

## REPORT ON TOBACCO CONSUMPTION AMONG HISPANIC/LATINO YOUTH

The National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN) recognizes that the burden of tobacco addiction has taken its toll on Hispanic/Latino communities. The purpose of this report is to bring awareness on tobacco consumption among the Hispanic/Latino Youth. This report includes information on smoking trends, patterns, health effects and recommendations for action.

This is a continuation of a report series produced by NLTCN which are useful resources for agencies, advocates and researchers who are working on tobacco control initiatives in Hispanic/Latino communities.



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### About the authors of this Report:

**Cecilia Portugal, MPH**, is a NLTCN collaborative partner and represents the University of Southern California, Institute for Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Research.

**Jeannette Noltenius, MA, PhD**, is the Director of the National Latino Tobacco Control Network and she represents the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc.

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# REPORT ON TOBACCO CONSUMPTION AMONG HISPANIC/LATINO YOUTH

Contributors: Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati, MPH, PhD; Aida McCammon, MSW, PhD; Jean A. Leroux Guillén, BGS  
This report is available in Spanish, translated by: Lizbeth Perez

## Overview

Each day in the United States, approximately 3,900 young people between 12 and 17 years of age smoke their first cigarette, and an estimated 1,000 youth become daily cigarette smokers.<sup>1</sup>

### *Tobacco Industry Targets Hispanic/Latino Youth*

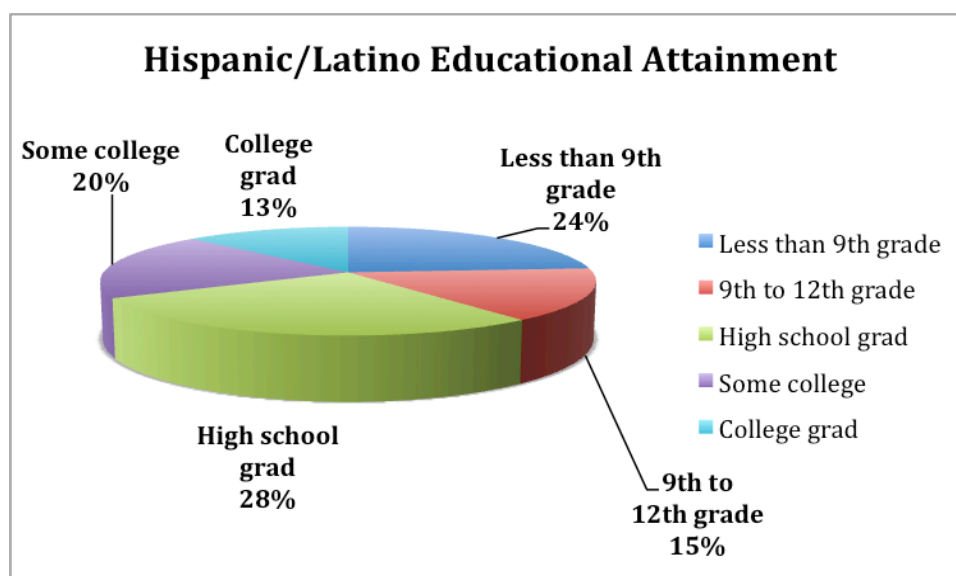
- The Hispanic/Latino population is a youthful population and heavily targeted by the tobacco industry, putting growing numbers of Hispanic/Latino youth and young adults more at risk for pro-tobacco influences and tobacco use. For example, according to research from the Pew Hispanic Center, the median age of Hispanics is 27 years old for both males and females whereas, for Whites the median age is 41, African-American median age is 32 and Asian median age is 36.<sup>2</sup>
- The cigarette companies spend more than \$12.5 billion each year to promote their deadly products – that’s more than \$34 million spent every day to market cigarettes, and much of that marketing directly reaches and influences kids.<sup>3</sup> Kids are more susceptible to cigarette advertising and marketing than adults.<sup>4</sup>
- Eighty-one (81.3) percent of youth smokers (12-17) prefer Marlboro, Camel, and Newport, three heavily advertised brands, while only 54.1 percent of smokers over age 26 prefer these brands.<sup>5</sup>
- Tobacco industry companies have targeted Hispanic/Latino youth through ads that depict Hispanic/Latino models, themes, and Spanish language text to entice youth to smoke. Youth along the U.S./Mexico border are a population that is at higher risk for being exposed to broadcast tobacco product advertisements, which are unrestricted in Mexico. This coupled with the problem that many Hispanic/Latinos along the border have little access to health care makes them even more vulnerable to tobacco use and less likely to receive smoking cessation intervention.
- Comprehensive statewide and national media campaigns and educational strategies and programs have helped to prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth. Examples of such programs are Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and the truth® campaign of the Legacy

Foundation. A recent study showed that real per capita expenditures on tobacco control had a negative and significant impact on youth smoking prevalence and on the average number of cigarettes smoked by smokers.<sup>6</sup>

### *Educational Attainment*

- According to a 2007 U.S. Census Bureau report, 61% of Hispanic/Latinos in comparison to 89% non-Hispanic Whites have a high school diploma. While only 12.5% of Hispanic/Latinos in comparison to 30.5% of non-Hispanic Whites have a bachelor’s degree.<sup>7</sup> (Figure 1)
- According to The Pew Hispanic Center, only 9% of Hispanics or fewer than 1-in-10 Hispanic dropouts obtained a GED Credential compared to 29% Whites and 20% African-Americans. This shows that twice as many African-Americans and three times as any white dropouts had a GED. Thus, Hispanics were the least likely group to have the “second chance” credential providing greater opportunities for future educational attainment or adequate employment.<sup>8</sup>
- Tobacco-use surveys conducted in middle schools and high schools, do not capture those students who are drop outs. In 2006, 59% of Hispanics age 25 and older had at least a high school education, and 12% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Furthermore, 839,000 Hispanics 25 years and older had advanced degrees in 2006 (e.g., master’s, professional, and doctorate). This means that approximately 39% of Hispanics have not finished high school.<sup>9</sup> Thus, there is a large segment of high school aged Hispanic youth who are not accounted for in national surveys with high school students to capture the use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.

**Figure 1**



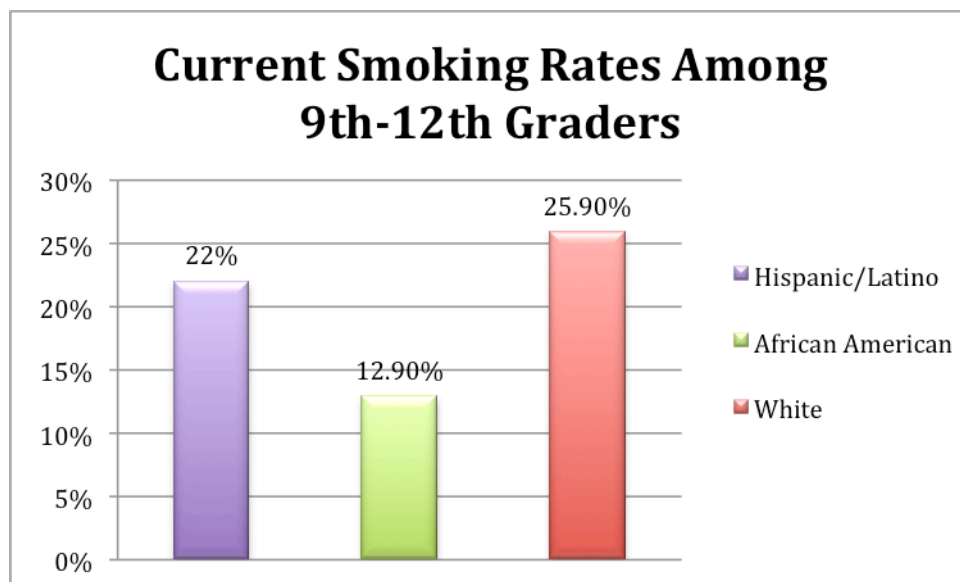
## Tobacco Use

- Smoking and smokeless tobacco use are usually initiated and established during adolescence. Most people become addicted to tobacco products before the age of 20. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, youth cigarette use declined between 1997-2003 but rates have remained relatively stable over the past several years.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, during the past few years, an increasing number of U.S. high school students have reported using smokeless tobacco products.<sup>11</sup>

### *Cigarette Smoking Among Hispanic/Latino High School Students and Middle School Students*

- According to the Center's for Disease Control, Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), the estimate for current cigarette smoking among Hispanics in grades 9 through 12 is 22.0%, versus 12.9% for African Americans and 25.9% for whites.<sup>12</sup> (Figure 2). Nationally, the estimate for youth in grades 9–12 is 23.0%.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 2**



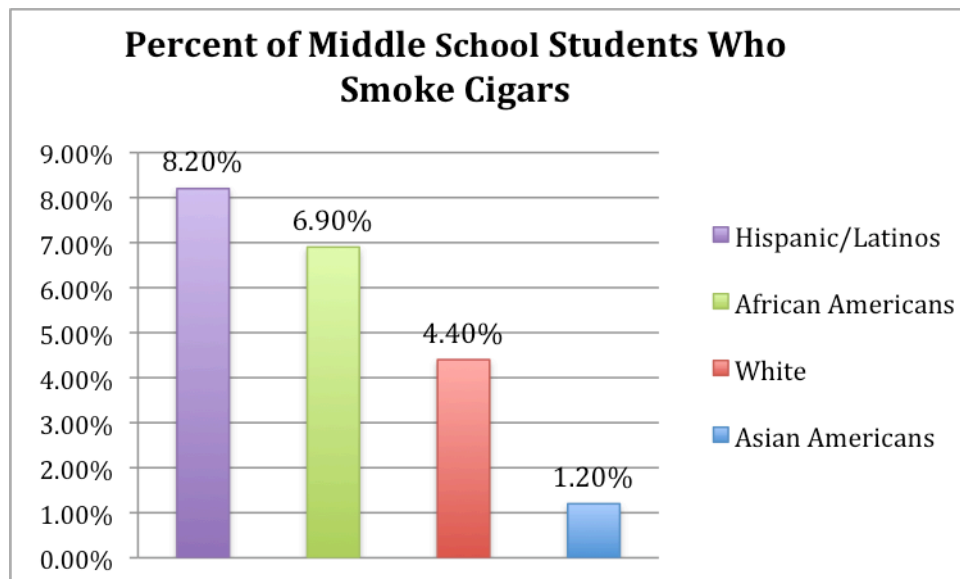
- Hispanic/Latino male high school students (grades 9 through 12) have a smoking prevalence rate equal to that of non-Hispanic whites (24.9%) versus 14.0% of African American males.<sup>14</sup> Nationally, the estimate for all males in grades 9–12 is 22.9%.<sup>15</sup>
- In terms of Hispanic/Latino female high school students, an estimated 19.2% of Hispanic females in grades 9 through 12 are current cigarette smokers, compared with 11.9% of African American females and 27.0% of white females in these grades.<sup>16</sup> Nationally, the estimate for all females in grades 9–12 is 23.0%.<sup>17</sup>

- Unfortunately, younger Hispanic/Latino students have higher smoking prevalence rates than their older counterparts (high school students). **Among middle school students Hispanic/Latino young people have the highest smoking prevalence rate (9.9%)** versus 8.5% of non-Hispanic White, 7.6% of African American, and 2.7% of Asian American middle school students.<sup>18</sup> The smoking prevalence estimate for all middle school students is 8.4%.<sup>19</sup>

*Cigar and Smokeless Tobacco Use among Hispanic/Latino Middle School Students*

- Cigarettes are not the only tobacco product that Hispanic/Latino middle school students smoke. An estimated 8.2% of Hispanic/Latinos, 6.9% of African Americans, 4.4% of whites, and 1.2% of Asian Americans are current cigar smokers.<sup>20</sup>
- Nationally, an estimated 5.3% of all middle school students are current cigar smokers with Hispanic/Latino students smoking at almost twice this rate.<sup>21</sup> (Figure 3)
- Hispanic/Latino male high school students (grades 9–12) appear to have the second lowest smokeless tobacco prevalence rate compared to other youth. Also, they have a lower prevalence rate compared to the overall national prevalence rate for use of smokeless tobacco. An estimated 8.6% of Hispanics, 3.0% of African Americans, and 17.6% of whites are current users of smokeless tobacco.<sup>22</sup> Nationally, an estimated 13.6% of high school males are current users of smokeless tobacco.<sup>23</sup> This difference between middle school student’s tobacco use rates compared to high school student’s rates can possibly be due to the high numbers of Hispanic/Latinos (39%) who drop out of high school.

**Figure 3**



## *Parental Influence and Modeling*

- A recent study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (The NSDUH Report, May 7, 2010) examined mothers' smoking and mothers' depression as possible risk factors for their adolescent children's cigarette use. The results showed that of mothers living with adolescents, 1 in 10 (10%) had a Major Depressive Episode (MDE) in the past month.<sup>24</sup>
- The study also showed that 25.6% of the mother's who had an MDE in the past month smoked cigarettes. According to this study, 24.6 million adolescents live with their mothers. Of these youth, 9.7% had mothers with past year MDE.<sup>25</sup>
- The smoking rates were higher among youth who's mothers had both risk factors, smoking and an MDE versus the adolescences who's mothers did not have an MDE in the past year (14.3% vs. 7.9% respectively).<sup>26</sup> Thus, peer pressure is not the only influence on youth smoking but so is the home setting, environment and exposure to the modeling of smoking behavior; these influences impact youth's smoking uptake.

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Tel: 317.472.1055 Fax: 317.472.1056 Toll free: 1-888-794-4291 [www.indianalatinocom](http://www.indianalatinocom)



[www.LatinoTobaccoControl.org](http://www.LatinoTobaccoControl.org)

BUILDING HEALTHIER LATINO COMMUNITIES BY  
REDUCING TOBACCO USE

## NATIONAL NETWORKS FOR TOBACCO CONTROL AND PREVENTION

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) funds selected organizations to lead six networks ([www.tobaccopreventionnetworks.org](http://www.tobaccopreventionnetworks.org)). These national networks educate, mobilize, and connect communities in an effort to strengthen tobacco control initiatives for specific populations. The lead agencies and the corresponding networks for these priority populations are:

**African American** — National African American Tobacco Prevention Network  
NAATPN [www.naatpn.org](http://www.naatpn.org)

**American Indian / Native Alaskan** — Intertribal Council of Michigan  
National Native Commercial Tobacco Abuse Prevention Network [www.keepitsacred.org](http://www.keepitsacred.org)

**Asian / Pacific Islanders** — Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy & Leadership  
APPEAL PROMISE [www.appealforcommunities.org](http://www.appealforcommunities.org)

**Hispanic / Latinos** — The Indiana Latino Institute, Inc.  
National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN) [www.latinotobaccocontrol.org](http://www.latinotobaccocontrol.org)

**Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual / Transgender / Queer** — The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health  
National LGBTQ Tobacco Control Network [www.lgbttobacco.org](http://www.lgbttobacco.org)

**Low Socio Economic Status** — The Health Education Council  
Break Free Alliance [www.healthedcouncil.org](http://www.healthedcouncil.org)

## NATIONAL LATINO TOBACCO CONTROL NETWORK

NLTCN started operating in July 2008 through a five year cooperative agreement as part of the National Network Initiative. The Network's goals are to become an effective catalyst, build leadership, inform, energize and support a National Network of tobacco control experts and activists working with Latino communities, states and coalitions to address the health burdens created by tobacco consumption. NLTCN achieves its goals by promoting policies and programs that prevent youth initiation, increase quit rates and assure smoke-free environments, as well as training and supporting communities to achieve policy changes and de-normalize tobacco use.

The expertise of the NLTCN network is built upon the collaboration of organizations and agencies involved with comprehensive tobacco control policies and programs; promising and best practices; faith and health based community mobilization; publication of tobacco control outreach materials in Spanish and English; promotion of effective cessation programs; utilization of Promotoras (Health Promoters) for tobacco control; capacity building, training and technical assistance in local communities; participatory research, evaluations, assessments and analysis; as well as, youth mobilization and media advocacy.

Although NLTCN focuses on tobacco disparities affecting the Hispanic/Latino communities, our network is enriched by the efforts and accomplishments of all the other networks collaborating with the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) which includes the CDC's OSH, Network members, Network partners, States, and other local and national tobacco control organizations to advance the science and practice of tobacco control in the United States for all members of their populations.