

GYTS Objectives

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS), a component of the Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS), is a global standard for systematically monitoring youth tobacco use and tracking key tobacco control indicators.

GYTS is a cross-sectional, nationally representative school-based survey of students in grades associated with ages 13 to 15 years. GYTS uses a standard core questionnaire, sample design, and data collection protocol. It assists countries in fulfilling their obligations under the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to generate comparable data within and across countries. WHO has developed MPOWER, a technical package of selected demand reduction measures contained in the WHO FCTC:



- Monitor tobacco use & prevention policies
- Protect people from tobacco smoke
- Offer help to quit tobacco use
- Warn about the dangers of tobacco
- Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, & sponsorship
- Raise taxes on tobacco

GYTS Methodology

GYTS uses a global standardized methodology that includes a two-stage sample design with schools selected with a probability proportional to enrollment size. The classes within selected schools are chosen randomly and all students in selected classes are eligible to participate in the survey. The survey uses a standard core questionnaire with a set of optional questions that countries can adapt to measure and track key tobacco control indicators. The questionnaire covers the following topics: tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), cessation, secondhand smoke (SHS), pro- and anti-tobacco advertising and promotion, access to and availability of tobacco products, and knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco use. The questionnaire is self-administered; using scannable paper-based bubble sheets, it is anonymous to ensure confidentiality.

In Panama, GYTS was conducted in 2023 by el Ministerio de Salud e Instituto Conmemorativo Gorgas de Estudios de la Salud. The overall response rate was 87.4%. A total of 7,439 eligible students in grades 8-10 completed the survey, of which 5,761 were aged 13-15 years. Data are reported for students aged 13-15 years.

GYTS Highlights

TOBACCO USE

- 8.5% of students, 10.2% of boys, and 6.9% of girls currently used any tobacco products (includes heated tobacco products).
- 5.4% of students, 6.6% of boys, and 4.2% of girls currently smoked tobacco.
- 3.1% of students, 3.5% of boys, and 2.6% of girls currently smoked cigarettes.
- 2.5% of students, 2.6% of boys, and 2.3% of girls currently used heated tobacco products.
- 2.4% of students, 2.8% of boys, and 2.0% of girls currently used smokeless tobacco.

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

- 8.5% of students, 9.0% of boys, and 8.1% of girls currently used electronic cigarettes.

CESSATION

- Almost 7 in 10 (68.6%) students who currently smoked tobacco tried to stop smoking in the past 12 months.
- Almost 6 in 10 (57.2%) students who currently smoked tobacco wanted to stop smoking now.

SECONDHAND SMOKE

- 15.8% of students were exposed to tobacco smoke at home.
- 28.6% of students were exposed to tobacco smoke inside enclosed public places.

ACCESS & AVAILABILITY

- 36.4% of students who currently smoked cigarettes bought cigarettes from a store, convenience store, street vendor, kiosk, or supermarket.
- Among students who currently smoked cigarettes who tried to buy cigarettes, 50.6% were not prevented from buying them because of their age.

ADVERTISING & PROMOTION

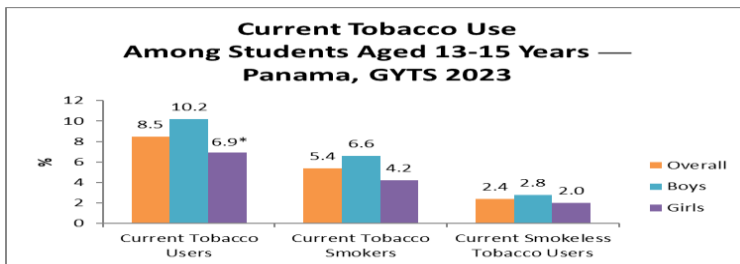
- Almost 5 in 10 (49.2%) students noticed anti-tobacco messages in the media.
- More than 2 in 10 (23.6%) students noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions when visiting points of sale.
- Almost 1 in 10 (7.4%) students had something with a tobacco brand logo on it.

KNOWLEDGE & ATTITUDES

- 60.7% of students definitely thought other people's tobacco smoking is harmful to them.

TOBACCO USE

| ANY TOBACCO USE (smoked, heated, and/or smokeless) | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|--|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Current tobacco users ¹ | 8.5 | 10.2 | 6.9* |
| Ever tobacco users ² | 25.5 | 26.5 | 24.6 |
| SMOKED TOBACCO | | | |
| Current tobacco smokers ³ | 5.4 | 6.6 | 4.2 |
| Current cigarette smokers ⁴ | 3.1 | 3.5 | 2.6 |
| Frequent cigarette smokers ⁵ | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Current smokers of other tobacco ⁶ | 3.2 | 4.1 | 2.4 |
| Ever tobacco smokers ⁷ | 19.4 | 19.6 | 19.3 |
| Ever cigarette smokers ⁸ | 13.9 | 13.6 | 14.2 |
| Ever smokers of other tobacco ⁹ | 10.0 | 10.7 | 9.4 |
| HEATED TOBACCO | | | |
| Current users of heated tobacco products ¹⁰ | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.3 |
| Ever users of heated tobacco products ¹¹ | 8.4 | 8.8 | 8.0 |
| SMOKELESS TOBACCO | | | |
| Current smokeless tobacco users ¹² | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.0 |
| Ever smokeless tobacco users ¹³ | 4.9 | 5.5 | 4.2 |
| SUSCEPTIBILITY | | | |
| Never tobacco users susceptible to tobacco use in the future ¹⁴ | 15.8 | 14.0 | 17.5 |
| Never tobacco smokers who thought they might enjoy smoking a cigarette ¹⁵ | 9.4 | 9.2 | 9.6 |



ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

| | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|--|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Current electronic cigarette users ¹⁶ | 8.5 | 9.0 | 8.1 |
| Ever electronic cigarette users ¹⁷ | 24.0 | 23.8 | 24.3 |

CESSATION

| | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|---|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Current tobacco smokers who tried to stop smoking in the past 12 months | 68.6 | 76.1 | 53.6 |
| Current tobacco smokers who wanted to stop smoking now | 57.2 | 60.2 | 52.3 |
| Current tobacco smokers who thought they would be able to stop smoking if they wanted to | 86.1 | 86.9 | 84.6 |
| Current tobacco smokers who have ever received help/advice from a program or professional to stop smoking | 17.7 | 17.5 | 17.9 |

SECONDHAND SMOKE

| | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|--|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Exposure to tobacco smoke at home ¹⁸ | 15.8 | 14.4 | 17.3 |
| Exposure to tobacco smoke inside any enclosed public place ¹⁸ | 28.6 | 24.6 | 32.4* |
| Exposure to tobacco smoke at any outdoor public place ¹⁸ | 34.2 | 31.8 | 36.5 |
| Students who saw anyone smoking inside the school building or outside on school property ¹⁹ | 34.0 | 33.2 | 34.8 |

ACCESS & AVAILABILITY

| | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|---|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Current cigarette smokers who bought cigarettes from a store, convenience store, street vendor, kiosk, or supermarket ²⁰ | 36.4 | 49.8 | 17.3* |
| Current cigarette smokers who were not prevented from buying cigarettes because of their age ²¹ | 50.6 | 42.1 | 67.2 |
| Current cigarette smokers who bought cigarettes as individual sticks ²² | 61.4 | 72.2 | 42.3 |

ADVERTISING & PROMOTION

| TOBACCO ADVERTISING & PROMOTION | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|---|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Students who noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions at points of sale ²³ | 23.6 | 22.6 | 24.6 |
| Students who saw anyone using tobacco on television, videos, or movies ²⁴ | 64.3 | 64.0 | 64.6 |
| Students who were ever offered a free tobacco product from a tobacco company representative | 5.1 | 5.4 | 4.8 |
| Students who had something with a tobacco brand logo on it | 7.4 | 7.3 | 7.6 |
| ANTI-TOBACCO ADVERTISING & PROMOTION | | | |
| Students who noticed anti-tobacco messages in the media ¹⁹ | 49.2 | 48.8 | 49.5 |
| Students who noticed anti-tobacco messages at sporting or community events ²⁵ | 42.3 | 42.6 | 41.9 |
| Current tobacco smokers who thought about quitting because of a warning label ²⁶ | 33.1 | 34.9 | 30.2 |
| Students who were taught in school about the dangers of tobacco use in the past 12 months | 55.0 | 54.8 | 55.3 |

KNOWLEDGE & ATTITUDES

| | OVERALL (%) | BOYS (%) | GIRLS (%) |
|---|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Students who definitely thought it is difficult to quit once someone starts smoking tobacco | 26.7 | 24.7 | 28.6 |
| Students who definitely thought other people's tobacco smoking is harmful to them | 60.7 | 59.5 | 61.8 |
| Students who favored prohibiting smoking at outdoor public places | 81.1 | 80.1 | 82.1 |

¹ Smoked cigarettes, smoked other type of tobacco, and/or used smokeless tobacco anytime during the past 30 days. ² Ever smoked tobacco and/or used smokeless tobacco. ³ Smoked cigarettes or other type of tobacco anytime during the past 30 days. ⁴ Smoked cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days. ⁵ Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days of the past 30 days. ⁶ Smoked tobacco other than cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days. ⁷ Ever smoked cigarettes or other type of tobacco, even one or two puffs. ⁸ Ever smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs. ⁹ Ever smoked tobacco other than cigarettes, even one or two puffs. ¹⁰ Used heated tobacco products anytime during the past 30 days. ¹¹ Ever used heated tobacco products. ¹² Used smokeless tobacco anytime during the past 30 days. ¹³ Ever used smokeless tobacco. ¹⁴ Susceptible to future tobacco use includes those who answered "definitely yes", "probably yes", or "probably not" to using tobacco if one of their best friends offered it to them, or "definitely yes", "probably yes", or "probably not" to using tobacco during the next 12 months. ¹⁵ Those who answered "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to the statement: "I think I might enjoy smoking a cigarette". ¹⁶ Used electronic cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days. Current use of electronic cigarettes is assessed separately from cigarettes, other smoked tobacco products, smokeless tobacco products, and heated tobacco products and is not included in the current definition of current any tobacco use. ¹⁷ Ever used electronic cigarettes in their entire life. ¹⁸ During the past 7 days. ¹⁹ During the past 30 days. ²⁰ Outlet from which current cigarette smokers bought cigarettes the last time they smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days. ²¹ Among those who tried to buy cigarettes during the past 30 days. ²² Based on the last purchase, among those who bought cigarettes during the past 30 days. ²³ Among those who visited a point of sale in the past 30 days. ²⁴ Among those who watched television, videos, or movies in the past 30 days. ²⁵ Among those who attended sporting or community events in the past 30 days. ²⁶ Among those who noticed warning labels on cigarette packages in the past 30 days.

NOTE: Data are weighted to be nationally representative of all students aged 13-15 years who are enrolled in school. Percentages reflect the prevalence of each indicator in each group, not the distribution across groups.

*Gender comparisons are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.