

Young people's opinion on extending smoking bans to cars and outdoor places where young people go

Background

To reduce New Zealanders' exposure to second-hand smoke and de-normalise smoking behaviour, smoking is prohibited in a range of places, including indoor areas of work and licensed premises, and the grounds and buildings of schools and early childhood centres (The Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act, 2003). Possible ways to further reduce young people's second-hand smoke exposure include extending the range of smokefree settings to areas where they are likely to be (eg, vehicles, recreation parks). The Health Promotion Agency's (HPA's) Youth Insights Survey (YIS) monitors Year 10 students' behaviours, attitudes and knowledge on a range of tobacco-related topics, including their opinions on extending smoking bans.

Methodology

To regularly monitor young people's opinions about tobacco control and aid the development of appropriate health promotion strategies, respondents in the 2012 YIS answered a few questions about their opinion on extending smokefree areas.

Responses to these questions were examined by:

- smoking status
 1. never smoked
 2. current smokers (smoke at least monthly)
 3. ex (no longer smoke) and experimental (smoke less often than monthly) smokers
- susceptibility to smoking
 1. non-susceptible never smokers (who said they would 'definitely not' accept a cigarette offered by their best friend or smoke a cigarette during the next 12 months)
 2. susceptible never smokers
- ethnicity
- gender.

When looking at the differences by exposure to second-hand smoke, ethnicity or gender, we have controlled for smoking status. This means that we take into account whether or not a respondent smokes, to ensure that any differences found by exposure to second-hand smoke, ethnicity or gender are not in fact due to the respondent's own smoking status. Only those differences between groups that were statistically significant ($p < .05$) are reported.

The 2010 YIS also asked about opinions on bans on smoking outdoors where young people are likely to go. Therefore, further analysis was undertaken on this question to examine change over time.

Smoking in cars when children are in them

All respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that 'smoking in cars should be banned when children are in them'. Almost all young people (88%, 86-89%) agreed with this statement. A small proportion disagreed (4%, 4-5%) or didn't know (8%, 7-9%). Those more likely to 'agree' were:

- never smokers (92%), compared with ex/experimental smokers (86%); and both never and ex/experimental smokers, compared with current smokers (63%)
- those who said no-one had smoked around them in the past week (92%), compared with those who said someone had (85%)
- those who had not been exposed to second-hand smoke while travelling in cars or vans in the past week (92%), compared with those who had (74%)
- females (91%), compared with males (85%).

Smoking in outdoor places where young people go

All respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that 'smoking should be banned in all outdoor places where young people go'. Around three-quarters (73%, 71-75%) agreed with this statement, 12% (10-13%) disagreed, and 15% (14-16%) didn't know. Those more likely to 'agree' were:

- never smokers (81%), compared with ex/experimental smokers (67%); and both never and ex/experimental smokers, compared with current smokers (29%)
- non-susceptible never smokers (85%), compared with susceptible never smokers (64%)

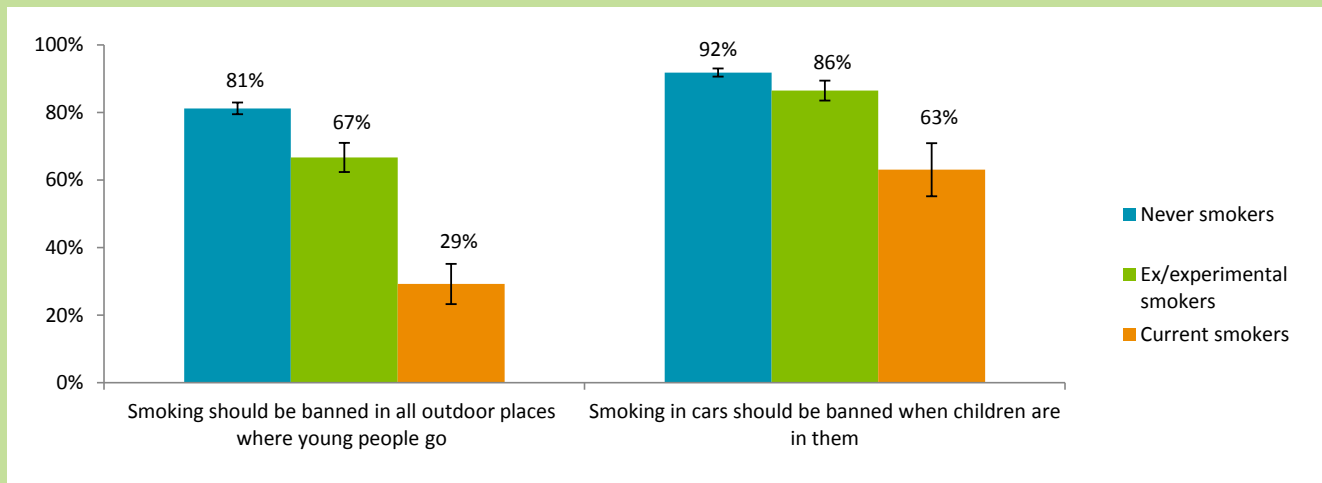
- those who said no one smoked around them in the past week (81%), compared with those who said someone had (68%)
- those who had not been exposed to second-hand smoke while travelling in cars or vans in the past week (78%), compared with those who had (58%)
- females (76%), compared with males (70%).

The overall rate of agreement that 'smoking should be banned in all outdoor places where young people go' in 2012 (73%) was not significantly different to the 2010 rate (71%).

Key points

- There was high agreement (88%) among young people with banning smoking in cars while children are in them. The majority also agreed that smoking bans should be extended to all outdoor places where young people go (73%).
- Young people most likely to agree with extending smoking bans were those who had never smoked, had not been exposed to second-hand smoke during the past week, and were female.
- Although current smokers were less likely than others to agree with extending smoking bans, around two-thirds did agree with a smoking ban in cars while children are present, and one-third with a smoking ban in outdoor places where young people go (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proportion of respondents who agreed with smoking bans in outdoor areas where young people go and in cars when children are in them, by smoking status



About the Youth Insights Survey

- The YIS forms part of the New Zealand Youth Tobacco Monitor (NZYTM), a collaborative effort by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and Action on Smoking and Health (ASH).
- The YIS is a nationwide paper-based survey conducted in schools every two years, first carried out in its current form in 2006 and dating back to 1995 in different formats.
- The YIS collects data on smoking-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour, as well as data on students' interests, lifestyles, activities, media use, and responses to tobacco control initiatives. It monitors a broad spectrum of risk and protective factors that relate to smoking uptake among young people.
- The 2012 YIS was conducted with a sample of 3,143 Year 10 students (14 to 15-year-olds). The school-level response rate was 77%, the student level response rate 82%, and the overall response rate was 65%. The sample included 1,589 NZ European, 704 Māori, 295 Pacific, 340 Asian, and 199 people of 'Other' ethnicity (prioritised ethnicity). Seven percent (n = 222) were current smokers (smoke daily, weekly or monthly).
- The data have been adjusted (weighted) to ensure they are representative of the population of New Zealand Year 10 school students.
- For this analysis, proportions and 95% confidence intervals were produced. Odds ratios were undertaken to compare responses between groups. The significance level used for statistical analyses was set to $\alpha=.05$.
- Comparison groups for these analyses were as follows:
 - Smoking status (current smokers, compared with ex/experimental smokers and never smokers).
 - Smoking susceptibility (susceptible never smokers, compared with non-susceptible never smokers; as determined by answers to the questions 'If one of your best friends offered you a cigarette, would you smoke it?' and 'At any time during the next year (12 months) do you think you will smoke a cigarette?', where non-susceptible never smokers answered 'definitely not' to both questions, and susceptible never smokers answered anything except 'definitely not').
- General exposure to second-hand smoke (those who said someone [including friends, family, and strangers] had smoked around them during the past week, compared with those who said no one had smoked around them in the past week).
- Exposure to second-hand smoke in cars/vans (those who said someone had smoked in their presence while they were travelling in a car or van in the past week, compared with those who said this had not happened).
- Ethnicity (Māori, compared with non-Māori).
- Gender (females, compared with males).
- A full description of the 2012 YIS methodology and further YIS publications can be found at <http://www.hpa.org.nz/research-library/research-publications>.

About the HPA

The HPA is a Crown entity that leads and delivers innovative, high quality and cost-effective programmes and activities that promote health, wellbeing and healthy lifestyles and prevent disease, illness and injury. The HPA also enables environments that support health and wellbeing and healthy lifestyles and reduce personal, social and economic harm.

References

The Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act 2003 (2003). *The Smoke-free Environments Amendment Act 2003*. Wellington.

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