
DOCUMENT THE PROBLEM: Youth Tobacco Use

Youth tobacco use data are available from several sources. Each data source offers certain advantages and disadvantages. Following is a description of several surveys conducted in California that provide information on youth tobacco use. A brief comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of the data in terms of local use and comparability to other data sets, is provided.

California Tobacco Survey (CTS)

Survey Specifications

<i>Survey of Youth:</i>	Ages 12 to 17 years old
<i>Methodology:</i>	Telephone survey
<i>Sample Size:</i>	6,000
<i>Representativeness:</i>	A statewide representative sample, representative for 10 counties and 8 multi-county regions
<i>Frequency:</i>	Every three years
<i>Type of Survey:</i>	Tobacco use specific survey
<i>Who Conducts:</i>	The University of California, San Diego under contract to CDHS/TCS.
<i>Availability of Data:</i>	Data are available in "The California Tobacco Control Program: A Decade of Progress, Results from the California Tobacco Survey, 1990-1999," available at http://www.dhs.ca.gov/tobacco .

Advantages

- Designed to provide representative state level data and data for 18 regions. The large sample size provides for reliable youth smoking prevalence estimates for age and race/ethnic groups and for the 10 largest counties and 8 multi-county regions.
- CTS youth data are available for 1990, 1992, 1993, 1996 and 1999 and provides both statewide and regional trends over several years.
- Data are available for Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Santa Clara, San Bernardino, Alameda, Riverside, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties and 8 multi-county regions.

California Youth Tobacco Survey (CYTS)

Disadvantages

- Telephone surveys produce a youth smoking prevalence rate less than half that produced from in-school surveys; therefore, they are not comparable with in-school surveys meaning the data are not comparable to national youth tobacco surveys.
- The multi-county regions are grouped based on being geographically contiguous rather than demographic similarity. Therefore, data may not be useful to counties that are grouped with demographically dissimilar counties.
- Only conducted every three years.

Survey Specifications

<i>Survey of Youth:</i>	Ages 12 to 17 years old
<i>Methodology:</i>	Telephone survey
<i>Sample Size:</i>	Approximately 2,500
<i>Representativeness:</i>	Statewide
<i>Frequency:</i>	Annual, continuous since 1994
<i>Type of Survey:</i>	Tobacco use specific survey
<i>Who Conducts:</i>	Conducted by the California Department of Health Services, Cancer Surveillance Section
<i>Availability of Data:</i>	<u>California Youth Tobacco Survey, 1994-2000</u>

Advantages

- Designed to provide representative state level data. The CYTS is used as the source for the “official” youth prevalence rate by the California Tobacco Control Program.
- CYTS data are available for 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001. Because it has been conducted since 1994, it provides the ability to compare youth smoking prevalence over an extended period of time.

Disadvantages

- Telephone surveys produce a youth smoking prevalence rate less than half that produced from in-school surveys; therefore, they are not comparable with in-school surveys, meaning the data are not comparable to national youth tobacco surveys.
- The sample size does not provide highly reliable youth smoking prevalence estimates for some race/ethnic groups because of the small sample size for these groups.

California Student Tobacco Survey (CSTS)

Survey Specifications

<i>Survey of Youth:</i>	Grades 6 through 12
<i>Methodology:</i>	Classroom-based survey of public and private school students
<i>Sample Size:</i>	Approximately 18,000 students from 120 middle and 240 high schools are surveyed
<i>Representativeness:</i>	Statewide, 7 largest counties and 5 demographically similar multi-county regions
<i>Frequency:</i>	Every two years
<i>Type of Survey:</i>	Tobacco use specific survey
<i>Who Conducts:</i>	WestEd under contract with CDHS/TCS
<i>Availability:</i>	Fall/Winter 2002

Advantages

- Designed to provide representative state level and regional data comparable to the National Youth Tobacco Survey and survey data collected by 35 other states.
- Will eventually be used as the “official” source of California’s youth prevalence rate because of its comparability to surveys conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and many other states.
- The CSTS sample design provides for the breakout of data for Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Santa Clara, San Bernardino, Riverside and Alameda counties and 5 demographically similar multi-county regions. The CSTS capability to give county/regional estimates can give results that are more representative of schools within a region, while at the same time providing comparability with data from other states and the nation.
- The large sample size provides reliable youth smoking prevalence rates for grade and race/ethnic groups.
- The CSTS is a component of the statutorily-mandated evaluation of the school-based tobacco use prevention education program.
- CDHS pays for conducting the survey and provides a financial incentive to schools for their participation.

Disadvantages

- Data will not be available until Fall/Winter 2002.
- No trend data are available; 2001/02 is the first year of the survey.

California Student Survey (CSS)

Survey Specifications

<i>Survey of Youth:</i>	Grades 7, 9, 11
<i>Methodology:</i>	Classroom-based survey of public school students
<i>Sample Size:</i>	Approximately 12,000 students
<i>Representativeness:</i>	Statewide
<i>Frequency:</i>	Every two years
<i>Type of Survey:</i>	Health survey with some tobacco use questions
<i>Who Conducts:</i>	WestEd under contract with the California Department of Education and the Attorney General's Office. Additional sponsors are CDHS/Office of AIDS and the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs.
<i>Availability:</i>	http://caag.state.ca.us/cvpc/css.html

Advantages

- Designed to provide representative state level data comparable to the California Healthy Kids Survey.

Disadvantages

- Does not provide data comparable to any national tobacco use data because of the way in which the survey is formatted.
- While the survey has been conducted since 1985, the survey questions and methods changed in 1999/00; the data from 1985 through 1997 are not comparable to the data collected beginning in 1999.

California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)

Survey Specifications

<i>Survey of Youth:</i>	Grades 5, 7, 9, 11
<i>Methodology:</i>	Classroom-based survey of public school students
<i>Sample Size:</i>	Approximately 500,000 students
<i>Representativeness:</i>	School-district, may also be representative of a school depending upon the sampling
<i>Frequency:</i>	Every two years
<i>Type of Survey:</i>	Health survey with some tobacco use questions in a tobacco-specific module is also available
<i>Who Conducts:</i>	WestEd under contract with the California Department of Education
<i>Availability:</i>	Local school districts, see instructions below

Advantages

- Designed to provide representative data at the school district level so the data are comparable to other school districts in the county or state.
- CHKS data are comparable to the CSS data (1999 version).
- If a majority of the school districts in a county collaborate to collect data in a single semester, county level data may be available.
- The CHKS is used to meet the Safe and Drug Free School funding requirement to conduct a needs assessment. It is also required for Tobacco Use Prevention Education funding among competitive grant high schools.
- Some schools may have two or three data points if they began using the CHKS in 1998 or 1999.
- CHKS Website <<http://www.wested.org/hks>> lists all the school districts administering the CHKS.

Disadvantages

- Although a large number of students are surveyed, aggregated data from the CHKS are not representative statewide and the CHKS data are not comparable to any national data because of the way in which the CHKS is formatted.
- Data are not representative of the county unless a majority of the school districts in a county collaborated and coordinated their data collection.

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- Schools must pay to participate and administer the survey themselves which may be a barrier to their participation in the survey.
 - Trend data are minimal since the survey began as a pilot in 1998 with broader use beginning in 1999.

▼ Steps to Obtain CHKS Data

Step 1: Contact your local school district office and ask for the name and telephone number of the Tobacco Use Prevention Education Coordinator or the Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator.

Step 2: Speak to the Coordinator directly and explain who you work for and that you work on youth tobacco issues.

Step 3: Ask the Coordinator the year in which the school district last administered the CHKS survey and the number of times the school district has conducted the survey. Find out if the school district conducted the Tobacco Module in addition to the Core Module. Request to obtain a summary of the survey findings including the Tobacco Module if it was conducted. While the survey findings are considered public use data, you may need to put your request in writing.

[Back to DOCUMENT THE PROBLEM: Youth Tobacco Use](#)