



Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug Survey 2014

Western Australian Results: Tobacco

What is the purpose of the survey?

The Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug (ASSAD) survey provides a snapshot of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among secondary school students aged 12 to 17 years (grade 7 to 12). The survey has been conducted every three years since 1984 and the previous survey was conducted in 2011.

Who took part?

In 2014, 186 secondary schools were approached to take part in the survey. Of these, 146 schools declined to participate and 46 schools agreed to participate. This resulted in a response rate of 21.5%.

From the schools that took part in the survey, 3,381 students completed the questionnaire. Of these, 3,305 (97.8%) provided valid responses for age and gender and were included in the final sample.

Students were randomly selected from government, Catholic and independent schools, and voluntarily completed the paper-based survey during school hours. The report presents estimates derived from the survey responses and weighted to the appropriate Western Australian population group by age, gender and school type to address any over or under sampling.

Key findings

- 4.8% of students aged 12 to 17 years reported smoking in the week prior to the survey. The mean number of cigarettes smoked was 21 (see Table 2).
- The proportion of 12 to 17-year-old school students who had never smoked in their life increased significantly from 2011 (see Table 1). The 2014 result continues the upwards trend demonstrated in previous years.
- Figure 2 shows that smoking prevalence has continued to decline for both males and females and is more than two-thirds less than that recorded in 1993 (16.9% in 1993 versus 4.8% in 2014).
- Of those students who smoked in the last week, 13.7% indicated that they were certain not to be smoking next year and 24.7% were undecided.
- Friends (43.8%) were the most common source of cigarettes for those who smoked. One in five (22.6%) bought single cigarettes that were not in a full packet.
- The 2014 survey also asked students about their use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). One in eight (12.1%) students aged 12 to 17 years reported having ever used battery operated e-cigarettes, with 3.5% of students reporting they had used an e-cigarette in the last 4 weeks.

Figure 1. Lifetime prevalence of school students aged 12 to 17 years who have never smoked, 1984–2014.

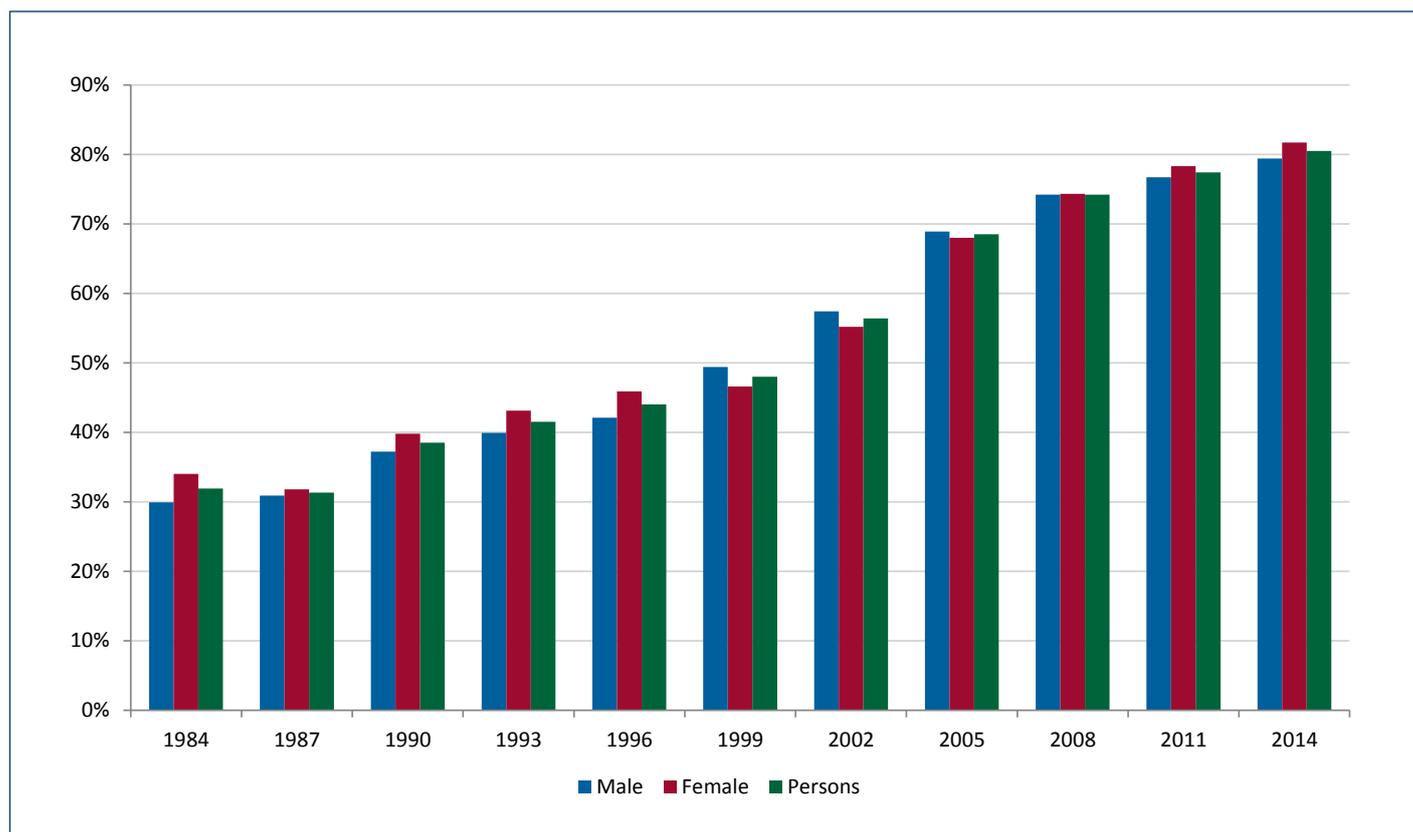


Table 1. Prevalence of tobacco use by school students aged 12 to 17 years by gender and recency of use, 2011 and 2014.

	2011	2014		2011	2014
Ever smoked			Smoked in last month		
Male	23.3%	20.6%	Male	7.7%	7.2%
Female	21.7%	18.3%	Female	7.3%	7.3%
Persons	22.6%	▼19.5%	Persons	7.5%	7.2%
Smoked in the last year			Smoked in last week		
Male	14.3%	13.6%	Male	5.9%	4.8%
Female	15.2%	13.6%	Female	5.6%	4.8%
Persons	14.7%	13.6%	Persons	5.7%	4.8%

▼ indicates that the prevalence is significantly lower than 2011 at $p < 0.05$.

Figure 2. Prevalence of tobacco use in school students aged 12 to 17 years by gender and recency of use, 1993–2014.

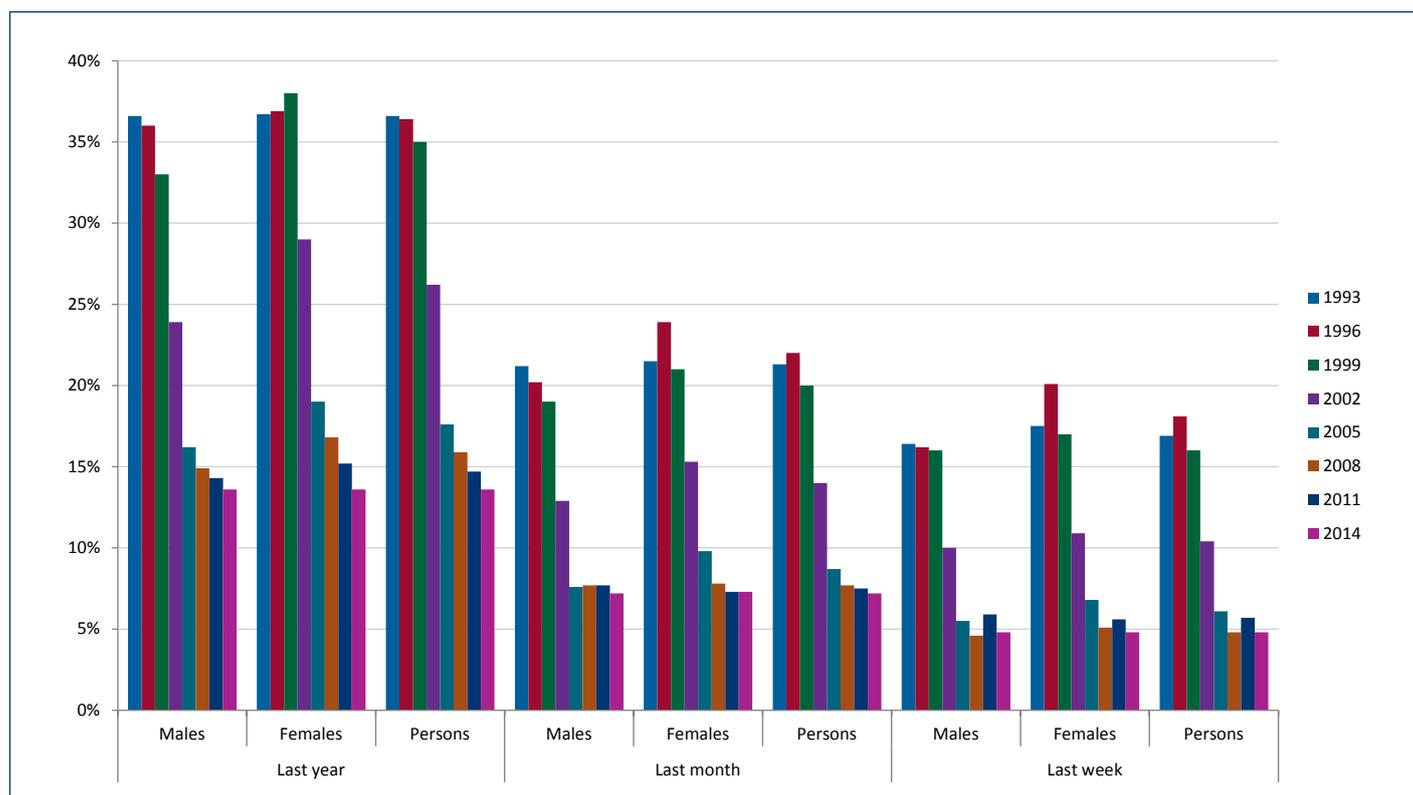


Table 2. Recency of tobacco smoking for school students by age, 2014.

	12 yrs		13 yrs		14 yrs		15 yrs		16 yrs		17 yrs		12-17 yrs	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Never smoked														
Males	92.6	143	85.4	273	80.0	344	74.6	366	69.3	218	64.9	80	79.4	1424
Females	89.3	91	89.0	237	84.7	283	75.0	267	76.1	213	66.9	72	81.7	1163
Persons	91.0	234	87.2	510	82.3	627	74.8	633	72.6	431	65.9	152	80.5	2587
Smoked in the last year														
Males	*2.1	<10	8.2	21	10.5	44	19.4	92	22.9	66	26.4	31	13.6	255
Females	8.4	<10	7.1	21	11.5	41	19.6	84	17.8	65	23.9	24	13.6	239
Persons	5.2	<10	7.7	42	11.0	85	19.5	176	20.4	131	25.2	55	13.6	494
Smoked in the last month														
Males	0.0	<10	4.6	11	4.3	17	10.7	50	12.2	36	18.4	22	7.2	136
Females	4.7	<10	4.1	12	5.5	19	10.2	45	10.0	36	12.6	12	7.3	126
Persons	2.3	<10	4.3	23	4.9	36	10.4	95	11.1	72	15.6	34	7.2	262
Smoked in the last week														
Males	0.0	<10	2.1	<10	2.5	10	7.0	33	9.5	27	13.0	16	4.8	91
Females	*2.4	<10	3.1	<10	3.3	12	7.7	34	6.2	22	8.6	<10	4.8	86
Persons	*1.2	<10	2.6	14	2.9	22	7.4	67	7.9	49	10.8	24	4.8	177
Of those who smoked in the last week – Mean number of cigarettes smoked¹														
Males	0	0	9.3	<10	26.0	10	25.4	31	21.1	25	21.0	14	22.9	83
Females	0	0	18.7	<10	5.0	11	18.0	32	20.9	21	37.8	<10	19.0	81
Persons	0	0	16.3	12	15.0	21	21.6	63	21.0	46	27.1	22	21.0	164

* Relative standard error greater than 50% and is too unreliable for the majority of practical purposes.

¹ Estimates exclude students who smoked > 40 cigarettes on any one day of the week.

Acknowledgements:

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