

2018 Georgia Youth Tobacco Surveillance Report



Georgia Tobacco Use Prevention Program
dph.ga.gov/tobacco



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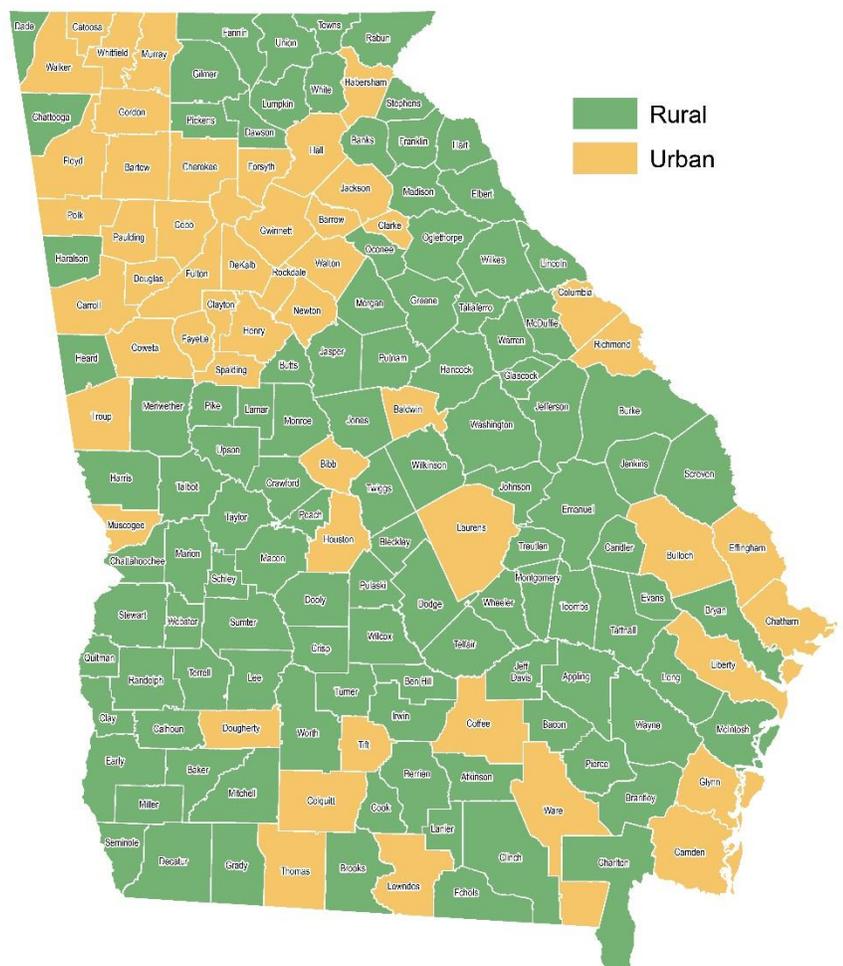
Youth Tobacco Survey

Overview: The Georgia Youth Tobacco Survey (GA-YTS) is a survey conducted in conjunction with the Georgia Youth Risk Behavior Survey (GA-YRBS) in public high schools (HS). The GA-YTS is conducted every odd year since 2009. The GA-YTS provides comprehensive data about various tobacco-related topics for Georgia HS students. In 2017, the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) oversampled rural counties so that data can be analyzed by urban/rural geographic distribution. Rural counties were defined as counties with less than or equal to $\leq 35,000$ residents. Georgia has a total of 51 urban counties and 108 rural counties (Map 1). Overall, 40 Georgia public HS (2,614 students) were sampled; of these, 26 were urban (1,373 students) and 14 were rural (1,241 students) public HS. The 2017 GA-YTS overall response rate was 68.3%.

Methods: Similar to the GA-YRBS, a two-stage cluster sample design was used to produce a representative sample of students in grades 9-12 in Georgia during 2017. In the first stage, HS were selected randomly within the grade range specified, with a probability proportional to enrollment size. In the second stage, classes were randomly selected from within the selected HS and all the students within a selected class were surveyed. The GA-YTS data were weighted to adjust for any unequal probabilities of selection, nonresponse, and disproportionate selection of different population groups. Results from the GA-YTS can be used to make inferences about tobacco use risk behaviors among all public HS students in Georgia.

Questionnaire: Topics included, but were not limited to, tobacco use such as cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, hookah, and electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), access to tobacco products, smoking cessation, secondhand smoke exposure, knowledge and attitudes about tobacco, social influences on tobacco use, exposure to tobacco products in the media and the internet, diagnosis of asthma, and understanding of 100% tobacco-free school policies.

Map 1. Rural/Urban Counties in Georgia



Tobacco Use among Youth

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable illness and deaths in Georgia. Furthermore, smoking during youth is particularly harmful due to cumulative exposure to toxins present in cigarettes and tobacco products, increasing the risk for diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases and perinatal conditions later in adulthood.¹

Georgia received \$385.6 million in tobacco settlement payments and taxes during fiscal year 2018.² Despite the adverse health effects from smoking, nearly 9 out of 10 cigarette smokers first tried smoking by age 18, and 98% of them first tried smoking by age 26.¹ Georgia is ranked 49th in the U.S. for its cigarette tax of 37 cents per pack. Compared to the national average of \$1.72; cigarette taxes are the highest (\$4.35) in the state of Connecticut and New York and the lowest (17 cents) in the state of Missouri.²

Ever Cigarette Use

One in four Georgia HS students reported that they had ever tried cigarette smoking (25.1%; 115,500). (Figure 1).

More male HS students (25.6%; 58,500) said they had ever tried cigarette smoking than females (23.6%; 54,000) (Figure 1).

Non-Hispanic (NH) White HS students (33.5%; 67,000) were significantly more likely to have ever tried cigarette smoking than NH Black HS students (14.1%; 24,100) (Figure 2).

More HS students residing in rural areas had ever tried cigarette smoking (30.3%; 25,000) than in urban areas (25.2%; 100,000) (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Percent of High School Students who ever Tried Cigarette Smoking, by Sex, Georgia, 2017

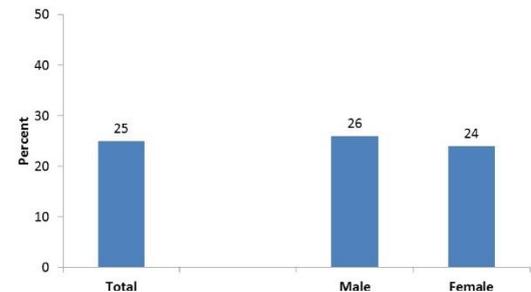


Figure 2. Percent of High School Students who ever Tried Cigarette Smoking, by Race/Ethnicity, Georgia, 2017

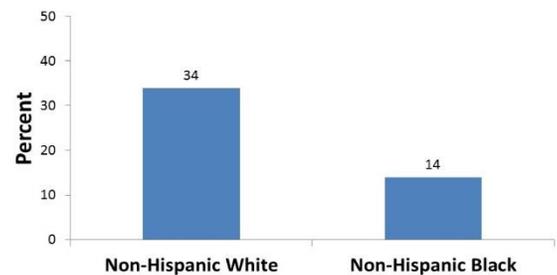
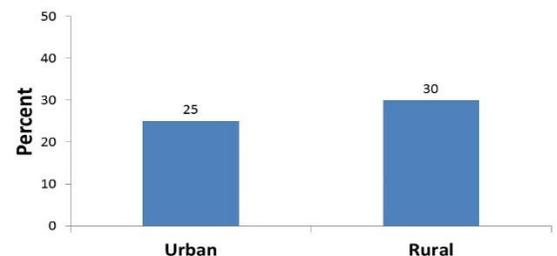


Figure 3. Percent of High School Students who ever Tried Cigarette Smoking, by Urban/Rural, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

Ever Electronic Cigarette Use

One in four Georgia HS students reported that they had ever used e-cigarettes (26.1%; 120,000) (Figure 4).

More male HS students (30.0%; 67,500) said they had ever used e-cigarettes than females (21.3%; 48,500) (Figure 4).

NH White HS students (36.2%; 71,000) were significantly more likely to have ever used e-cigarettes than Hispanic HS students (27.9%; 15,000) and NH Black HS students (12.9%; 21,500).

Ever using of e-cigarettes increased with grade level:

- 9th grade (20.0%; 28,000)
- 10th grade (25.2%; 29,500)
- 11th grade (29.8%; 30,500)
- 12th grade (32.2%; 32,000)

Current Cigarette Use

About eight percent (7.7%; 36,000) of HS students in Georgia reported that they were current cigarette smokers (Figure 5).

More HS students residing in rural areas smoked cigarettes (11.1%; 9,100) than in urban areas (7.6%; 31,000).

More male HS students (9.7%; 22,500) said they currently smoked cigarettes than females (4.6%; 10,600) (Figure 5).

Current use of cigarettes among 10th and 12th graders was higher than among 9th and 11th graders (Figure 6):

- 9th grade (5.5%; 7,800)
- 10th grade (9.0%; 11,000)
- 11th grade (6.0%; 6,200)
- 12th grade (10.8%; 12,000)

Figure 4. Percent of High School Students who ever Used E-Cigarettes, by Sex, Georgia, 2017

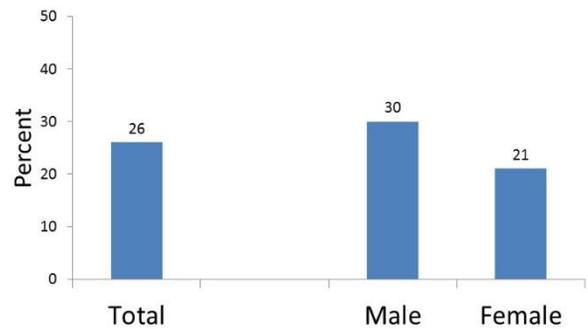


Figure 5. Percent of Current High School Student Smoker, by Sex, Georgia, 2017

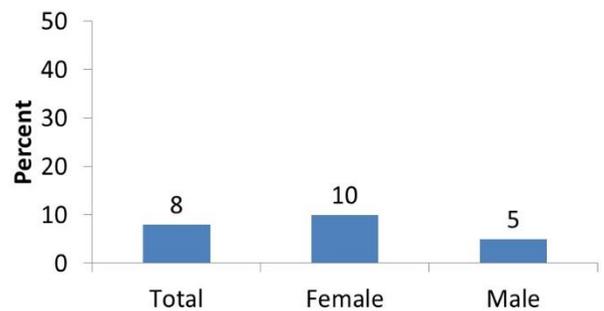
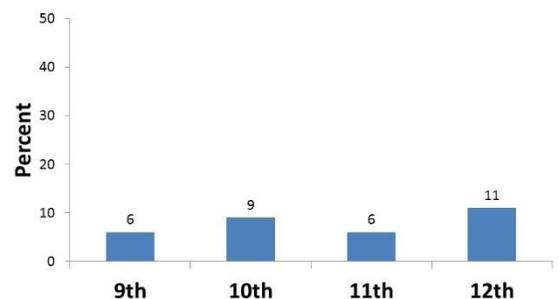


Figure 6. Percent of Current High School Student Smoker, by Grade, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

Current Electronic Cigarette Use

Overall 12.7% (58,500) of HS students in Georgia currently smoke e-cigarettes (Figure 7).

More HS students residing in urban areas currently smoke e-cigarettes (14.3%; 56,500) than in rural areas (9.7%; 8,000) (Figure 7).

Male HS students were twice as (15.9%; 36,000) likely to smoke e-cigarettes than females (8.4%; 19,100) (Figure 7).

Current e-cigarette use was higher among NH White high school students (17.5%; 35,000) than among NH Black high school students (6.1%; 11,000).

Use of e-cigarettes among 10th and 12th graders was higher than among 9th and 11th graders (Figure 8):

- 9th grade (8.9%; 12,500)
- 10th grade (14.5%; 17,000)
- 11th grade (12.3%; 13,000)
- 12th grade (16.5%; 16,500)

Among Georgia HS students, there were more daily e-cigarette smokers (3.4%; 15,500) than daily cigarette smokers (1.3%; 6,500).

Current Tobacco Use

E-cigarettes have become more popular among Georgia HS youth than other tobacco types (Figure 9):

- Cigar, cigarillos, or little cigars such as Black and Milds, Swisher Sweets, Dutch Master, White Owl, or Phillies Blunts (14.2%;66,000)
- E-Cigarettes (12.7%; 58,500)
- Smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip such as Redman, Levi Garrett, Beechnut, Skoal, Skoal Bandits, or Copenhagen (7.9%; 36,300)
- Cigarettes (7.7%; 36,000)
- Hookah or Waterpipe (4.7%; 21,500)

Figure 7. Percent of Current High School Student E-Cigarette User, by Demographics, Georgia, 2017

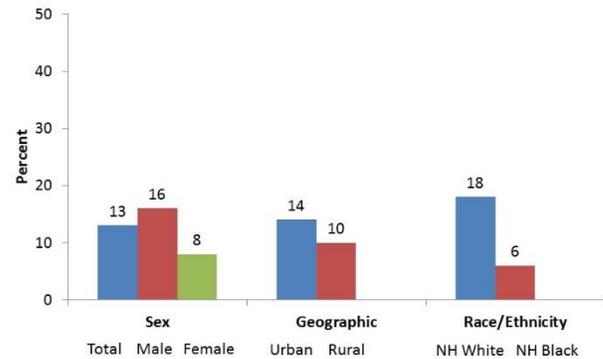


Figure 8. Percent of Current High School Student E-Cigarette User, by Grade, Georgia, 2017

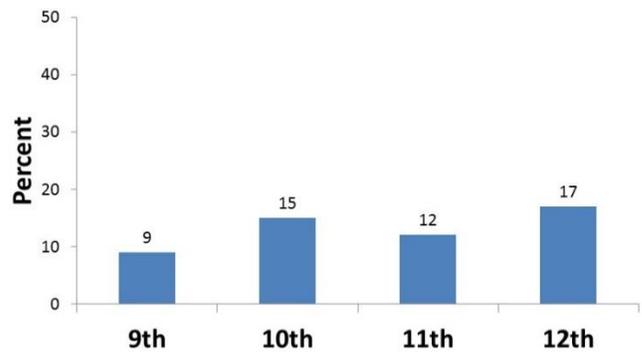
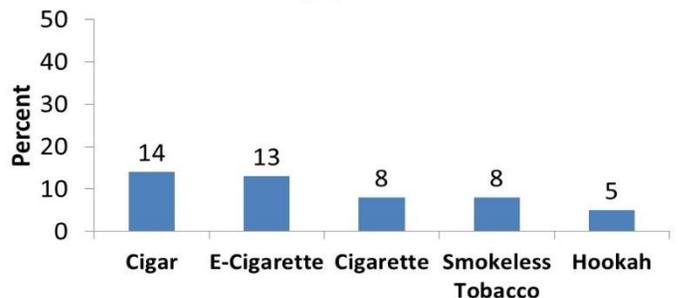


Figure 9. Percent of Current High School Student Tobacco Users, by Tobacco Type, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

HS students residing in urban areas had higher prevalence of using e-cigarettes, cigars, and hookah/waterpipes than HS students residing in rural areas. HS students residing in rural areas had higher prevalence of using cigarettes and smokeless tobacco than HS students in urban areas (Figure 10 and 11).

Tobacco Products	Urban	Rural
Cigarettes	7.6%; 30,500	11.1%; 9,100
E-Cigarettes	14.3%; 56,200	9.7%; 7,900
Cigars	15.4%; 61,400	13.2%; 10,800
Smokeless tobacco	8.4%; 33,200	9.7%; 7,900
Hookah/Waterpipe	5.1%; 20,000	4.2%; 3,400

Point of Sale (POS)

The tobacco industry spends nearly \$9.5 billion a year in marketing its products throughout the United States (US), and 96% (\$9.1 billion) of this money is spent at the point of sale (POS).³ POS marketing and promotions refer to a variety of marketing practices, including signs on the interior and exterior of retail stores, coupons and price discounts that reduce the price of tobacco products for the consumer.³ Tobacco company advertising at the POS encourages youth initiation and discourages cessation.⁴

Georgia HS smokers reported that they usually possessed cigarettes as a result of (Figure 12):

- Bought them themselves (27.7%; 13,000)
- Got them some other way (23.5%; 11,000)
- Borrowed or bummed them (20.2%; 9,200)
- Had someone else buy it for them (13.5%; 6,500)
- Someone gave it to them (11.7%; 5,500)
- Took them from a store or another person (3.3%; 1,500)

Figure 10. Percent of Current High School Student Tobacco Users Residing in Urban, by Tobacco Type, Georgia, 2017

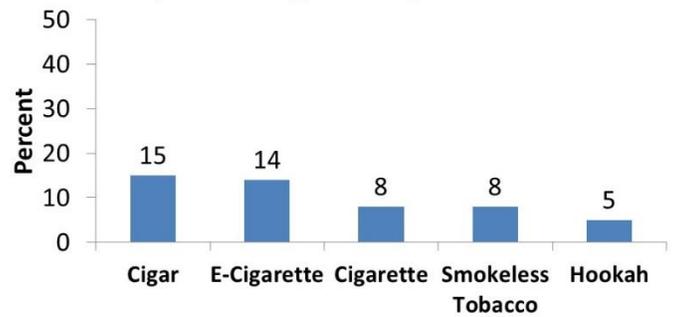


Figure 11. Percent of Current High School Student Tobacco Users Residing in Rural, by Tobacco Type, Georgia, 2017

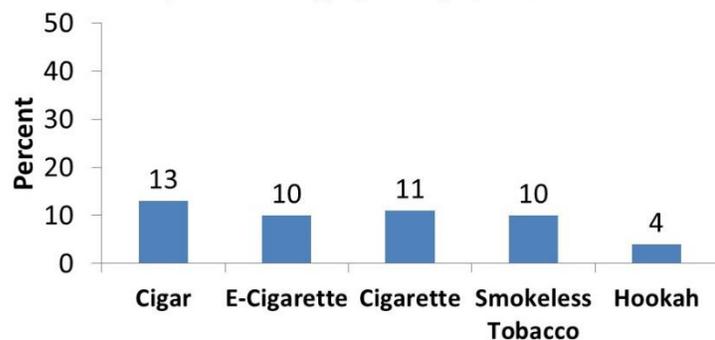
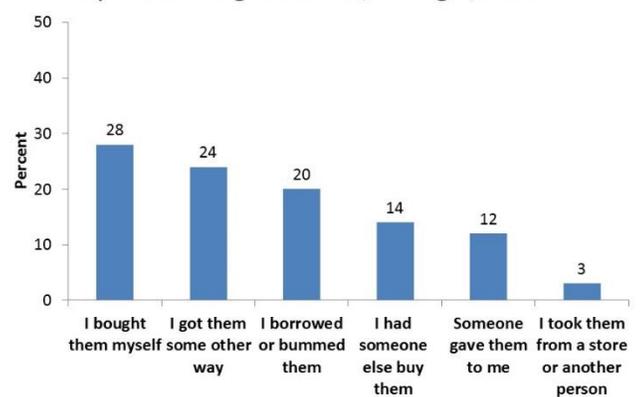


Figure 12. Percent of Current High School Smokers, by Purchasing Methods, Georgia, 2017

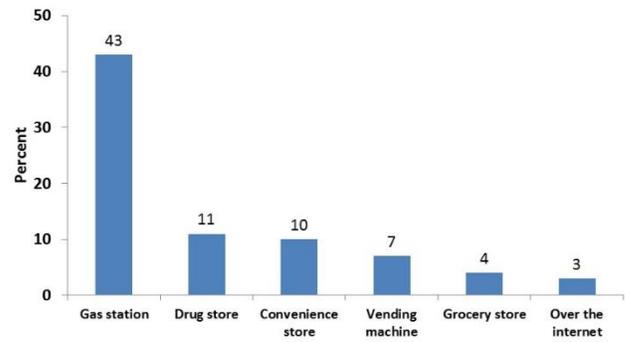


Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

Forty-three percent (42.5%; 14,000) of Georgia’s HS student smokers chose to go to a gas station to purchase cigarettes (Figure 13):

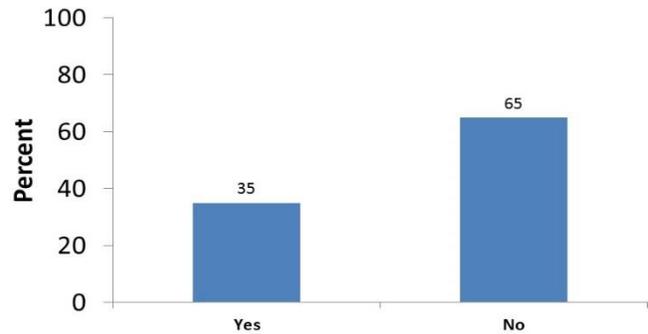
- Gas station (42.5%; 14,000)
- Drug store (11.4%; 3,700)
- Convenience store (10.3%; 3,400)
- Vending machine (6.5%; 2,200)
- Grocery store (3.7%; 1,200)
- Over the internet (3.0%; 970)

Figure 13. Percent of Current High School Smokers, by Point of Sale, Georgia, 2017



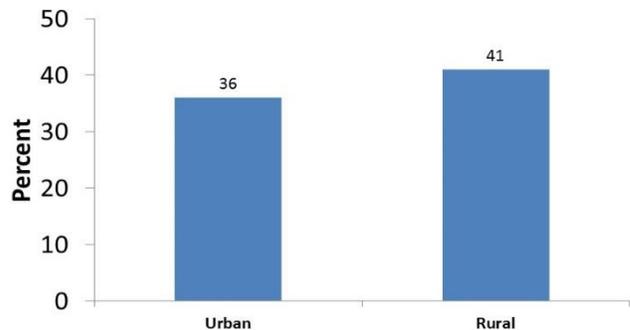
Among HS smokers, only 35.3% (12,000) reported that someone verified their age by checking the date of birth on their identification (ID) when purchasing cigarettes during the past 30 days, while 64.7% (22,000) of HS smokers were **not** asked at all (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Percent of High School Student Smokers who Were Verified Their Age when Purchasing Cigarettes, Georgia, 2017



One in two NH White HS students (52.6%; 5,100) had their age verified when purchasing tobacco products than NH Black students (12.4%; 1,500); also more male HS students (42.5%; 9,800) had their age verified when purchasing cigarettes than HS females (18.5%; 2,000).

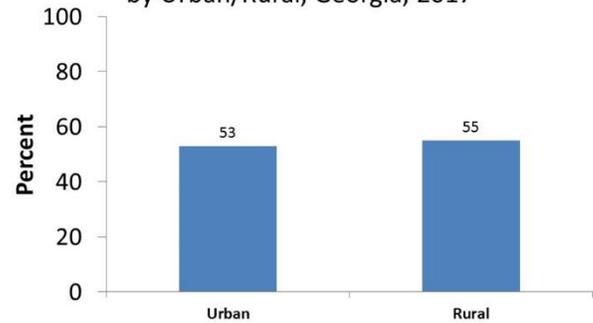
Figure 15. Percent of High School Student Smokers who Were Verified Their Age when Purchasing Cigarettes, by Urban/Rural, Georgia, 2017



In rural counties, more HS students (41.4%; 2,600) reported that someone verified their age by checking the date of birth on their ID when purchasing cigarettes than HS students living in urban counties (36.2%; 12,000) (Figure 15).

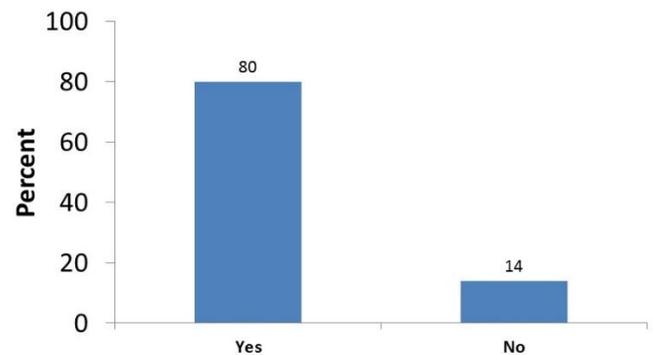
One in two Georgia HS students (53.1%; 235,000) **strongly** agreed with the statement: “All tobacco products are dangerous.” HS students living in rural counties were more likely (55.3%; 44,000) to strongly agree that ‘all tobacco products are dangerous’ than HS students living in urban counties (52.7%; 200,000) (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Percent of High School Student Smokers who Strongly Agreed with the Statement ‘All Tobacco Products are Dangerous’, by Urban/Rural, Georgia, 2017



The majority (79.8%; 27,000) of the Georgia HS student smokers reported that they saw warning label explaining the product is harmful either by a picture or in words on a cigarette pack during the past 30 days. (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Percent of High School Student Smokers who Saw a Warning Label on a Cigarette Pack, Georgia, 2017

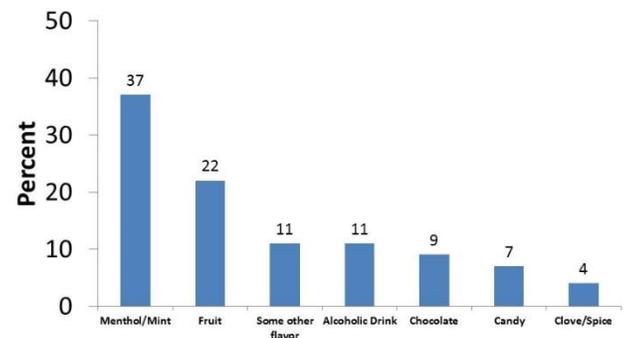


Research shows that there is more store advertising for menthol cigarettes and a greater availability of price promotions. Those strategies make menthol cigarettes more visible and more affordable to youth.⁵ Flavorings in tobacco products can make them more appealing to youth.⁶

Overall, Georgia HS students preferred the following flavors in tobacco products during the past 30 days (Figure 18):

Figure 18. Percent of Current High School Smokers, by Flavoring Tobacco Products, Georgia, 2017

- Menthol or mint (36.6%; 23,500)
- Fruit (22.1%; 14,500)
- Some other flavor not listed (11.2%; 7,200)
- Alcoholic drink flavors such as wine, cognac, margarita or other cocktails (11.0%; 7,050)
- Chocolate (8.7%; 5,600)
- Candy, desserts or other sweets (6.8%; 4,500)
- Clove or spice (3.7%; 2,500)



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

HS students who reported seeing tobacco advertising were more likely to be susceptible to trying cigarettes than their peers who did not see such advertising.⁹

Two of three (70.1%; 319,000) Georgia HS students reported they often saw promotions and advertisements for cigarettes and other tobacco products when they went to a convenience store, supermarket, or gas station. Additionally, Georgia HS students saw promoting and advertising materials on the internet (40.8%; 187,000) and in newspapers or magazines (24.3%; 111,000) (Figure 19).

Youth Cessation

During the past 12 months, more than half of Georgia HS students (63.9%; 291,000) said they were **not** advised not to use any kind of tobacco products by a doctor, dentist, or nurse, while only 36.1% (165,000) of HS students were advised not to use tobacco products by health professionals (Figure 20).

In 2017, 56.5% (19,000) of current Georgia HS smokers reported they stopped smoking for one day or longer because they were trying to quit smoking for good; 43.5% (15,000) of HS students said they continued to smoke and did **not** try to quit during the past 12 months (Figure 21).

Figure 19. Percent of Current High School Smokers by Tobacco Advertisement Sources, Georgia, 2017

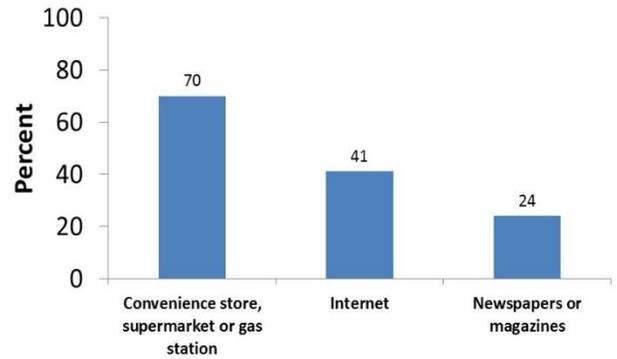


Figure 20. Percent of Current High School Smokers who were Advised not to Smoke by Health Professionals, Georgia, 2017

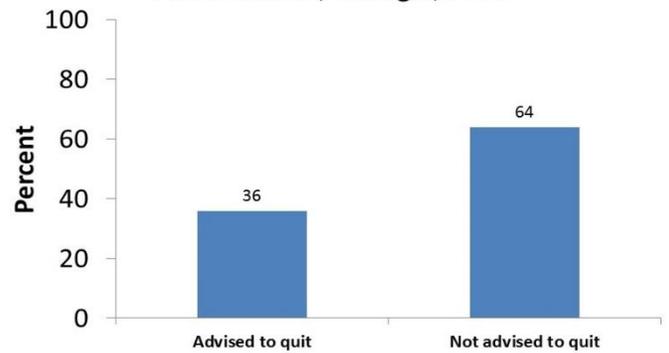
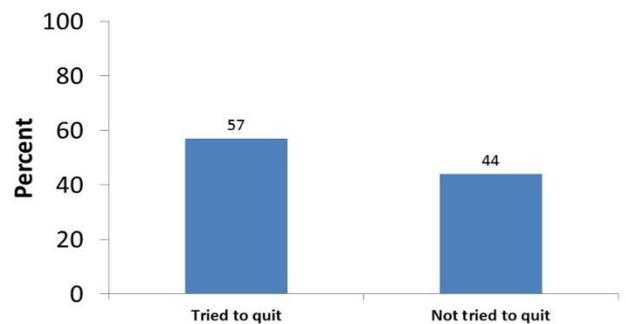


Figure 21. Percent of Current High School Smokers who Tried to Quit Smoking, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

Among Georgia current HS smokers, 28.6% (9,800) of them reported they had seen brochures, pamphlets, etc. advertising the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line (GTQL) (Figure 22).

In 2017, Georgia current HS smokers heard about the GTQL by the following sources (Figure 23):

- Health professional, such as a doctor, nurse or counselor (9.6%; 3,200)
- County Health Department (6.5%; 2,200)
- Brochure, poster, newsletter, or flyer (6.2%; 2,100)
- Some other place (5.1%; 1,700)
- School (4.6%; 1,600)
- Community organization such as the YMCA (4.3%; 1,500)

Peer Influence in Youth Smoking

Youth were more likely to use tobacco if they saw that tobacco use was acceptable or normal among their peers.¹

Of all Georgia HS students, only 11.8% (55,600) stated that they would smoke if their best friend offered them a cigarette, while 17.5% (78,000) said that smoking cigarettes would make them have more friends.

Twenty-six percent (26.0%; 8,800) of Georgia HS student smokers reported that smoking cigarettes would make them look cool or “fit in” than non-smokers (7.2%; 30,000) (Figure 24).

Figure 22. Percent of Current High School Smokers who Heard about Georgia Tobacco Quit Line (GTQL), Georgia, 2017

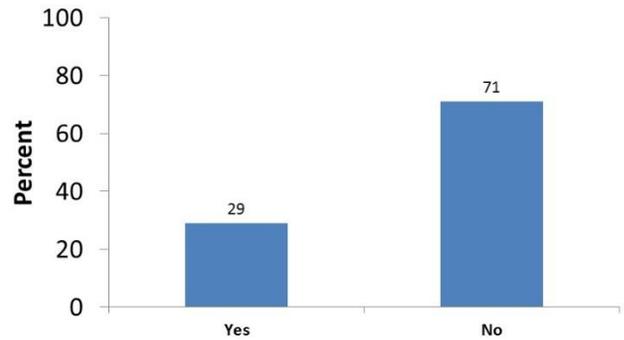


Figure 23. Percent of Current High School Smokers, by GTQL Sources, Georgia, 2017

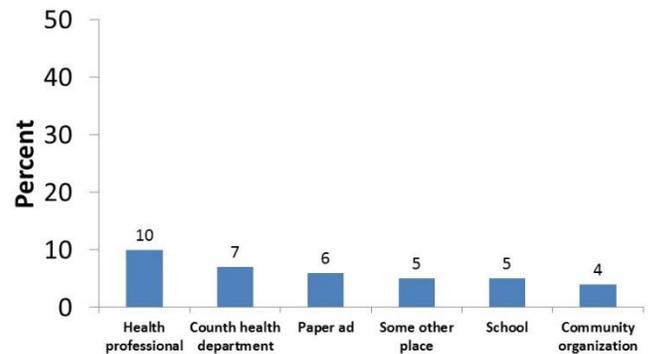
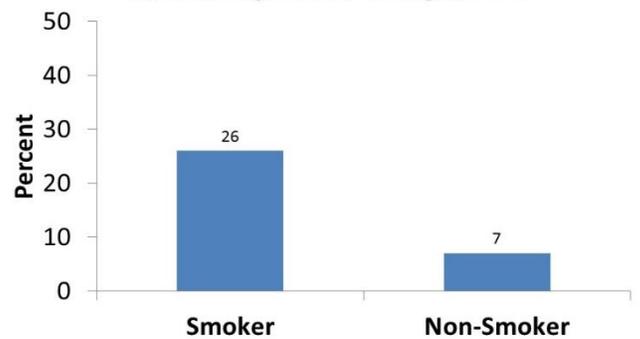


Figure 24. Percent of Current High School Students who Think Cigarettes Make Them Look Cool or Fit in, Smoking Status, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

100% Tobacco-Free School Policy

Georgia does not have statewide legislation mandating 100% tobacco-free policies in public K-12 schools. Therefore, each School District must choose to implement 100% tobacco-free policies individually.

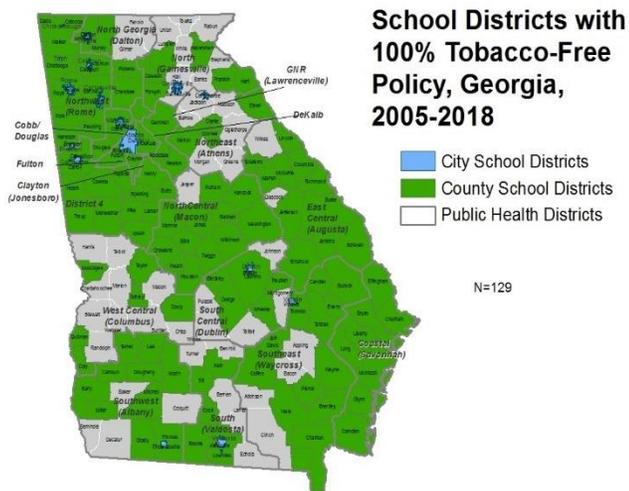
In Georgia, as of July 2018, 72% (129/181) of cities and school districts and 14% (16/115) of charter schools in Georgia passed. 100% tobacco free policy, protecting over 1.5 million youth and employees from these areas. This is a significant increase from 2005, when only one Georgia school district had a 100% tobacco-free policy.

Smoking on school grounds has detrimental effects for students at school, including encouraging students to smoke. Students who are involved in tobacco-use prevention activities in their communities can help reduce the burden of the tobacco epidemic by preventing youth from initiating tobacco.⁹

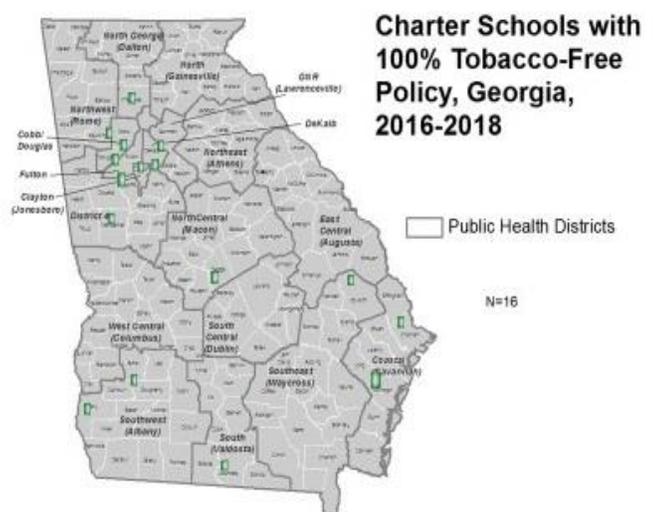
Tobacco-free school policies help to prevent smoking initiation among youth and stop youth smokers from becoming established adult smokers. The model “100% Tobacco-Free School Policy” includes no tobacco use or possession:⁸

- On school property, in school vehicles or at school functions held off school property
- By all students, staff, parents, and visitors
- At all times 24 hours, seven days a week

Map 1. School Districts with 100% Tobacco-Free Policies, Georgia, 2018



Map 2. Charter Schools with 100% Tobacco-Free Policies, Georgia, 2018



More than half of Georgia HS students (52.7%; 230,500) stated that they think their school had a 100% tobacco-free school policy (Figure 25).

However, a large number of students were still not sure whether their school had a 100% tobacco-free school policy (33.6%; 147,000) while 13.8% (60,500) stated that their school did not have a 100% tobacco-free policy (Figure 25).

100% Tobacco-Free School Policy: Products

Of Georgia HS students who knew that their school is 100% tobacco-free, 34.2% (135,000) knew that the policy prohibited use of all types of tobacco products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and cigars; 53.8% (213,000) were not sure and 12.0% (48,000) were not aware of all those tobacco products covered by the policy (Figure 26).

100% Tobacco-Free School Policy: Location

Of Georgia HS students who knew their school is 100% tobacco-free, 33.6% (120,000) knew that the policy prohibits tobacco use in all school locations, including school grounds, in school buildings, on school buses, or other school vehicles and at off-campus school-sponsored events while 56.8% (203,000) were not sure and 9.6% (34,500) were not aware of those locations (Figure 27).

Figure 25. Percent of Current High School Students who Think Their School has a 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy, Georgia, 2017

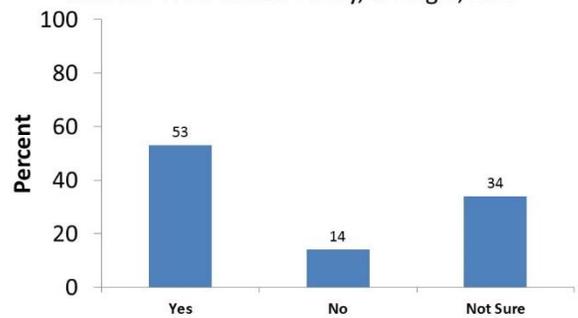


Figure 26. Percent of Current High School Students who Think Their School has a 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy, by Tobacco Product, Georgia, 2017

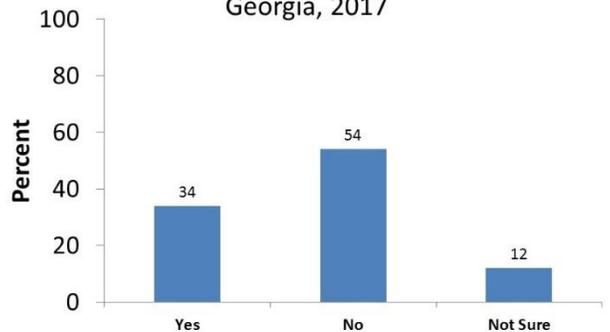
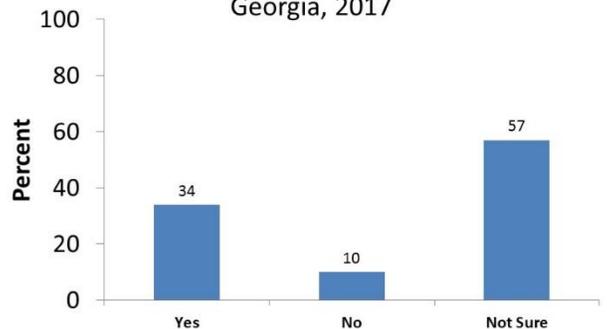


Figure 27. Percent of Current High School Students who Think Their School has a 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy, by Location, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

100% Tobacco-Free School Policy: Hours

Of Georgia HS students who knew their school is a 100% tobacco-free schools, 44.3% (191,000) knew that their schools' tobacco policy prohibited tobacco use during both school and non-school hours, while 43.2% (187,000) thought it prohibited tobacco use during school hours only and 1.0% (4,500) during non-school hours only (Figure 28).

100% Comprehensive Tobacco-Free School Policy

When combining the requirements for the 100% comprehensive tobacco-free school policy i.e. prohibiting all types of tobacco products, locations, and hours, only 26.7% (103,000) of Georgia HS students fully understood the policy while 56.7% (218,000) were still not sure and 16.6% (64,000) were not (Figure 29).

In 2017, only 12.4% of Georgia HS students (54,500) had been involved in any organized activities to keep students of their age from using any form of tobacco product.

Thirty percent (30.3%; 134,000) of Georgia HS students reported that they had seen tobacco-free signage on school campus; while 32.5% (143,500) HS students did not see tobacco-free signage on their campus; and 37.2% (164,000) were not sure if they any saw tobacco-free signs on their school campus (Figure 30).

Figure 28. Percent of Current High School Students who Think Their School has a 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy, by Hours, Georgia, 2017

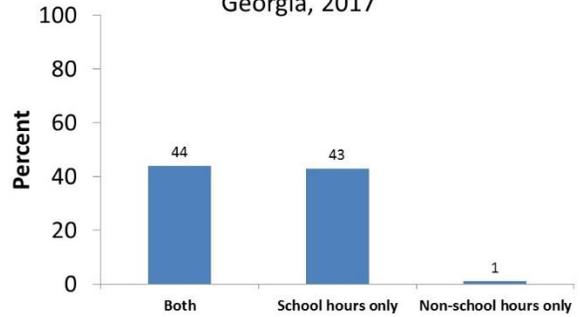


Figure 29. Percent of Current High School Students who Understand Their School has a Comprehensive 100% Tobacco-Free School Policy, Georgia, 2017

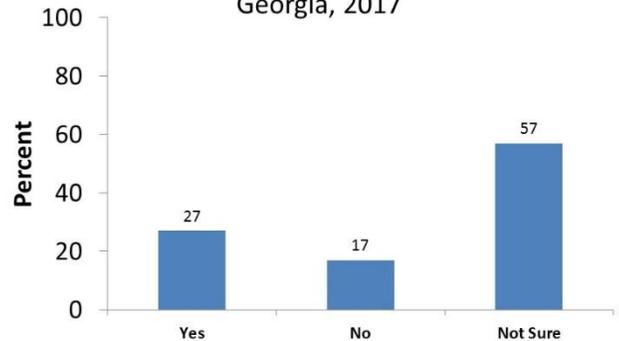
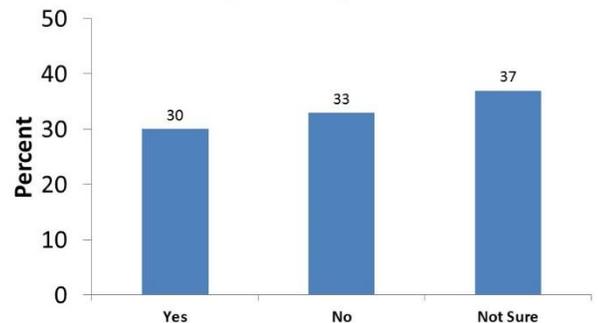


Figure 30. Percent of Current High School Students who Saw the Tobacco-Free Signage on School Campus, Georgia, 2017



Data Source: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)

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Ask Your Georgia HealthCare Provider about Georgia cAARds

Referring to the Georgia Tobacco Quitline (GTQL):

Georgia cAARds Program: Ask, Advise, and Refer with with Follow-up:

- **Ask** all patients about tobacco use during each visit
- **Advise** them about the benefits of tobacco cessation
- **Refer** them to the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line for a free “Quit Kit”, individualized plan and behavioral counseling : 1-877-270- STOP
- *Complete* the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line fax Referral Form with the patient
 - ✓ [GTQL Fax Referral Form](#) can be downloaded from DPH’s website
- *Inform* the patient they will be contacted by a Georgia Tobacco Quit Like staff member within 48 hours or less

Georgia Tobacco Quit Line: 1-877-270-STOP (7867)

Georgia Spanish Line: 1-877 2NO-FUME (66-3863)

Hearing Impaired: 1-877-777-6534

Open 24 hours/ 7 days a week