

# SMOKING AMONG ADOLESCENTS

## *Did you know?*

- In Shasta County in 2007, 58.3% of regular smokers were less than 18 years old when their smoking habits began.
- The legal age to smoke in California is 18.
- Economic studies show that a 10% increase in cigarette price reduces teen smoking by 7%.
- Every day in the United States, an estimated 6,000 adolescents start smoking. Of these, about 2,000 will become regular smokers—or nearly 730,000 new adolescent smokers each year.
- Nearly one-third of the adolescents who continue to smoke regularly will eventually die from a smoking-related illness.

## **Definition:**

Percentage of Shasta County adolescents aged 12 through 17 who reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days.

## **Healthy People 2010 National Objectives:**

Reduce tobacco use by students in grades 9-12 to less than 16%.

## **Shasta County Baseline:**

- Not available.

<b>Smoking Behaviors Among 7th, 9th, and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students, Shasta County and California</b>						
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Percent Shasta County Students, 2006-2007</b>			<b>Percent California Students, 2005-2007</b>		
	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>
Ever tried a cigarette, even one or two puffs	19%	33%	42%	15%	29%	41%
Ever smoked a whole cigarette	8%	20%	30%	6%	15%	26%
Smoked in past 30 days	5%	11%	14%	4%	9%	13%

<b>Smoking Perceptions Among 7th, 9th, and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students, Shasta County and California</b>						
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Percent Shasta County Students, 2006-2007</b>			<b>Percent California Students, 2005-2007</b>		
	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>
Perceive frequent smoking as harmful*	95%	96%	97%	95%	94%	95%
Perceive cigarettes as difficult for students to get**	31%	15%	10%	35%	19%	11%
Feel peers would disapprove of them for smoking***	81%	79%	74%	78%	75%	63%

\* Combines "Extremely Harmful," "Harmful," and "Somewhat Harmful"

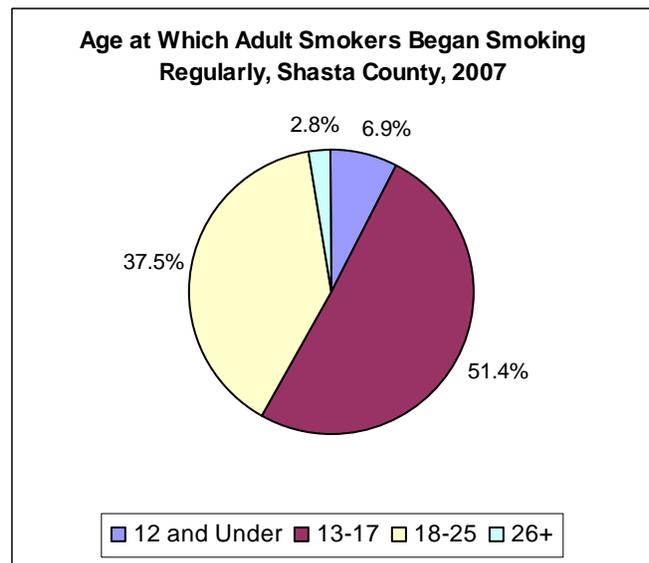
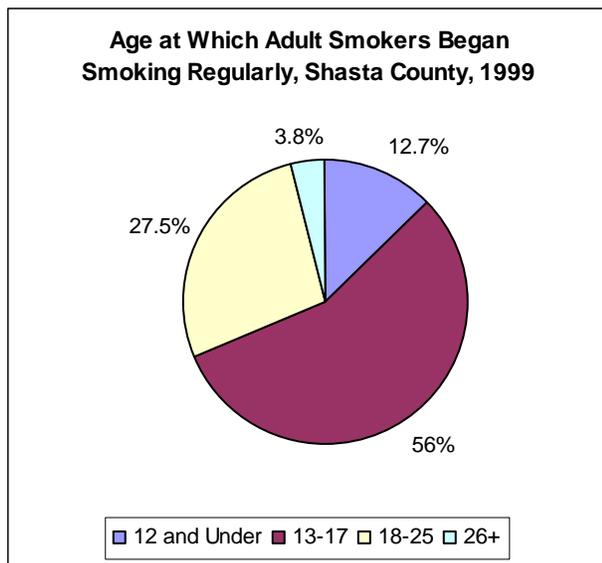
\*\* Combines "Very Difficult" and "Fairly Difficult"

\*\*\* Combines "A Lot" and "Some"

# SMOKING AMONG ADOLESCENTS (continued)

## Key Points:

- In the 2006-07 school year, Shasta County adolescents were about as likely as their counterparts in the state to have ever smoked a whole cigarette or to have smoked in the past 30 days.
- In the 2006-07 school year, Shasta County adolescents were slightly less likely than California adolescents to perceive cigarettes as difficult to get.
- Between 1999 and 2007, the median age at which an adult smoker in Shasta County began smoking increased from 16.4 years old to 17.2 years old.



## Primary Prevention Activities:

- Increase the cost of tobacco products.
- Ban tobacco advertisements and promotions in magazines and in stores, and sponsorship of events by tobacco companies.
- Encourage media venues, such as TV shows and movies, to provide more positive non-smoking role models.
- Increase media campaigns to provide information on adverse effects of tobacco use, including exposure to second-hand smoke, and also youth access to cigarettes from family, friends and retailers.
- Work with the business community and local law agencies on enforcement of existing laws regarding youth and tobacco.
- Encourage retirement plans and individual investors to divest tobacco stock holdings.
- Decrease or eliminate federal subsidies for tobacco growers.

**Data Source:** California Healthy Kids Survey, 2004-05 and 2006-2007, California Student Survey, 2003-04, Mercy Medical Center Community Health Assessment, 1999, 2004 and 2007.