

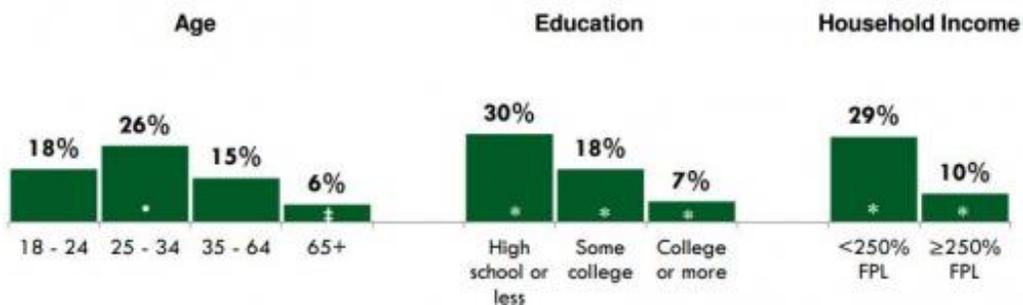
# Cancer survivors call for Vermont to increase tobacco sales age to 21

[vb vermontbiz.com/news/november/cancer-survivors-call-vermont-increase-tobacco-sales-age-21](http://vermontbiz.com/news/november/cancer-survivors-call-vermont-increase-tobacco-sales-age-21)

**Vermont Business Magazine** The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is celebrating the American Cancer Society's 41<sup>st</sup> annual Great American Smokeout Thursday, November 17, a day when smokers are encouraged to put down all tobacco products and formulate a plan to quit tobacco for good, by calling on the legislature to protect the health of Vermont residents by increasing the sale age of tobacco to 21.

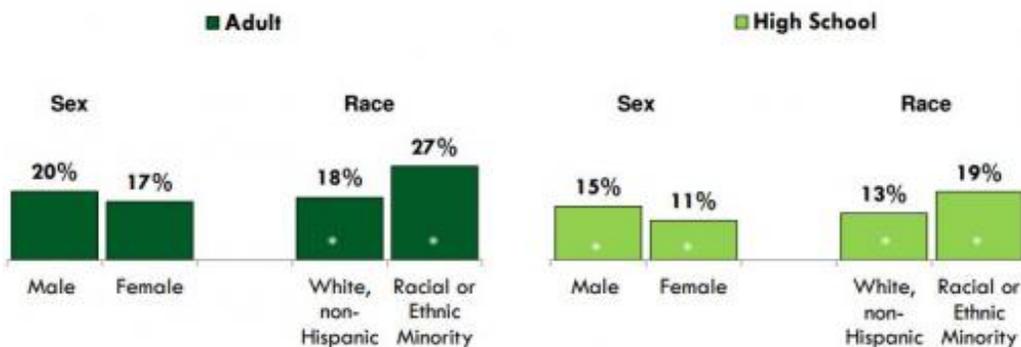
## Adult smoking prevalence by demographic characteristics

Vermonters 25 – 44 years old were significantly more likely than other age groups to report smoking. Adults 65 and older were significantly less likely to smoke compared to younger adults. Adults with less education and lower annual household incomes have higher smoking rates than those with more education or income.



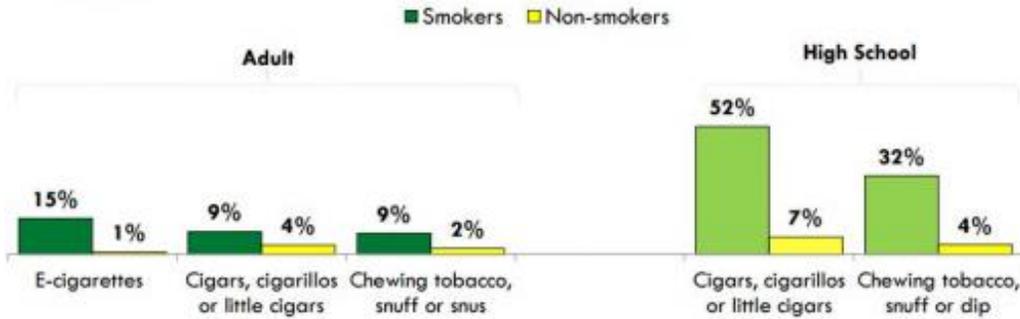
## Adult and youth smoking prevalence by demographic characteristics

In Vermont, adult men and women reported smoking at similar rates, while male high school students were significantly more likely to smoke compared to female students. The prevalence of cigarette use was statistically higher among racial or ethnic minorities compared to white non-Hispanics among adults and high school students.



## Adult and youth prevalence of other tobacco product use

Vermont adults and high school students who smoke were significantly more likely to use other tobacco products (OTP) and tobacco substitutes compared to non-smokers. The difference was particularly large among students: less than one in ten non-smokers used a cigar product or chewing tobacco while approximately half of smokers used a cigar product and one-third used chewing tobacco.

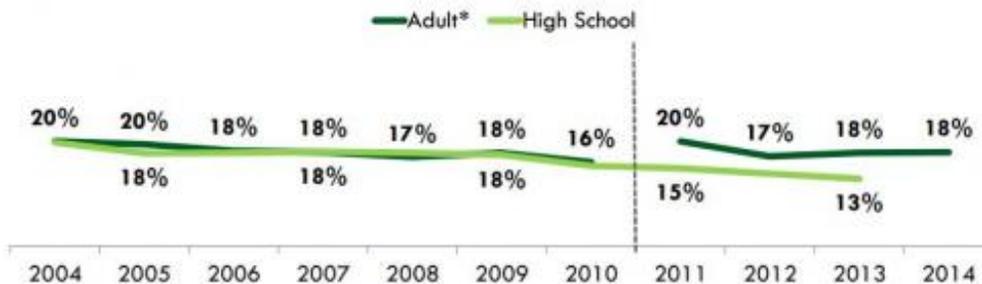


## Tobacco Use in Vermont



### Adult and youth cigarette smoking prevalence

In 2014, 18% of adults were current smokers and in the most recent data for youth (2013), 13% of high school students were current smokers. Cigarette smoking among students has decreased significantly in the past decade, while smoking prevalence among adults has remained similar over time.



Source: VT BRFSS 2004 – 2014 & YRBS 2005 - 2013

\*Adult data on this page are age adjusted to the U.S. 2000 population

--- Comparisons between data collected in 2011 and later and that from earlier years should be made with caution due to changes in survey methodology

The dangers of smoking cannot be overstated. A [recent study \(link is external\)](#) from the American Cancer Society found that smoking cigarettes contributed to more than one in four cancer deaths in the United States. The analysis also found that the impact of smoking varied considerably by state, reflecting the effectiveness of tobacco control policies and programs; for example, cigarettes contribute to 11 percent of cancer deaths among women in Utah but a staggering 40 percent of cancer deaths among men in Arkansas. In Vermont, 28 percent of cancer deaths are attributable to smoking, and [data \(link is external\)](#) shows that smoking prevalence among Vermont college students is higher than the national average, despite the state's largest institution - the university of Vermont - being a smoke free campus.

“The Society’s Great American Smokeout is about helping people quit, however, we can come closer to a generation of Vermonters never picking up this deadly addiction in the first place if we increase the sale age of tobacco to 21,” said Jill Sudhoff-Guerin, director of government relations for ACS CAN in Vermont. According to the Institute of Medicine, raising the sale age of tobacco products to 21 could reduce the prevalence of smoking by 12 percent.

“The Great American Smokeout is a perfect opportunity to remind our lawmakers that each year the tobacco

industry spends more than \$80 million on marketing in our state to entice the next generation of smokers,” said Sudhoff-Guerin. “Big Tobacco knows that 95 percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn 21 – by increasing the tobacco sales age to 21, we can help prevent a generation of kids from having to try to quit smoking, because they will never have started.”

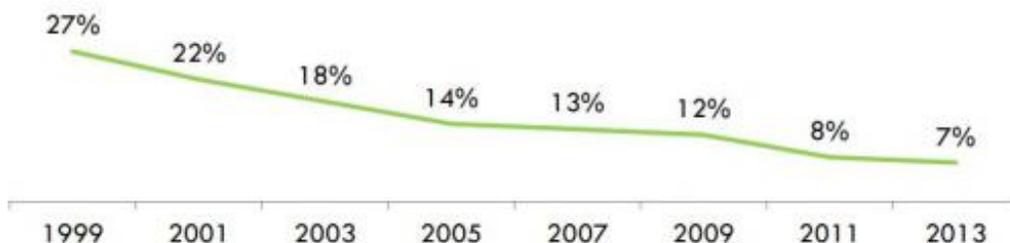
The American Cancer Society launched the Great American Smokeout over 40 years ago as a platform to encourage smokers to quit. Since then, the program has expanded to not only encourage smokers to make a plan to quit, but also to encourage all Americans to advocate for comprehensive smoke-free laws, increased tobacco excise taxes and increased funding for tobacco cessation programs.

ACS CAN works in partnership with state policymakers across the country to ensure that tobacco use is addressed through a comprehensive approach including 1) raising the price of tobacco products, 2) implementing comprehensive smoke-free policies and 3) fully funding and sustaining evidenced-based, statewide tobacco prevention and cessation programs.

The use of tobacco products remains the nation’s number one cause of preventable death, killing more than 480,000 Americans and costing \$289 billion in health care costs and lost productivity annually. In Vermont, tobacco is responsible for 1,000 deaths each year and costs the state \$348 million per year in direct health care costs. States with comprehensive tobacco control programs experience faster declines in cigarette sales, smoking prevalence and lung cancer incidence and mortality than states that do not invest in these programs.

#### Initiation of cigarette use before age 13

- In 2013, 7% of high school students reported smoking a whole cigarette before age 13.
- Smoking before age 13 decreased significantly from 2011 to 2013 and continued a downward trend since 1999.



ACS CAN, the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit [www.acscan.org](http://www.acscan.org) (link is external).

For additional quit tips and information about the effects of using tobacco, visit [cancer.org/smokeout](http://cancer.org/smokeout) (link is external).

# Definitions of Tobacco Measures

|  |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Current smoker</b>                                | Adult                   | Smoked at least 100 cigarettes in life and now smokes every or some days   |
|  | High school/<br>college | Smoked at least one cigarette during the past 30 days  |
| <b>Smoker</b>  | Adult                   | Current smoker or smoked at least 100 cigarettes in life and quit within the past 12 months  |
| <b>Other tobacco product/tobacco substitute user</b> | Adult                   | Uses OTP/tobacco substitute everyday or some days  |
|  | High school/<br>college | Used OTP/tobacco substitute during the past 30 days  |
| <b>Quit attempt</b>                                  | Adult/ high school      | Made at least one quit attempt in the last 12 months   |
| <b>Secondhand smoke exposure</b>                     | Adult                   | Someone other than yourself smoked tobacco in your home or you were in a car with someone smoking tobacco or you breathed the smoke from someone who was smoking tobacco in an indoor or outdoor public space during the past seven days   |
|  | High school             | In the same room or car as someone who was smoking during the past seven days  |
| <b>Home or vehicle smoking ban</b>                   | Adult                   | Don't allow any smoking anywhere in their home (considered to allow smoking if smoking was permitted in some places or at some times in their home or if there were no rules about smoking in their home).<br>Don't allow any smoking when children are in the vehicle (considered to allow smoking if smoking was permitted some times or anytime when children are in the vehicle or if there were no rules about smoking when children are in the vehicle). |

Vermont Department of Health

11/11/16

WILLISTON, Vermont - November 11, 2016 – American Cancer Society, Inc.