

Press Release

January 27, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: 2024 Survey Results on Youth Cigarette Use

Monitoring The Future (MTF) is an ongoing study of the behaviors, attitudes, and values of Americans from adolescence through adulthood. Each year, more than 25,000 8th, 10th and 12th grade students are surveyed as part of the MTF Main study (12th graders from 1975, and 8th and 10th graders since 1991) and approximately 20,000 adults ages 19 to 65 are surveyed as part of the MTF Panel study. The MTF study conducts annual follow up surveys with a subsample of each graduating class, who complete a follow up every two years from ages 19–30 and every five years from age 35 onward and has been funded under the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) , a part of the National Institutes of Health.

According to the survey, the percentage of adolescents who had smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days declined in all grades in 2024, a decline that was statistically significant in 8th and 10th grades. Prevalence in 2024 is at the lowest ever recorded by the survey. Lifetime use also continued a long-term decline to the lowest levels recorded by the survey, although the declines in 2024 were not statistically significant.

Researchers maintain the intense public debate in the late 1990s over cigarette policies likely played an important role in bringing about the very substantial downturn in adolescent smoking that followed. MTF helped to give rise to that debate, as it publicly reported in the first half of the 1990s that the level of smoking among U.S. adolescents was rising sharply—results that were widely covered in the national media.

Other subsequent developments the study feels have likely contributed are:

- Increases in cigarette prices, brought about in part by the tobacco industry settlement with the states and by state-level taxing decisions
- Substantially increased prevention activities, including antismoking ad campaigns in a number of states
- The removal of certain types of advertising (including billboards) as well as the Joe Camel campaign nationwide
- The initiation of a national antismoking ad campaign by the American Legacy Foundation, which was created as a condition of the tobacco Master Settlement Agreement of 1998

- Efforts by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and states to reduce youth access to cigarettes.

In 2009 the passage of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, gave the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate the manufacturing, marketing, and sale of tobacco products. MTF researchers say these new efforts by the FDA have contributed to the continuing decline in use of cigarettes and their reported availability by 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.

The report indicates previous efforts to reduce adolescent smoking were unsuccessful. Between 1984 and 1992, little change was identified in smoking prevalence among 12th grade students despite increasingly restrictive legislation at the state and local levels, as well as prevention efforts made in many school systems, suggesting that the successful reduction in adolescent smoking requires a concerted, national, multi-pronged effort. During the 1990s, trends in cigarette smoking generally moved in concert across 8th, 10th, and 12th grades—and not in the usual, staggered pattern indicative of a cohort effect.

The prevalence of current smoking began to rise among 8th and 10th graders after 1991 and among 12th graders after 1992, and until 1996 moved steadily upward in all three grades. In 1996, current smoking peaked in grades 8 and 10 and then peaked a year later among 12th graders.

Researchers note that cigarettes, which normally reflect cohort differences, began to exhibit a secular trend in the same historical period that illicit drugs, which normally exhibit secular trends, began to show cohort effects. Of particular importance is the fact that in all three grades in 2024 the prevalence of smoking half a-pack or more per day is down from peak levels by more than 90%, and is currently less than half a percentage point in all three grades. Over time, researchers feel this dramatic decline in regular smoking should produce substantial improvements in the health and wellness of the population.

For nicotine vaping, the 2024 declines continue a 180-degree turn centered around the pandemic onset. Prior to the pandemic, use levels surged from 2017 to 2019 and then held steady in 2020. Large declines took place during the pandemic and have since continued to the point where the 2024 levels for past 12-month use are close to where they started in 2017, the first year that questions on nicotine vaping were included in the survey. Specifically, past 12-month use was 21% in 12th grade (compared to 35% in 2020 and 19% in 2017), 15% in 10th grade (compared to 31% in 2020 and 16% in 2017), and 10% in 8th grade (compared to 17% in 2020 and 10% in 2017).

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is a component of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIDA supports most of the world's research on the health aspects of drug use and addiction. The Institute carries out a large variety of programs to inform policy, improve practice, and advance addiction science. For more information about NIDA and its programs, visit www.nida.nih.gov.

SAFE is the only alcohol and substance use prevention agency in Glen Cove whose mission is to eliminate alcohol and substance use in Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in youth and is conducting a prevention awareness campaigns entitled "Keeping Glen Cove SAFE" to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's Youth and Tobacco Use and Vaping Facts and Myths pages at www.safeglencove.org.