

## Acceptability of smoking in public places Health and Lifestyles Surveys 2008-2010

### Background

There are a number of potential benefits in implementing restrictions on smoking in outdoor public places where other people might be affected. This includes reductions in:

- exposure to second-hand smoke
- role modelling of smoking
- the extent to which smoking is seen as normal and acceptable.

However, because smoking restrictions in public places affect a large number of people, it is important to gauge public opinion around allowing smoking in outdoor places. The HSC uses this knowledge to inform its tobacco control programme and the wider sector, but not to assess the merits of any particular policy. To help establish this information, people were asked a question in the Health Sponsorship Council's (HSC's) 2008 and 2010 Health and Lifestyles Surveys (HLSs).

### Overview of key findings

- In 2010, around two in three people thought that smoking should not be allowed at outdoor sports fields or courts.
- In 2010, around three in five people thought that smoking should not be allowed at outdoor music/community events and activities.
- Current smokers and males were more likely to think that people should be allowed to smoke at outdoor sports fields or courts and outdoor music/community events and activities.
- People were more likely to think that smoking should not be allowed at outdoor sports fields or courts in 2010 than in 2008.

### Methodology

In 2008 and 2010, all respondents were asked **in your opinion, do you think people should be able to smoke at outdoor sports fields and courts?** Response options in 2008 were 'anywhere', 'in set areas', or 'not at all'. Response options in 2010 were 'yes' or 'no'. The percentage of respondents answering 'not at all' in 2008 was compared against those who answered 'no' in 2010.

The percentage of respondents in 2010 who answered 'no' to these questions is presented for the overall sample. The percentage of respondents who answered 'yes' for each statement is then compared by:

- Smoking status (current smokers: those who smoked at least monthly, and past smokers: those who had ever smoked but did not smoke at the time of the survey, compared with never smokers).
- Ethnicity (Māori, Pacific, and Asian people, compared with people of European/ Other ethnicity).
- Neighbourhood deprivation status (high: NZDep2006 8-10 and medium: NZDep2006 4-7, compared with low: NZDep2006 1-3).
- Gender.

In 2010, all respondents were also asked – **in your opinion, do you think people should be able to smoke at outdoor music or community events and activities?** The percentage of respondents who answered 'yes' was compared by the subgroups listed above.

Statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) are reported.

## Acceptability of smoking in public places Health and Lifestyles Surveys 2008-2010 (continued)

### Detailed Findings

#### *Outdoors sports fields/courts*

In 2010, around two in three (64%) respondents answered 'no' when asked whether they thought that **people should be able to smoke at outdoor sports fields or courts**. Respondents who were more likely to respond 'yes' were:

- Current smokers (51%) and past smokers (39%), compared with never smokers (26%).
- Males (42%), compared with females (30%).

There were no differences by ethnicity or neighbourhood deprivation status.

Respondents were more likely to think that smoking **should not** be allowed at outdoors sports fields or courts in 2010 (64%) than in 2008 (59%).

#### *Outdoor music and community events*

In 2010, three in five (59%) respondents answered 'no' when asked whether they thought that **people should be able to smoke at outdoor music or community events and activities**.

Respondents who were more likely to respond 'yes' were:

- Current smokers (61%) and past smokers (44%), compared with never smokers (29%).
- Males (48%) compared with females (35%).

### About the Survey

- The HLS is a nationwide in-home face-to-face survey conducted every two years, starting in 2008. The 2010 HLS consisted of a sample of 1,740 New Zealanders aged 15 years and over, who provided information about their health behaviours and attitudes relating to tobacco, sun safety, healthy eating, gambling, and alcohol.
- In 2010, the main sample, with a response rate of 57%, included 866 people of European/Other ethnicity, 460 Māori, 301 Pacific peoples and 113 Asian people (prioritised ethnicity).
- The data have been adjusted (weighted) to ensure they are representative of the New Zealand population.
- For this analysis, odds ratios were undertaken to compare responses between groups collected by the 2010 HLS. Responses from the 2008 and 2010 HLS were compared using interval estimates. The significance level used for statistical analyses was set to  $\alpha=.05$ .
- Data presented here from the 2008 HLS have been re-analysed to be comparable with the 2010 HLS. This may mean results differ slightly from those published previously.
- A full description of the 2008 and 2010 HLS survey methodology and further HLS publications can be found online at [www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html](http://www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html).

#### **About the HSC**

The HSC is a crown entity that uses health promotion initiatives to promote health and encourage healthy lifestyles, with a long-term focus on reducing the social, financial and health costs of a number of health behaviours.

#### **Citation**

Trappitt, R., Li, J., Peck, R., & Tu, D. (2011) *Acceptability of smoking in public places – Health and Lifestyles Surveys 2008-2010* [In Fact]. Wellington: Health Sponsorship Council. Retrieved from [www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html](http://www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html)

Research and Evaluation Unit, HSC  
PO Box 2142, Wellington 6011, New Zealand  
[www.hsc.org/researchpublications.html](http://www.hsc.org/researchpublications.html), [research@hsc.org.nz](mailto:research@hsc.org.nz)  
August 2011

