

# Indiana Youth Smoking



Tobacco Prevention  
and Cessation

October 2021

Preventing tobacco companies from aggressively marketing their products to youth should be a priority for everyone. Early use of cigarettes or other combustible tobacco products including cigars, cigarillos, pipe or hookah has been shown to lead to nicotine addiction. About half of adults who smoke report starting before the age of 18. In Indiana, an estimated 2,600 new Hoosier youth will smoke daily each year.

## Indiana has made substantial progress with youth cigarette smoking

Fewer youth reported ever trying cigarettes in 2018 than ever before.

High School students: **65.3%** in 2000 → **22.1%** in 2018

Middle School students: **34.1%** in 2000 → **9.5%** in 2018

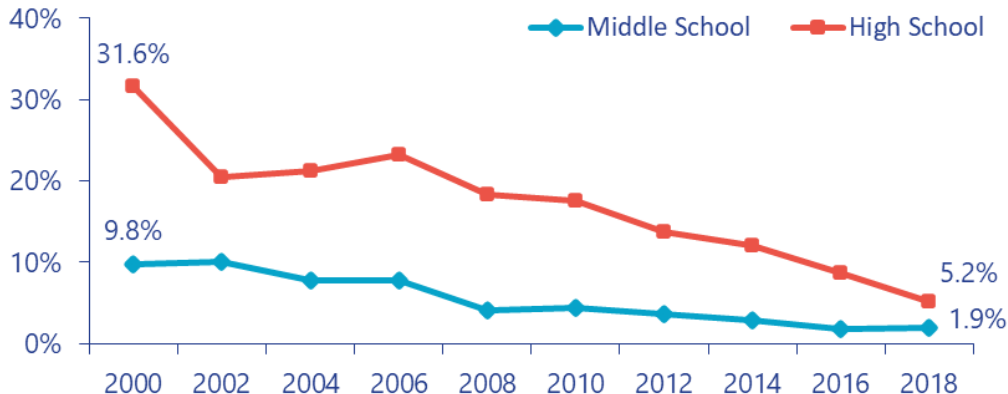
Fewer students reported current use (within 30 days) of cigarettes.

High School students: **31.6%** in 2000 → **5.2%** in 2018

Middle School students: **9.8%** in 2000 → **1.9%** in 2018.

These declines are similar to what we saw in 2020 across the United States as well. Current use of cigarettes dropped to **1.6% among middle school students and 4.6% among high school students** nationally.

Indiana Youth Smoking Prevalence,  
IYTS 2000-2018



## Changes in Smoking Behaviors

In addition to declines in smoking prevalence overall, fewer youth are reporting behaviors that indicate regular, established smoking.

- The percentage of Indiana high school students who frequently smoke **decreased by 40% between 2000 and 2018**, from 54.3% to 31.6%.

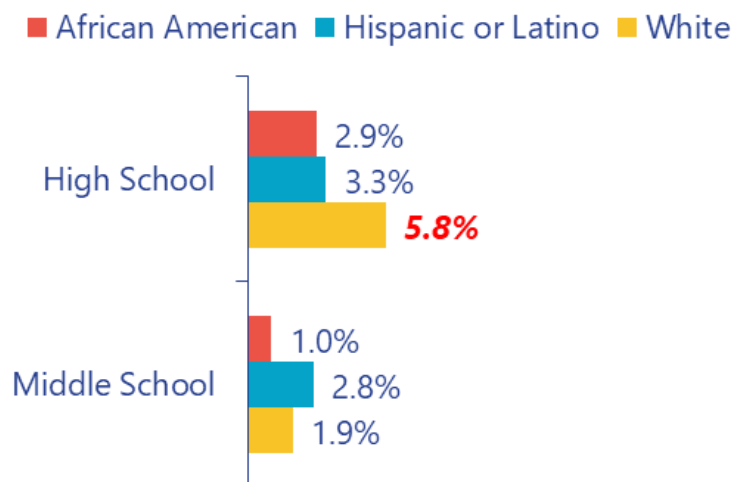
## Fast Facts

- An estimated **2,600 new Hoosier youth** become youth who smoke daily each year.
- **5.2%** of Hoosier high school students and **1.9%** of Hoosier middle school students reported current smoking in 2018.
- Current smoking has declined **81%** among middle school students and **84%** among high school students since 2000.
- Youth who do smoke are smoking less frequently and smoking fewer cigarettes.

## Demographics of Cigarette Smoking among Youth

- In 2020 among high school students across the US, smoking rates were not different across races. However, this differs from what we have seen among Indiana high school students. In 2018, current smoking was **significantly higher** among white students (5.8%) compared to Hispanic or Latino (3.3%) and African American (2.9%).
- Nationally, in 2020 we saw smoking prevalence continue to increase with grade level and with more high school students smoking compared to middle school students. Similarly, in Indiana, the lowest smoking rates are among youth in 6th grade and the highest of smoking rates are among those in the 12th grade.

Current Smoking among Indiana Youth, by Race/Ethnicity, IYTS 2018



## Other Combustible Tobacco Use

Other combustible tobacco, such as cigars, cigarillos, hookahs, and pipes, pose many of the same health risks as cigarettes. Nationally, in 2020, cigars including little cigars or cigarillos were used at rates similar to traditional cigarettes, this is similar to what we saw in Indiana in 2018. Additionally, use of any combustible tobacco use remains high, 9.4% among high school students in the US which is again similar to what we saw in Indiana in 2018. Many of these other combustible tobacco products are also available in flavors (cigars/cigarillos/hookah) which are intended to make tobacco products more appealing to youth.

### What Can You Do?

Due to the tailored marketing of the tobacco industry, thousands of Hoosier youth continue to smoke cigarettes and other combustible tobacco products. Reducing youth smoking will require sustained efforts including:



Promoting **tobacco-free environments** including public spaces



Providing evidence-based assistance for youth to quit commercial tobacco, such as the **Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW)**



Encouraging youth to join Indiana's youth empowerment initiative, VOICE, which promotes and celebrates tobacco-free lifestyles. **VOICEIndiana.org**