

Young people's awareness of 'Smokefree 2025'

Background

In March 2011, the New Zealand Government committed to a goal of New Zealand becoming 'smokefree' by the year 2025, where less than 5% of the population smokes (The New Zealand Government, 2011). The Health Promotion Agency's (HPA's) Youth Insights Survey (YIS) monitors Year 10 students' behaviours, attitudes and knowledge on a range of tobacco-related topics, including the 'Smokefree 2025' goal.

Methodology

Participants in the 2012 YIS were asked about whether they were aware of the 'Smokefree 2025' goal, if they thought the goal is achievable, and if they thought many people would still be smoking in the year 2025.

Responses to these questions were examined by:

- smoking status
 1. never smoked
 2. current smokers (smoke at least monthly)
 3. ex (no longer smoke) and experimental (smoke less often than monthly) smokers
- susceptibility to smoking
 1. non-susceptible never smokers (who said they would 'definitely not' accept a cigarette offered by their best friend or smoke a cigarette during the next 12 months)
 2. susceptible never smokers
- ethnicity
- gender.

When looking at the differences by ethnicity and gender we have controlled for smoking status. This means that we take into account whether or not a respondent smokes, to ensure that any differences found by ethnicity or gender are not in fact due to the respondent's own smoking status. Only those differences between groups that were statistically significant ($p < .05$) are reported.

Awareness of Smokefree 2025

All participants were asked, 'The government has a goal of a Smokefree New Zealand/Auahi Kore Aotearoa by 2025. This means that the country would essentially be smokefree, meaning that less than 5% of the population would be smokers. Before today, were you aware of this goal?' Just over one-third (36%, 33-39%) had heard of the goal. One-half (51%, 48-54%) had not and 13% (11-14%) didn't know. There were no significant group differences in awareness of the 'Smokefree 2025' goal.

Young people who think Smokefree 2025 is achievable

All participants were asked, 'Do you think that a Smokefree/Auahi Kore Aotearoa New Zealand is achievable by 2025?' One-third (34%, 32-37%) said they thought it is achievable. Thirty-two percent (30-34%) did not, and 34% (32-36%) didn't know.

Those more likely to think 'Smokefree 2025' is achievable were:

- never smokers (37%), compared with ex/experimental smokers (32%); and both never and ex/experimental smokers, compared with current smokers (16%)
- non-susceptible never smokers (39%), compared with susceptible never smokers (29%).

Young people who think hardly anybody will be smoking by 2025

All participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that 'By 2025, hardly anybody will be smoking'. One-in-five (18%, 17-20%) agreed, while the majority disagreed (44%, 42-46%) or didn't know (38%, 36-40%).

Males (21%) were more likely than females (16%) to agree that by 2025 hardly anybody will be smoking.

Key points

- Around three in 10 young people were aware of the government's 'Smokefree 2025' goal. A similar proportion thought the goal is achievable.
- Around two in 10 young people thought that hardly anybody will be smoking by 2025.
- Those who had never smoked and were not susceptible to taking up smoking were the most likely to think the 'Smokefree 2025' goal is achievable.

References

The New Zealand Government (2011). *Government Response to the Report of the Māori Affairs Committee on its Inquiry into the tobacco industry in Aotearoa and the consequences of tobacco use for Māori. (Final Response)*. Presented to the House of Representatives in accordance with Standing Order 248. Wellington: the New Zealand Government.

Citation

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About the Youth Insights Survey

- The YIS forms part of the New Zealand Youth Tobacco Monitor (NZYTM), a collaborative effort by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) 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 and dating back to 1995 in different formats.
- The YIS collects data on smoking-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour, as well as data on students' interests, lifestyles, activities, media use, and responses to tobacco control initiatives. It monitors a broad spectrum of risk and protective factors that relate to smoking uptake among young people.
- The 2012 YIS was conducted with a sample of 3,143 Year 10 students (14 to 15-year-olds). The school-level response rate was 77%, the student level response rate 82%, and the overall response rate was 65%. The sample included 1,589 NZ European, 704 Māori, 295 Pacific, 340 Asian, and 199 people of 'Other' ethnicity (prioritised ethnicity). Seven percent (n = 222) were current smokers (smoke daily, weekly or monthly).
- The data have been adjusted (weighted) to ensure they are representative of the population of New Zealand 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 $\alpha=.05$.
- Comparison groups for these analyses were as follows:
 - Smoking status (current smokers, compared with ex/experimental smokers and never smokers).
 - Smoking susceptibility (susceptible never smokers, compared with non-susceptible never smokers; as determined by answers to the questions 'If one of your best friends offered you a cigarette, would you smoke it?' and 'At any time during the next year (12 months) do you think you will smoke a cigarette?', where non-susceptible never smokers answered 'definitely not' to both questions, and susceptible never smokers answered anything except 'definitely not').
 - Ethnicity (Māori, compared with non-Māori).
 - Gender (females, compared with males).
- A full description of the 2012 YIS methodology and further YIS publications can be found at <http://www.hpa.org.nz/research-library/research-publications>.

About the HPA

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