

Youth Openness to Cigarette Smoking in New York has Reached Highest Level on Record

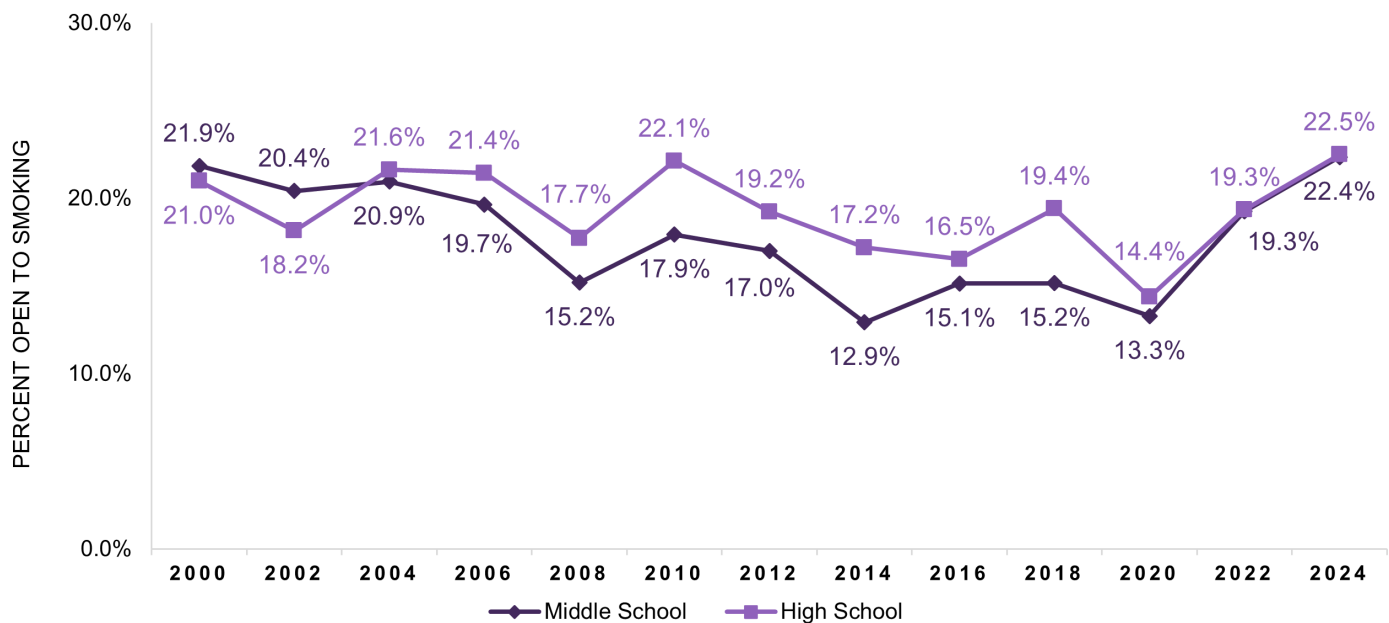


Cigarette use among youth remains at a historic low since 2000 due to effective prevention efforts. However, some young people remain open to smoking. Openness to smoking means not having made a firm decision to avoid smoking in the near future. Because nearly all cigarette use begins during adolescence, openness to smoking is an important early warning sign for future cigarette use.¹

In 2024, approximately 1 in 5 middle and high school students who have never smoked reported openness to smoking, the highest level on record. Despite historically low youth cigarette smoking rates, openness now exceeds levels seen when youth smoking was far more common.

This increase suggests a shift in youth attitudes towards smoking and is concerning given the established link between openness and future smoking behaviors. Sustained investment in comprehensive tobacco control efforts that include public education campaigns, youth engagement, retail and marketing restrictions, and proven policy strategies is essential to counter the influence of tobacco industry marketing and to reinforce consistent smoke-free norms.

Percentage of Middle and High School Student Never Smokers who are Open to Smoking,² New York Youth Tobacco Survey (NY-YTS) 2000-2024



1. Mowery PD, Farrelly MC, Haviland ML, Gable JM, Wells HE. Progression to established smoking among US youths. *Am J Public Health*. 2004 Feb;94(2):331-7.
2. Openness to smoking is defined as responding “yes” to the question “Do you think that you will try a cigarette soon?”; “definitely yes,” “probably yes,” or “probably not” to the question “Do you think you will smoke a cigarette at any time during the next year?”; or “definitely yes,” “probably yes,” or “probably not” to the question “If one of your best friends offered you a cigarette, would you smoke it?”