

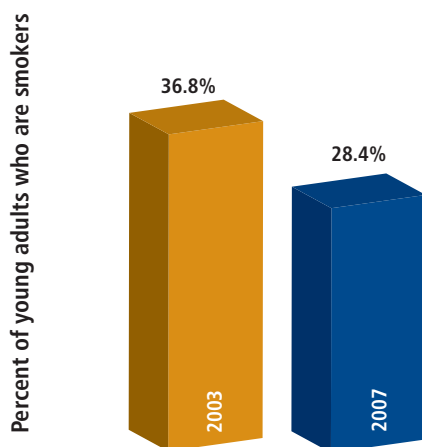


FEWER YOUNG ADULT MINNESOTANS SMOKE

Fewer young adults smoke.

The percentage of Minnesota adults aged 18-24 who report that they have smoked in the past 30 days has declined from 36.8 percent in 2003 to 28.4 percent in 2007 (Figure 1), according to the Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey (MATS). This represents 42,000 fewer young adult smokers than in 2003. Although Minnesota's young adults still have the highest smoking rate of any adult age group, the decrease in young adult smoking is much larger than the decrease in overall adult smoking. In this study, a young adult current smoker is defined as someone who has smoked cigarettes in the previous 30 days.

FIGURE 1. FEWER MINNESOTANS AGED 18-24 WERE CURRENT SMOKERS IN 2007 THAN IN 2003.



Source: Minnesota Adult Tobacco Surveys, 2003 and 2007

Minnesota's Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program:

In Minnesota, a comprehensive tobacco control program—led by ClearWay MinnesotaSM, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)—implements broad, evidence-based statewide strategies to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.

Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey:

The three partner organizations also collaborate on the Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey, which is the most thorough source of information about tobacco use prevalence, behaviors, attitudes and beliefs in the adult Minnesota population and serves as a tool for measuring the progress of Minnesota's comprehensive tobacco control program. Data for the most recent MATS were collected in 2007. Other survey years were 1999 and 2003. Key findings from the most recent MATS and the trend analyses from all three MATS are discussed in the complete report, *Creating a Healthier Minnesota: Progress in Reducing Tobacco Use*, and in accompanying MATS briefings, which are available at www.mnadulttobaccosurvey.org.

FEWER YOUNG ADULT MINNESOTANS SMOKE

Young Adult Smokers in Minnesota are most likely to be male and less educated.

- Young men currently smoke at a rate of 33.3 percent, compared with 23.1 percent for young women.
- Over 40 percent of young adults (41.1 percent) not enrolled in college are current smokers, compared with 23.0 percent of young adults who are enrolled in college or have already graduated from college.

This definition is more appropriate for studies of adolescents and young adults than the definition of current smoker used for adults, which is someone who has smoked 100 or more cigarettes and now smokes every or some days. See chapter 5 of the full report, *Creating a Healthier Minnesota: Progress in Reducing Tobacco Use*, for further explanation of these terms.

Multiple efforts have contributed to the drop in smoking.

Young adults are center stage in the fight to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use. They are in transition

between adolescence, when most smokers start to smoke, and the middle and later adult years, when smoking tends to become more deeply entrenched. The tobacco industry also directs much of its marketing at this age group.

The encouraging drop in young adult smoking may be traced in part to strategies used by Minnesota's comprehensive tobacco control program to reach both adolescents and young adults. The Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative (MYTPI), launched by the Minnesota Department of Health in 2000, focused on 12-17-year-olds because more than 80 percent of adult smokers begin smoking before age 18. MYTPI included the Target Market ad campaign and youth organizing movement, grants to school and community prevention programs, and tougher enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to youths under age 18. In 2004, MYTPI was replaced by the Tobacco-Free Communities grant program. The success of these efforts appears to be showing up in the later adolescent and young adult years. According to the Minnesota Student Survey, the smoking rate among 12th-grade students fell from 34.6 percent in 2001 to 23.0 percent in 2007. Far fewer youth are now entering their young adult years as current smokers.

Colleges and universities in Minnesota are increasingly prohibiting smoking in college buildings, including dormitories, and in some outdoor campus areas. Some campuses have become entirely smoke-free. ClearWay MinnesotaSM, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and their higher education partners have developed creative media campaigns and other innovative programs to reach college students. These efforts appear to be succeeding. According to University of Minnesota studies, tobacco use among 18-24-year-old students on the Twin Cities campus dropped by one-third between 2003 and 2007.

Increasing the price of cigarettes also appears to have affected young adult smoking patterns. Thirty percent (30.4 percent) of young adult smokers reported that the 75-cent increase brought about by the 2005 health impact fee helped them cut down on cigarettes, and 33.8 percent said it helped them make a quit attempt.

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Most young adults know they can get help to quit smoking but don't think they need it.

Young adult smokers are as likely to try to quit as older adults. However, they are not using the most effective and available strategies in their attempts to quit. More than two-thirds (68.9 percent) of young adults are aware of free quit-smoking programs, but only 1.1 percent of young adult smokers report using behavioral counseling. In contrast, 17.9 percent of those 25 and older used behavioral counseling. Young adult smokers with a quit attempt (85.3 percent) are far more likely than older smokers with a quit attempt (48.7 percent of those 25 and older) to believe they can quit without the help of medications. About one-fourth (28.3 percent) of young adult smokers report using any stop-smoking medications such as the nicotine patch and prescription drugs when they tried to quit, compared with 49.2 percent of those 25 and older (Figure 2).

Many young adult smokers are surrounded by people who smoke.

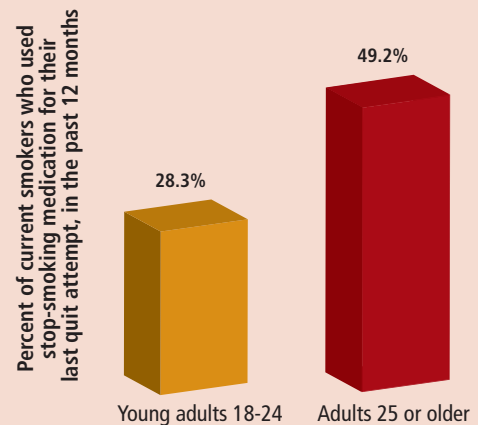
Sixty percent (59.5 percent) of young adult smokers report that at least one other adult who lives in their household smokes. Also, 40.9 percent report that about half or more of the people who are close to them smoke or use other forms of tobacco. The presence of other smokers in their daily lives may encourage some young adults to start smoking, provides more occasions and temptations to smoke, and can discourage quitting or staying quit.

Young adult smokers are also more likely than older adults to be social smokers. Over 40 percent (42.4 percent) reported that, in the last 30 days, they smoked mainly when they were with other people, and 56.1 percent reported that, in the past 30 days, they were more likely to smoke while they were drinking alcohol. Because they limit their smoking to social situations, many social smokers may feel that they are in control of their smoking and are not at risk of becoming deeply addicted.

Fewer young adults are exposed to secondhand smoke.

Young adults' exposure to secondhand smoke has decreased substantially, although they still face greater exposure than any other age group. The percentage of young adults who reported any exposure to secondhand

FIGURE 2. FEW YOUNG ADULT SMOKERS USE MEDICATIONS WHEN THEY TRY TO QUIT SMOKING.



Source: Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey, 2007

MINNESOTA PASSES FREEDOM TO BREATHE ACT OF 2007

In May 2007, Minnesota passed a comprehensive smoke-free law that covers indoor public places and workplaces, including bars and restaurants. Because the Freedom to Breathe Act went into effect in October 2007—after MATS data collection was conducted—this study does not reflect the effects of this statewide law. MATS 2007 data do provide an opportunity to describe the effects of local policies and, potentially, forecast the larger effects of a statewide policy.

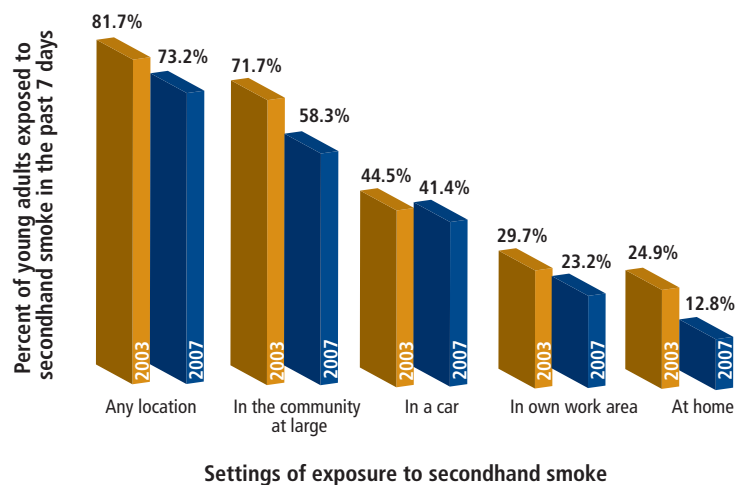
MATS SURVEY METHODS

MATS 2007 telephone interviews were conducted with adults aged 18 and older living in Minnesota from February to June 2007. The sample of 12,580 responding adults consisted of 7,532 from a statewide random digit dial sample and 5,048 from a list of Blue Cross members. The response rates were 41 percent and 48 percent, respectively. The two samples were merged using scientific survey weighting methods, and the merged sample is representative of the Minnesota adult population. Associations are based on bivariate analysis only and are not adjusted for potential confounders. Statistical tests used overlapping confidence intervals and chi-square tests. Differences are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ unless otherwise noted.

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smoke in the past seven days fell from 81.7 percent in 2003 to 73.2 percent in 2007 (Figure 3). The sharpest decreases were found in homes and in the community at large. The drop in exposure may be related to the general decline in young adult smoking and the adoption of local smoke-free ordinances. In addition, the percent of young adults who live in households that prohibit smoking inside the home increased from 72.2 percent in 2003 to 87.5 percent in 2007.

FIGURE 3. SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE HAS DECREASED AMONG YOUNG ADULT MINNESOTANS SINCE 2003.



Source: Minnesota Adult Tobacco Surveys, 2003 and 2007



MINNESOTA ADULT TOBACCO SURVEY

Tobacco Use in Minnesota: 1999 to 2007

www.mnadulttobaccosurvey.org

Ann St. Claire, MPH
 Research Program Manager
 ClearWay MinnesotaSM
 (952) 767-1416
 astclaire@clearwaymn.org

