

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a summary of the research conducted with youth regarding tobacco beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Data were collected from focus groups, individual interviews, and a survey of 6th to 10th graders.

Research results are divided into five sections:

1. A description of tobacco rates among youth and their intentions of tobacco use (**Tobacco Initiation and Use**);
2. A description of the determinants of smoking initiation (**Determinants of Smoking Initiation**);
3. A description of the determinants of recent smoking among those who have ever smoked (**Determinants of Recent Smoking**);
4. A table summarizing the determinants of **Smoking Initiation** and **Recent Smoking**, and
5. Comparisons between results of surveys about tobacco use among youth.

Definitions

Smoking initiation refers to whether or not youth report having “**ever** tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?”

Recent smoking refers to those who have initiated tobacco use and who answered, “yes” to the question, “**In the past 30 days**, have you smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs?”

Qualitative research in this report refers to focus group and individual interviews. As described in the methods section, qualitative research results assisted in the development of the survey.

Survey research in this report refers to the data analysis of the survey of 6th through 10th graders.

The initial data analyses revealed that many of the factors that contribute to explaining whether youth smoke are, themselves, other risk behaviors (e.g., alcohol use, delinquent behaviors) or risk behaviors of sig-

nificant others (e.g., best friends, parents). Since these behaviors may not be direct intervention targets for programs aimed at preventing smoking, we have focused our subsequent analysis on identifying the factors that best explain youth smoking, among the factors that are promising and realistic intervention targets.

Significant findings from the survey research are reported for each smoking behavior, as well as highlights from the qualitative research results. Those factors that are significant explanatory factors are indicated with the following icons.



Smoking Initiation



Recent Smoking

It is important to note that smoking behavior refers to the use of cigarettes, not smokeless tobacco products. Although our survey posed questions on smokeless tobacco use, only a small percentage of the sample had initiated smokeless tobacco use.