

Cigarette Use

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and accounts for more than 480,000 deaths each year in the United States.⁽¹⁾ Smoking and smokeless tobacco use are initiated and established primarily during adolescence while nearly nine out of ten smokers started smoking by age 18.^(2,3) Cigarette smoking increases risk for heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), acute respiratory illness, stroke, and cancers of the bladder, blood, cervix, colon, larynx, liver, lung, oral cavity, pancreas, pharynx, and stomach.^(3,4) In addition, as compared to nonsmokers, cigarette smokers are more likely to drink alcohol, use marijuana and cocaine, engage in risky sexual behaviors, engage in physical fighting, carry a weapon and attempt suicide.⁽³⁾




2023 Results

The following are findings related to cigarette use among NJ students for 2023:

- About 1-in-8 of New Jersey students (13%) reported ever smoking a cigarette in their life.
- Only 3% of students currently have smoked cigarettes on just one or more of the past 30 days.
- Frequent (smoking 20 of the past 30 days) or daily (smoking all of the past 30 days) was rare among NJ high schools with less than 0.5% of students doing so.
- Only 3% of NJ students reported smoking cigarettes before the age of 13 .

Trend Summary

The general 10-year trend for cigarette use among New Jersey youth is generally positive. Lifetime use of cigarettes fell from 34% to 13% and current use declined from 13% to 3%. (The lifetime cigarette use decline is not statistically confirmed by CDC.) Frequent and daily cigarette use also declined significantly in the past 10 years – both falling from about 4-5% to under 0.5%. Cigarette use before the age of 13 declined from 5% in 2019 to 3% in 2023, though the change is not statistically significant.

Percentage of New Jersey Youth Who	2013	2019	2021	2023	Trend
Lifetime Cigarette Use <i>smoked a cigarette, even one or two puffs, on any day in their life.</i>	34%	—	—	13%	Trend not reported by CDC —
Current Cigarette Use <i>smoked a cigarette on 1+ days in past 30 days</i>	13%	4%	4%	3%	Decrease in negative behavior 
Frequent Cigarette Use <i>smoked a cigarette on 20+ days in past 30 days</i>	5%	1%	1%	<0.5%	Decrease in negative behavior 
Daily Cigarette Use <i>smoked on all 30 days in the past 30 days</i>	4%	1%	1%	<0.5%	Decrease in negative behavior 

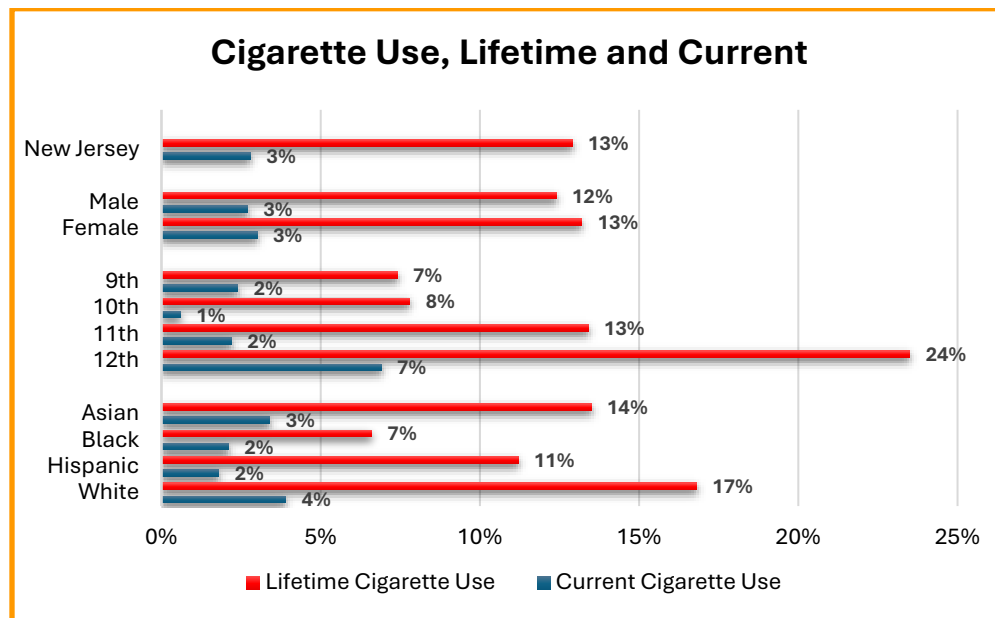
Percentage of New Jersey Youth Who	2013	2019	2021	2023	Trend
Cigarette Use Before Age 13 <i>smoked their first cigarette before the age of 13</i>	6%	5%	4%	3%	No change in behavior ●

Note: Trend analysis was performed by the CDC on data from 2013 to 2023 to determine which differences across years were statistically significant. For questions not asked in all survey years, the trend analysis was performed from 2021 back to the last consecutive year in which the question was asked.

Demographic Breakdown

Lifetime and current cigarette use was reported by 13% and 3% of NJ high school students respectively.

- **Gender** – Females and males were equally likely to have reported cigarette use in their lifetime (13% and 12%, respectively) or current cigarette use (3% each).
- **Grade** – Cigarette use was highest amongst 12th graders (24% lifetime and 7% current) who were about twice as likely as students in lower grades to have used cigarettes. Only 13% of students in 11th grade have smoked in their lifetime and this falls to 8% and 7% for students in 10th and 9th grades. Current use of cigarettes was just 1-2% for students in grades 9 to 11.
- **Race/Ethnicity** – Lifetime cigarette use was greatest among White students (17%) than Asian (14%), Hispanic (11%) or Black (7%) students. Current use of cigarettes was under 5% for White students (4%) as well as Asian (3%), Black and Hispanic (2% each) students.



Resources

- ReachNJ - Facing Addiction Taskforce: 1-844-ReachNJ (New Jersey's 24/7 Addiction Helpline), <https://nj.gov/humanservices/reachnj/>
- New Jersey Prevention Network: <https://www.njpn.org>
- Partnership for Drug-Free Kids: <https://drugfree.org/>

- Parent-To-Parent: <http://www.parent2parentnj.org/index.php>
- FDA's Youth Tobacco Prevention Plan:
<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/youth-and-tobacco/fdas-youth-tobacco-prevention-plan>