

2012 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey: Fact Sheet 7



Social Attitudes Toward Tobacco Use



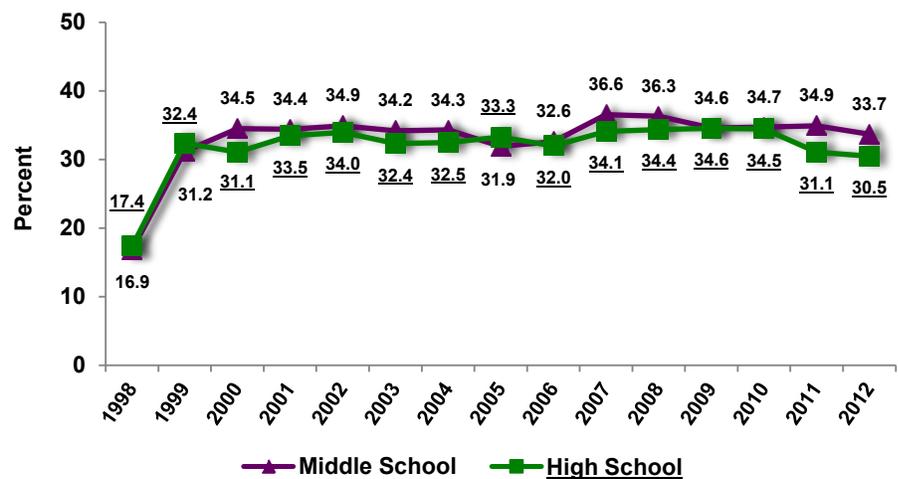
Introduction

The Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS) was administered in the spring of 2012 to 38,989 middle school students and 36,439 high school students in 746 public schools throughout the state. The overall survey response rate for middle schools was 77%, and the overall survey response rate for high schools was 73%. The FYTS has been conducted annually since 1998. The data presented in this fact sheet are weighted to represent the entire population of public middle and high school students in Florida.

Smoking Cigarettes and Making Friends

In 2012, 33.7% of middle school and 30.5% of high school students definitely did not think that cigarette smokers have more friends (Figure 1). Among middle and high school students, the percentage who definitely did not think that young people who smoke cigarettes have more friends increased from 1998 to 1999 by approximately 85%. From 1999 to 2012, the trend of this indicator has not changed significantly.

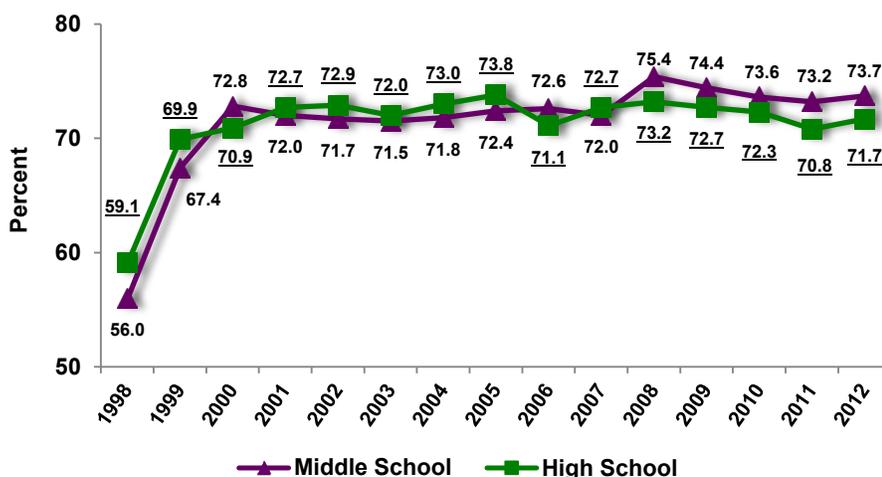
Figure 1. Smoking Cigarettes and Making Friends



Smoking Cigarettes and "Looking Cool" or "Fitting In"

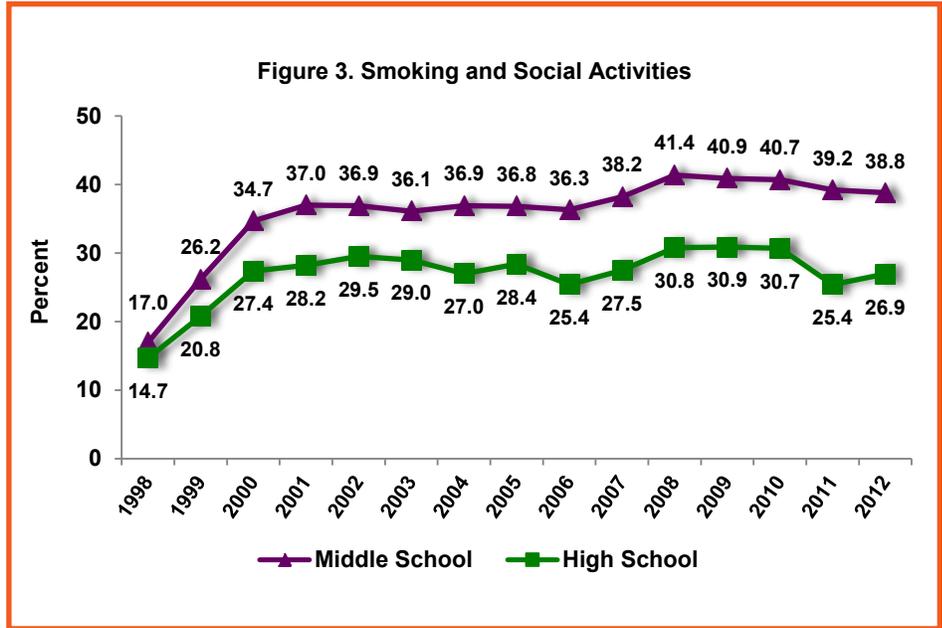
In 2012, 73.7% of middle school and 71.7% of high school students definitely did not think that smoking cigarettes makes young people "look cool" or "fit in" (Figure 2). Middle school students were more likely than high school students to respond that they did not think that smoking cigarettes makes young people look cool or fit in. From 1998 to 2012, the percentage of Florida students who did not think that smoking cigarettes makes young people look cool or fit in increased by 31.6% among middle school students and by 21.3% among high school students.

Figure 2. Smoking Cigarettes and "Looking Cool" or "Fitting In"



Smoking and Social Activities

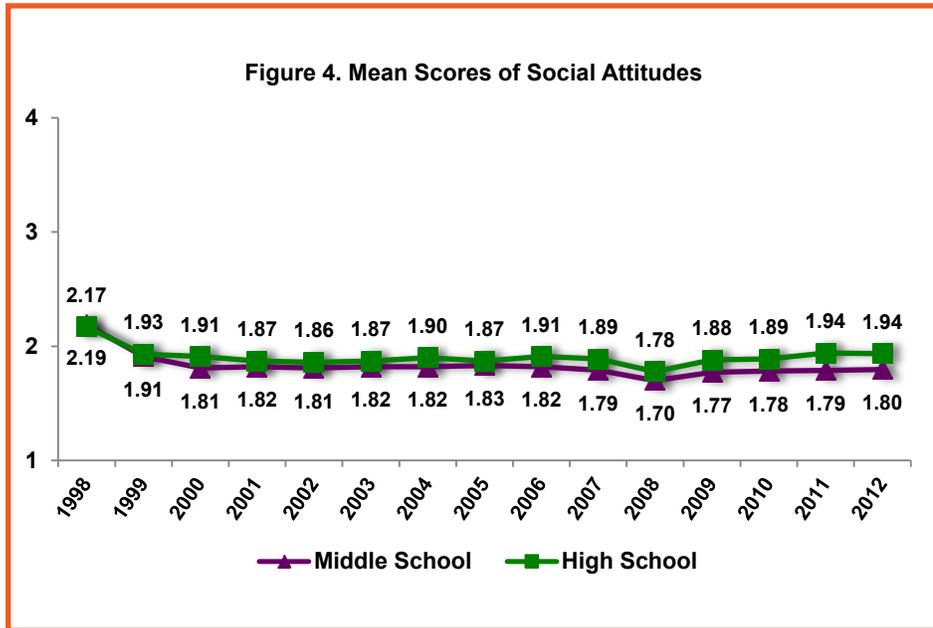
In 2012, 38.8% of middle school students and 26.9% of high school students definitely did not think that smoking cigarettes helps people feel more comfortable in social activities (Figure 3). From 1998 to 2012, the percentage of Florida students who definitely did not think that smoking cigarettes helps people feel more comfortable in social activities increased by 128.2% among middle school students and by 83.0% among high school students. Since 1999, middle school students have consistently had a lower prevalence of believing that smoking helps people feel more comfortable in social situations than high school students.



Mean Scores of Social Attitudes

Mean score is calculated using responses to the three social attitude-related questions. Each response was scored on a four-point scale, and then the three values were averaged. The scores range from one to four, with higher scores indicating pro-tobacco attitudes.

Among both middle and high school students, the social attitudes toward tobacco changed dramatically from pro-tobacco to anti-tobacco during 1998 to 2000 and have not changed significantly from 2000 to 2012. In 2012, middle school students were more likely than high school students to express anti-tobacco attitudes.



For more information about the FYTS, please contact the Chronic Disease Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Evaluation Section, at (850) 245-4401, or by e-mail at ChronicDisease@doh.state.fl.us. You can also visit our website at <http://www.FloridaChronicDisease.org>.