: 14.7% in 2008/2009, 11.1% in 2010/2011, 11.6% in 2012/2013, 10.3% in 2014/2015
- Use of any tobacco product (past 30 days) Canada: 18.3% in 2008/2009, 14.0% in 2010/2011, 12.6% in 2012/2013, 9.8% in 2014/2015

The following table displays alcohol and drug use rates in Ontario and Canada. Alcohol use, binge drinking, and pharmaceutical use rates in Ontario are significantly lower than the national rates in 2014/2015. Additionally, the 2014/2015 Ontario results show a statistically significant decrease in the rate of binge drinking since 2012/2013.

Table 2: Alcohol and Drug Use (percentage) in Ontario and Canada, Grade 7-12 Students, 2008/2009 – 2014/2015 Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol Use (past 12 months)</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binge drinking (past 12 months) *</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis use (past 12 months)</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical use (past 12 months) †</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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* Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks of alcohol on one occasion.
† Includes sedatives or tranquilizers, stimulants, medicine to treat ADHD, and pain relievers. 2014/2015 also includes oxycodone and fentanyl.

Note: The 2014/2015 results for ON for alcohol use, binge drinking, and pharmaceutical use are statistically significantly lower than the 2014/2015 results for the rest of Canada.
Figure 9: Cannabis Use in the past 12 months in Ontario and Canada, Grade 7-12 students, 2008-2014/15 CSTADS

Acknowledgements

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