

CIGARETTE SMOKING

In 2012, a report by the Surgeon General found that the majority of cigarette use begins in adolescence or young adulthood and reported that, “of every three young smokers, only one will quit, and one of those remaining smokers will die from tobacco-related causes.”⁷²

The percent of teens who report smoking in the past month began a rapid increase in the early 1990s, with the rates among 8th and 10th grade students reaching a peak in 1996 (at 21.0 and 30.4 percent, respectively), and the rate among 12th grade students peaking a year later (36.5 percent). After years of steady

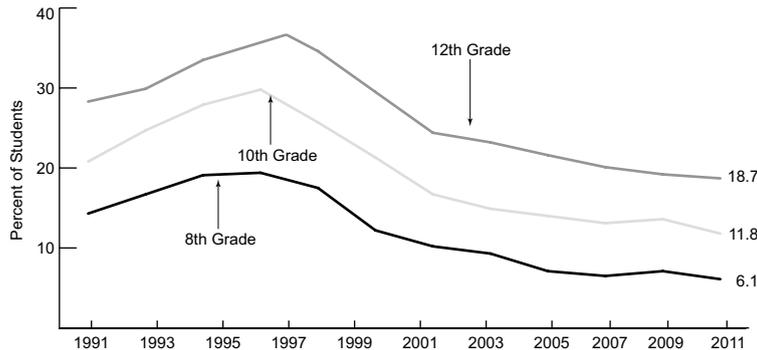
progress, declines in the use of cigarettes by adolescents and young adults have decelerated. In 2009, cigarette smoking among adolescents decreased to 12.7 percent, according to the annual Monitoring the Future study.⁷³ Between 2009 and 2010, the overall percentage of high school students who reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days rose from 12.7 percent in 2009 to 12.8 percent, but this change was not statistically significant. In 2011, declines in past-month smoking occurred among students in all three grades to 6.1 percent of 8th, 11.8 percent of 10th and 18.7 percent of 12th grade students. The decline between 2010 and 2011 was statis-

tically significant for 10th grade students only.

Despite a population-wide decline, certain subgroups of adolescents remain significantly more likely to smoke than their peers. Students who plan to complete a four-year college education are less than half as likely to smoke than students who either do not plan to attend college or plan to attend college for less than four years. This difference exists at each grade level. With regard to race and ethnicity, non-Hispanic White students are the most likely to report smoking in the past month, followed by Hispanic students (data not shown).

Cigarette Use Among Students in the Past 30 Days, by Grade, 1991–2011

Source (II.21): National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Monitoring the Future Study



Cigarette Use Among Students in the Past 30 Days, by College Plans, 2010–2011

Source (II.21): National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Monitoring the Future Study

