

## Young people's desires and attempts to stop smoking Youth Insights Survey 2010

### Background

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The Health Sponsorship Council's (HSC's) Youth Insights Survey (YIS) monitors year 10 students' behaviours, attitudes and knowledge on a range of tobacco-related topics, including quitting smoking. The New Zealand Government has a set of six health targets, one of which is "better help for smokers to quit". It is, therefore, important to understand attitudes and behaviour around quitting smoking among young people who are a key audience for tobacco control interventions. In the 2010 YIS respondents were asked about whether they wanted to stop smoking and whether they had tried to quit in the past 12 months. The proportion of those who had tried to quit and were now quit was also calculated.

### Methodology

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All respondents were asked **do you want to stop smoking now?** Response options were:

- 'I have never smoked cigarettes'.
- 'I have smoked in the past but don't smoke now'.
- 'Yes, I want to stop smoking'.
- 'No, I don't want to stop smoking'.

The proportion of current smokers (n=301) who responded 'Yes, I want to stop smoking' was calculated.

All respondents were asked **during the past year (12 months), have you ever tried to stop smoking cigarettes?** Response options were:

- 'I have never smoked cigarettes'.
- 'I did not smoke during the past year'.

- 'Yes, I have tried to stop smoking'.
- 'No, I have not tried to stop smoking'.

Analysis was restricted to those who had smoked in the past year (n=542) ie, excluded those who responded 'I have never smoked cigarettes' or 'I did not smoke during the past year'. The proportion of those who had smoked in the past year who responded 'Yes, I have tried to stop smoking' was calculated.

Further analysis was undertaken to determine, of those who had tried to stop smoking, how many were now quit. Of those who responded 'Yes, I have tried to stop smoking' (n=354), the proportion who answered 'I am not a smoker now'<sup>1</sup> to an earlier question **how often do you smoke now** was calculated.

Statistically significant differences (p<.05) are then reported by:

- Ethnicity (Māori, compared with non-Māori).
- Gender.
- School decile (as a marker of socio-economic status) (low: decile 1-3; mid: decile 4-7; high: decile 8-10).
- Early smoking uptake (those who first tried a cigarette when they were 10 years old or older, compared with those who started smoking before the age of 10).

### Detailed Findings

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#### *How many young people want to stop smoking now?*

Around one-half (51%) of current smokers responded 'Yes, I want to stop smoking now'. Those attending low-decile schools were more likely to respond 'Yes, I want to stop smoking

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now' (63%) compared with those attending high-decile schools (42%). There were no differences by ethnicity, gender or early smoking uptake.

### *How many young people have tried to quit smoking?*

Around two-thirds (67%) of those who had smoked in the past 12 months responded 'Yes, I have tried to stop smoking'. Respondents who were more likely to say this were:

- Māori (76%), compared with non-Māori (61%).
- Those attending low-decile schools (76%), compared with those attending high-decile schools (56%).

This difference was still significant after controlling for ethnicity.

There were no differences by gender or early smoking uptake.

### *How many young people who have tried to quit now consider themselves non-smokers?*

Around one-quarter (27%) of those who responded 'Yes, I have tried to stop smoking' now considered themselves non-smokers. Of those who had tried to stop smoking, non-Māori (31%) were more likely to now consider themselves non-smokers, compared with Māori (20%). There were no differences by gender, school decile, or early smoking uptake.

## About the Survey

- The YIS forms part of the New Zealand Youth Tobacco Monitor (NZYTM), a collaborative effort by HSC and Action on Smoking and Health (ASH).
- The YIS is a nationwide paper-based survey conducted in schools every two years, first carried out in its current form in 2006.
- The YIS collects data on smoking-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour, as well as data on students' interests, lifestyles, activities, and media use, and responses to tobacco control initiatives. It monitors the broad spectrum of risk and protective factors that relate to smoking uptake among young people.
- The 2010 YIS was conducted with a sample of 3,197 Year 10 students (14- to 15-year-olds). The school-level response rate was 79%, the student level response rate 85%, and the overall response rate was 65%. The sample included 1,708 NZ European, 639 Māori, 332 Pacific, 337 Asian people and 158 people of 'Other' ethnicity (prioritised ethnicity).
- The data have been adjusted (weighted) to ensure they are representative of the population of Year 10 school students.
- For this analysis, proportions and 95% confidence intervals were produced. Odds ratios were undertaken to compare responses between groups. The significance level used for statistical analyses was set to  $\alpha=0.05$ .
- A full description of the 2010 YIS methodology and further YIS publications can be found at [www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html](http://www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html).

### Footnote

The full response option was 'I have never smoked /I am not a smoker now'. However, as the question was only analysed for those who had tried to stop smoking, these respondents would have fallen into the category of 'I am not a smoker now'.

### 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

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