

# Social Attitudes Toward Tobacco Use



Results from the 2011 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey

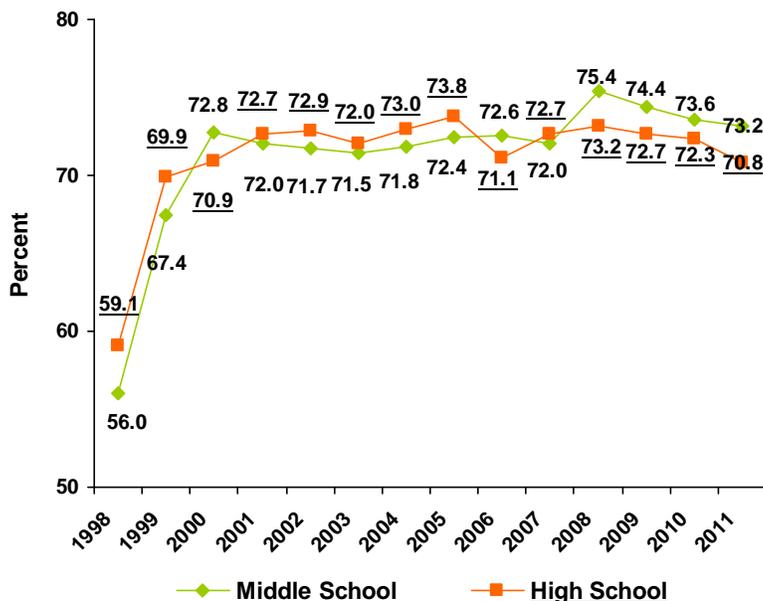
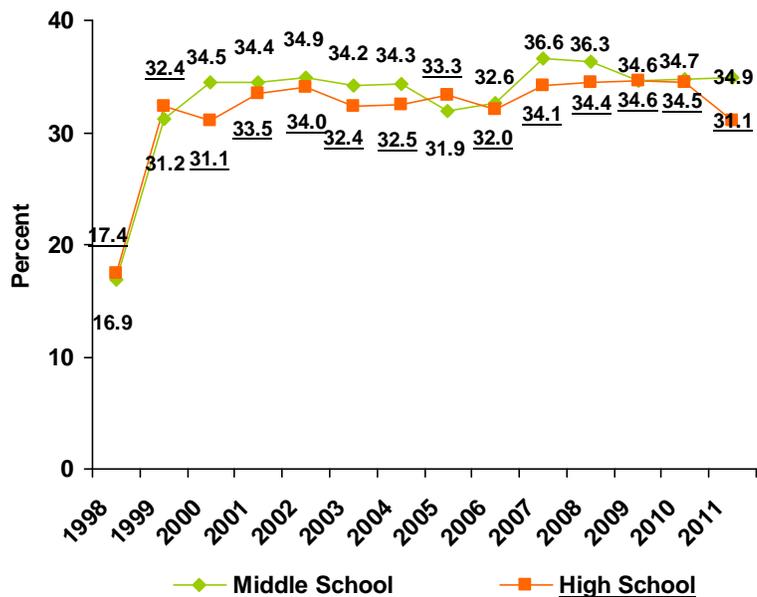
\*Fact Sheet 7\*

## Introduction

The Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS) was administered in the spring of 2011 to 6,045 middle school students and 6,163 high school students in 172 public schools throughout the state. The survey response rate for middle schools was 83%, and the 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

Among middle and high school students, the percentage who **definitely did not think** that young people who smoke cigarettes have more friends increased significantly from 1998 to 1999 by approximately 85%. From 1999 to 2011, the trend of this belief has remained relatively flat. In 2011, 34.6% of middle school and 31.1% of high school students did not think that cigarette smokers have more friends.

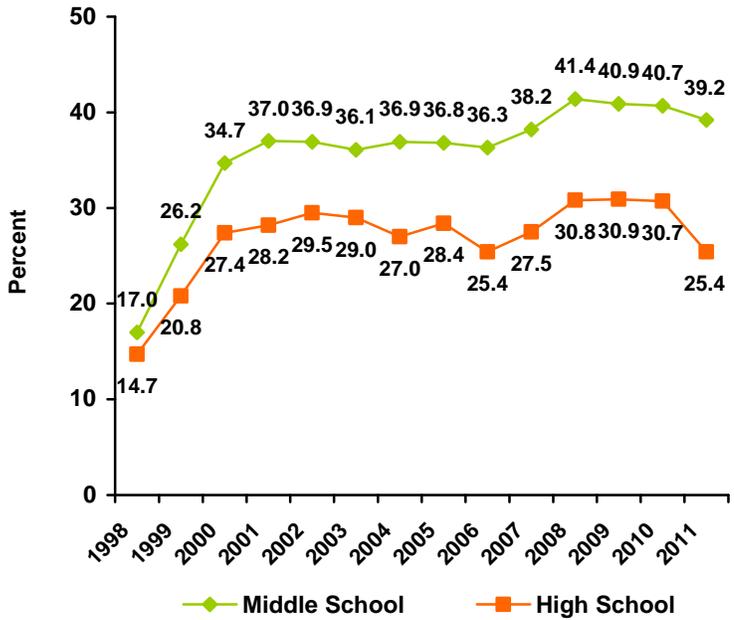


### Smoking Cigarettes and "Looking Cool" or "Fitting In"

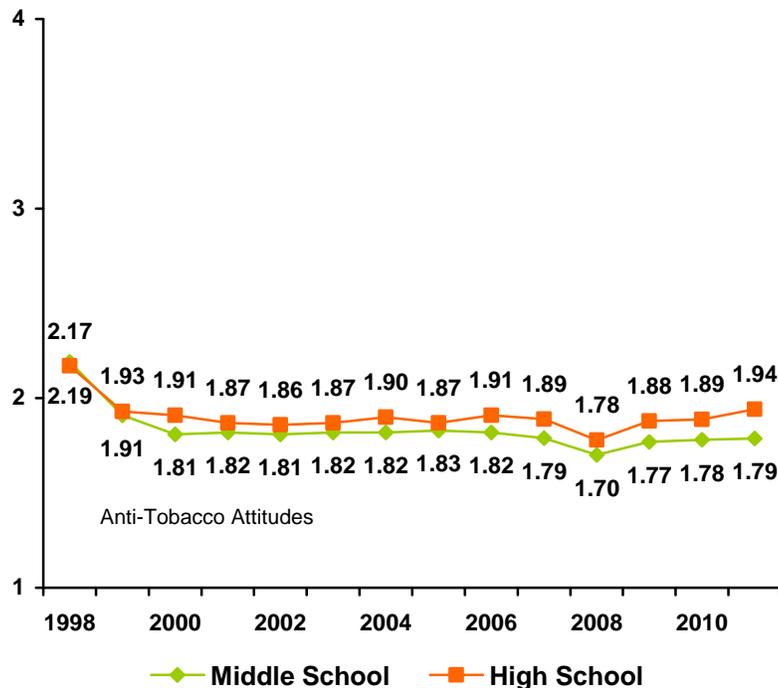
From 1998 to 2011, the percentage of Florida students who **definitely did not think** that smoking cigarettes makes young people look "cool" or "fit in" increased by 30.7% among middle school students and by 19.8% among high school students. In 2011, 73.2% of middle school and 70.8% of high school students did not think that smoking cigarettes makes young people look cool or fit in. There was not a significant difference in this attitude by school level.

**Smoking and Social Activities**

From 1998 to 2011, the percentage of Florida students who **definitely did not think** that smoking cigarettes helps people feel more comfortable in social activities increased by 130.6% among middle school students and by 66.0% among high school students. Since 1999, middle school students have consistently had a significantly lower prevalence of believing that smoking helps people feel more comfortable in social situations than high school students.



Pro-Tobacco Attitudes



**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 1 to 4, 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 leveled out from 2000 to 2011.

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

