

Syria (Ages 13-15)

Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS)

FACT SHEET



The Syria GYTS includes data on prevalence of cigarette and other tobacco use as well as information on five determinants of tobacco use: access/availability and price, exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS), cessation, media and advertising, and school curriculum. These determinants are components Syria could include in a comprehensive tobacco control program.

The Syria GYTS was a school-based survey of students in 7-10, conducted in 2007. A two-stage cluster sample design was

used to produce representative data for all of Syria. At the first stage, schools were selected with probability proportional to enrollment size. At the second stage, classes were randomly selected and all students in selected classes were eligible to participate. The school response rate was 100%, the class response rate was 100%, the student response rate was 83.7%, and the overall response rate was 83.7%. A total of 1,621 students aged 13-15 participated in the Syria GYTS.

Prevalence

27.4% of students had ever smoked cigarettes (Boy = 40.0%, Girl = 15.0%)
 38.0% currently use any tobacco product (Boy = 48.9%, Girl = 26.8%)
 12.3% currently smoke cigarettes (Boy = 19.1%, Girl = 5.9%)
 25.0% currently smoke shisha (Boy = 32.5%, Girl = 17.4%)
 34.7% currently use other tobacco products (Boy = 44.9%, Girl = 24.5%)
 14.7% of never smokers are likely to initiate smoking next year

Knowledge and Attitudes

28.0% think boys and 22.3% think girls who smoke have more friends
 22.9% think boys and 16.0% think girls who smoke look more attractive

Access and Availability - Current Smokers

43.6% usually smoke at home
 21.2% buy cigarettes in a store

Exposure to Secondhand Smoke (SHS)

60.1% live in homes where others smoke in their presence
 58.4% are around others who smoke in places outside their home
 77.4% think smoking should be banned from public places
 72.4% think smoke from others is harmful to them
 56.1% have one or more parents who smoke
 5.5% have most or all friends who smoke

Cessation - Current Smokers

79.7% want to stop smoking
 73.1% tried to stop smoking during the past year
 77.9% have ever received help to stop smoking

Media and Advertising

84.7% saw anti-smoking media messages, in the past 30 days
 59.2% saw pro-cigarette ads on billboards, in the past 30 days
 54.0% saw pro-cigarette ads in newspapers or magazines, in the past 30 days
 12.9% have an object with a cigarette brand logo
 11.8% were offered free cigarettes by a tobacco company representative

School

60.5% had been taught in class, during the past year, about the dangers of smoking
 40.5% had discussed in class, during the past year, reasons why people their age smoke
 56.5% had been taught in class, during the past year, the effects of tobacco use

Highlights

- Over one-third of the students currently use any form of tobacco; 12.3% of students currently smoke cigarettes; 25% currently smoke shisha; 34.7% of the students currently use some other form of tobacco.
- SHS exposure is high – Six in 10 students live in homes where others smoke in their presence; More than half are exposed to smoke in public places; Over half of the students have at least one parent who smokes.
- More than 7 in 10 of students think smoke from others is harmful to them.
- Over three-quarters of the students think smoking in public places should be banned.
- Eight in 10 smokers want to quit.
- One in 8 students has an object with a cigarette brand logo on it.
- Over 4 in 5 students saw anti-smoking media messages in the past 30 days; More than half the students saw pro-cigarette ads on billboards and in newspapers or magazines in the past 30 days.

For additional information, please contact:

Dr. Bassam Abou el Dahab

e-mail: tcp-osh@scs-net.org