

Office of Tobacco Control

Children, Youth and Tobacco:



Behaviour, Perceptions and Public Attitudes

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OFFICE OF TOBACCO CONTROL

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Willow House,
Millennium Park,
Naas, Co. Kildare

Tel: +353 45 852 700
Fax: +353 45 852 799

email: info@otc.ie
Website: www.otc.ie

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TNS mrbi

Temple House, Temple Road,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

Tel: +353 1 278 1011
Fax: +353 1 278 1022

email: mrbi@tns-global.com
Website: www.tnsmrbi.ie

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foreword

**MARY CUNNINGHAM,
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF IRELAND**

I am honoured to have the opportunity to provide the foreword to this very insightful report on Children, Youth and Tobacco, and commend the Office of Tobacco Control for commissioning it. The report not only provides us with very interesting data on the smoking behaviour of young people but goes a step further by looking at the attitudes and beliefs of young people and adults towards smoking.

Adolescents in general are considered one of the healthiest cohorts in society. By the second decade of their life they have survived the diseases of early childhood and the health problems associated with ageing are still a long way off (Child and Adolescent Health Development, 2002). However with an increasing body of data now available on the behaviour and health status of young people, this portrayal of young people is seriously being challenged.

This report confirms the worrying trends associated with young people now having large disposable incomes to spend as they choose. The report outlines the increased spending on tobacco throughout the adolescent years. It appears that spending increases dramatically at 16 years of age, highlighting the need for early intervention with young people when it comes to tobacco use. What is also striking for this period of adolescence as shown in the report, is the excessive spending on alcohol and fast foods at this time of a young person's life.

According to the US Surgeon General teens who smoke are 3 times more likely as non-smokers to use alcohol, 8 times more likely to use marijuana, and 22 times more likely to use cocaine. Smoking is associated with a host of other risky behaviours, such as fighting and engaging in unprotected sex.

Health inequalities are now a concern for all involved in health service provision. The research contained in this report demonstrates such inequalities by highlighting the links between tobacco use amongst young people and social class. When we talk about youth health promotion, it is vital to think in terms of supportive environments and supporting young people in terms of their health choices. That is why the findings of this report on the environments of young smokers is particularly interesting.

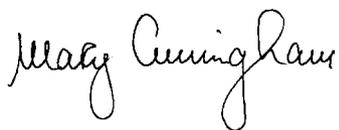
What seems to be pertinent in the debate about young people and tobacco is the ease with which young people continue to be able to purchase cigarettes. I believe that if the provisions of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002 were enforced, whereby shopkeepers found selling cigarettes to minors would be completely banned from selling tobacco products, asking for ID would soon become the norm for such shopkeepers.

Public policy in Ireland needs to be implemented in a manner that actively discourages young people from smoking. We need to take advantage of young people's price sensitivity and of their obvious preferences in terms of purchasing 10 packs of cigarettes. I believe that when we remove the sale of 10 packs, increase the price of cigarettes year on year, and enforce the current public health legislation, that these moves will go a long way to actively discouraging young people from smoking.

Linked to this is the obvious and challenging area of tobacco advertising and sponsorship. We know that young people are very brand conscious; reinforced by the research presented hereafter. We need to move towards a complete ban on all tobacco advertising if public policy on tobacco is to be effective.

Given that smoking is the single biggest preventable cause of death, an insight into public perceptions and attitudes is vital. We need to counteract misinformation around smoking and show young people that the social norm is not to smoke in Ireland with a current smoking rate of approximately 24%. Young people are under the impression that 'everyone is doing it' in terms of smoking or other health behaviours, and while we know this is statistically not the case, a concerted effort is needed to reduce the smoking rates among young people even further in Ireland.

The information provided in this report will go a long way to help us plan interventions for use with young people on tobacco. It also outlines where we need to be in terms of public policy and what steps we need to put in place to get there. I have no doubt that we have a lot of work to do in terms of young people and tobacco, but this report makes our job of ensuring that children and young people are kept tobacco free, a little easier.



Mary Cunningham
National Youth Council of Ireland
3 Montague Street,
Dublin 2.
www.nyci.ie



introduction

**PROFESSOR SHEILA GREENE,
DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN**

It is a pleasure to introduce this very useful and thought-provoking report. The problem of cigarette smoking and especially of the recruitment of children into smoking remains a major challenge despite the partial success of the public health anti-smoking message over the last two decades.

Tobacco smoking is, of course, one of the most baffling and intractable of the addiction problems. It is baffling because so many young people continue to become addicted, despite the mild and not very obviously pleasurable effects of smoking in the initial phase. It is intractable because of the strength of the addiction to nicotine once the habit is established. Samuel Johnson's astute warning against smoking encapsulates the insidious, ensnaring nature of tobacco: "The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken."

In the case of children especially, the explanation for the continuing allure of cigarette-smoking, despite growing awareness of the health risks, lies mainly in the highly charged symbolism of smoking – its apparent capacity to signal the young smoker's maturity, sophistication, glamour, toughness or daring. This survey strongly corroborates the role of peer group pressure in these processes and the significance of role models, media images and advertising. Fully 92% of the children who smoked had friends who smoked, while only 15% of the children, who did not, had smoking friends. It is worth noting that 65% of the smoking children first accessed cigarettes through their friends.

Pressures to conform and the influence of advertising were also clear from the fact that 80% of the child smokers smoked just two different brands, which happened to be the two most popular brands generally within the Irish market. For the older generations who remember childhood as a period of chronic lack of money, the findings about the weekly expenditure of children are fascinating and an obviously essential aspect of the new climate of Celtic Tiger Ireland. The 16 and 17 year olds were spending €122 per week and astonishingly, those amongst them who smoked were spending almost an additional €80 a week.

Smoking among young people is not a new phenomenon. Overall 53% of all smokers interviewed had begun by 15 years of age and 7% by age 11. Indicating the continuing elevated risk in the lower income groups, the corresponding figures for people from these groups were 62% and 9%. This trend of higher smoking rates among lower income groups has continued to our present day youth, with children from lower income backgrounds currently spending three times as much on cigarettes as children from higher income backgrounds.

Most of the children who smoked were able to purchase cigarettes at various retail outlets and this survey makes a telling point with the finding that 92% were not asked for an ID the last time they purchased.

A hopeful note is struck by the findings that show that 77% of the adult smokers support a ban on all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion or communication and only 17% of smokers seem to be opposed to restrictions on smoking. Following the smoke-free workplaces legislation there appears to be a widespread awareness, even amongst smokers, of the dangers and undesirability of both smoking and passive smoking. Legislative changes and health promotional campaigns are clearly having some positive impact and are leading to shifts in social attitudes and behaviour.

On the other hand, more pessimistically and indicating the difficult nature of the health educator's task, the finding that only 32% of smokers acknowledge that smokers die younger, compared to 70% of non-smokers, points to the enduring influence of psychological denial processes in the mindset of the smoker. Many young people start smoking mainly for psychological or social reasons, as the result of peer pressure or to assert their maturity. Young people are inclined to feel that they are invulnerable and future health concerns can seem very remote. The finding that 32% of 12-15 year old and 38% of 16-17 year old smokers have tried to give up smoking and failed reinforces the fact that once the smoking habit is established the physiological power of nicotine addiction takes over.



Professor Sheila Greene
Children's Research Centre,
Trinity College,
Dublin 2.
www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre/

background

The Office of Tobacco Control (OTC) was established on a statutory basis on 31st May 2002. The remit of the OTC is to support Government policy of promoting a tobacco free society by fulfilling the functions set out in the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 and Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act, 2004.

To assist in these duties, a programme of market research has been established, to inform the OTC on consumer attitudes towards smoking and smoking behaviour.

This report, focusing on children, youth and tobacco, looks specifically at five key areas:

1. Expenditure amongst children and young people;
2. Smoking behaviour among young people and the population aged 8+;
3. The impact of pricing on purchasing decisions;
4. Public attitudes and perceptions regarding smoking;
5. Branding and marketing awareness of tobacco products among young people and the population aged 8+.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data presented in this study was compiled from a survey undertaken by TNS mrbi. The survey was conducted on a face-to-face interview basis in the home of the respondents. The defined universe for this study was all aged 8+ years living in the Republic of Ireland.

HOW THE RESPONDENTS WERE SELECTED

Firstly, the population was stratified by the four main regions: Dublin, Rest of Leinster, Munster and Connaught/Ulster. Within these regions, the population was further divided into Urban and Rural. DEDs (District Electoral Divisions) were then chosen using sampling procedures and were then the primary sampling point.

The second stage involved selecting individuals for interviews within each sampling point. For each sampling point, the relevant Registers of Electors was identified from which one address was randomly selected. It is at this address that the interviewer must commence interviewing. The interviewer then follows a random route procedure, whereby they call at every fifth household in urban areas and every quarter of a mile in rural areas to fulfil their quotas.

SAMPLE SIZE AND STRUCTURE

A nationally representative sample of 1,479 people (8+) was achieved. In order to obtain a robust representation of people aged 8-17 years, a booster of 500 interviews was conducted.

After combining the main and the booster samples, data weighting was applied to ensure that the demographic profile of the sample was aligned to that of the total population aged 8+.

Actual population estimates (000's) from the 2002 Census were used for weighting purposes. The sample was also weighted by day of the week; this was necessary to establish the spending pattern over the week as opposed to over the previous days.

	Sample Unweighted 1479 people	Sample Weighted 3.2 million people (National Population from 3,210,000 CSO 2002 census) (000's)
Age Group		
8 – 17	667	656
18 – 24	110	420
25 – 44	336	1016
45 – 64	249	704
65+	114	414
Refused	3	
Total	1479	3210
Social Class		
ABC1F1	640	1421
C2DEF2	838	1789
Refused	1	
Total	1479	3210

findings

The protection of young people before they become addicted to tobacco is a key priority of the report of the Tobacco Free Policy Review Group – *Towards a Tobacco Free Society*. The following charts and tables explore a number of issues in relation to tobacco among young people and the population as a whole. The analysis helps us to form a picture of the use of tobacco among young people in Ireland today, and informs us of the attitudes and perceptions of young people and adults with regard to tobacco.

EXPENDITURE AMONGST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Consumer spending is an important component of economic growth and has averaged 4.5% per annum from 2001-2005. This survey shows that young people – even those as young as 8 to 11 years of age – are also part of this boom in expenditure.

The following chart details the actual amount of money young people are spending in a typical week. It shows that 16-17 year olds spent on average €122 in the week before the interview for the purpose of this survey was conducted. 12-15 year olds spent almost half of that amount at €61.60, while 8-11 year olds spent €33.70 in that week. Overall, an average of €64.30 was spent by the 8-17 year olds interviewed in the week preceeding the survey.

→ Expenditure Amongst Children Aged 8-17 Years

Base: All aged 8-17 years: 667

	Average Spend in Past Week			
	8-17 Years	8-11 Years	12-15 Years	16-17 Years
	Total	(225)	(297)	(145)
	€	€	€	€
Clothes/footwear	7.1	5.5	5.1	14
Sweets/chocolates/crisps/Ice-creams	10.4	7.9	12.4	10.7
Mobile phone	9.1	2.1	9.3	20.4
Soft drinks/bottled water	5.4	2.9	5.9	8.7
Takeaways/fast food	6	3.3	6	10.5
Tapes/CDs/DVD's	3.5	2.5	3.9	4.5
Entertainment	3	1.1	4.7	3.2
Alcoholic drinks	5.3	-	1.8	20.9
Cigarettes/tobacco products	3	-	1.6	10.7
Computer games	2.6	3.5	2.2	2
Other food/drink	2.9	0.9	3.2	5.9
Newspapers/magazines	1.8	2	1.3	2.2
Travel	1.7	0.2	1.1	5.6
Jewellery	0.4	0.2	0.3	1.1
Other	2.1	1.6	2.8	1.6
Total Weekly Spend	64.30	33.70	61.60	122.00

Of the 15 items which young people were asked to report their expenditure on, cigarettes/tobacco products were ranked joint fourth for 16-17 year olds, with almost 9% of their expenditure going on such items. For 12-15 year olds, cigarettes/tobacco products were among the lower ranking expenditure items with about 2.5% of expenditure for this age group going on this category of spending.

However, when the expenditure patterns of children who smoke is examined, a clearer picture of the level of expenditure among young smokers on Cigarettes/Tobacco products is evident. Approximately 16% of the young people interviewed were classified as smokers¹ - 14% of girls and 17% of boys.

¹ The question asked to classify an interviewee as a smoker or non-smoker was 'Do you smoke one or more cigarettes each week, whether packaged or roll your own?' As no 8-11 year old was classified as a smoker, the 16% prevalence rate was calculated from 12-17 years only. It is important to note that there is a small base size when looking specifically at 12-17 year old smokers (69).

From the chart below, it can be seen that 16-17 year olds who smoke, had a typical weekly expenditure level of approximately €200 per week, while 12-15 year olds spent half that amount with €100 per week. Both expenditure figures are approximately 60% higher than the combined smoking and non-smoking group in the previous chart.

Of the 15 items which the young smokers were asked to report, 16-17 year olds devoted 19% of their expenditure to cigarettes/tobacco products, which were ranked second behind alcohol. For 12-15 year olds, cigarettes/tobacco products were the highest expenditure item, with 17% of expenditure for this age group going on this category of spending. Mobile phone expenditure followed cigarettes/tobacco closely, with alcoholic drinks ranked third. No respondents aged under 12 were classified as 'smokers'.

→ Expenditure Amongst Children Who Smoke Aged 12-17 Years			
Base: All aged 12-17 year old smokers: 69*			
	Average Spend in Past Week		
	12-17		
	Years	12-15	16-17
	Total	Years	Years
	(69)*	(28)*	(41)*
	€	€	€
Clothes/footwear	14.8	3.9	22
Sweets/chocolates/crisps/ice-creams	11.8	12.5	11.4
Mobile phone	20.5	16	23.5
Soft drinks/bottled water	7.7	5.4	9.1
Takeaways/fast food	15.9	14.2	16.9
Tapes/CDs/DVD's	3.9	2	5.2
Entertainment	4.6	4	5
Alcoholic drinks	36.7	15.5	50.7
Cigarettes/tobacco products	29.7	16.9	38.2
Computer games	2.8	1.1	3.9
Other food/drink	5.5	4.4	6.3
Newspapers/magazines	1.6	0.9	2.1
Travel	3.9	0.8	5.9
Jewellery	-	-	-
Other	1.9	2.6	1.4
Total Weekly Spend	161.30	100.20	201.60
*Caution small base size			

When expenditure is broken down by socio-economic group, it can be seen that overall expenditure in lower socio-economic groupings (C2DEF2), is approximately €30 higher per week than higher socio-economic groupings (ABC1F1). Alcohol, followed closely by cigarettes/tobacco

products are the highest expenditure items for the lower socio-economic grouping. Combined, these two categories account for 48% of spend of this group. For the higher socio-economic group, clothes/footwear and mobile phone expenditure are the highest expenditure categories, with alcoholic drinks and cigarettes and tobacco ranked third and fifth. The average spend in this group on cigarettes/tobacco at €12 per week is approximately one-third of the spend of the lower socio-economic group. For the higher socio-economic group the combined spend on alcohol and cigarettes/tobacco is 21 % of average weekly expenditure.

→ Expenditure Amongst Children Who Smoke Aged 12-17 Years By Social Class

Base: All aged 12-17 year old smokers: 69*

	Average Spend in Past Week	
	ABCF1	C2DEF2
	Total (20)*	Years (49)*
	€	€
Clothes/foowear	36.8	5.6
Sweets/chocolates/crisps/Ice-creams	9.0	13.0
Mobile phone	21.6	20.1
Soft drinks/bottled water	6.8	8.0
Takeaways/fast food	14.4	16.5
Tapes/CDS/DVD's	2.7	4.4
Entertainment	-	6.5
Alcoholic drinks	17.1	44.9
Cigarettes/tobacco products	12.0	37.2
Computer games	2.4	3.0
Other food/drink	8.1	4.4
Newspapers/magazines	1.4	1.7
Travel	4.3	3.7
Jewellery	-	-
Other	2.6	1.6
Total Weekly Spend	139.20	170.60

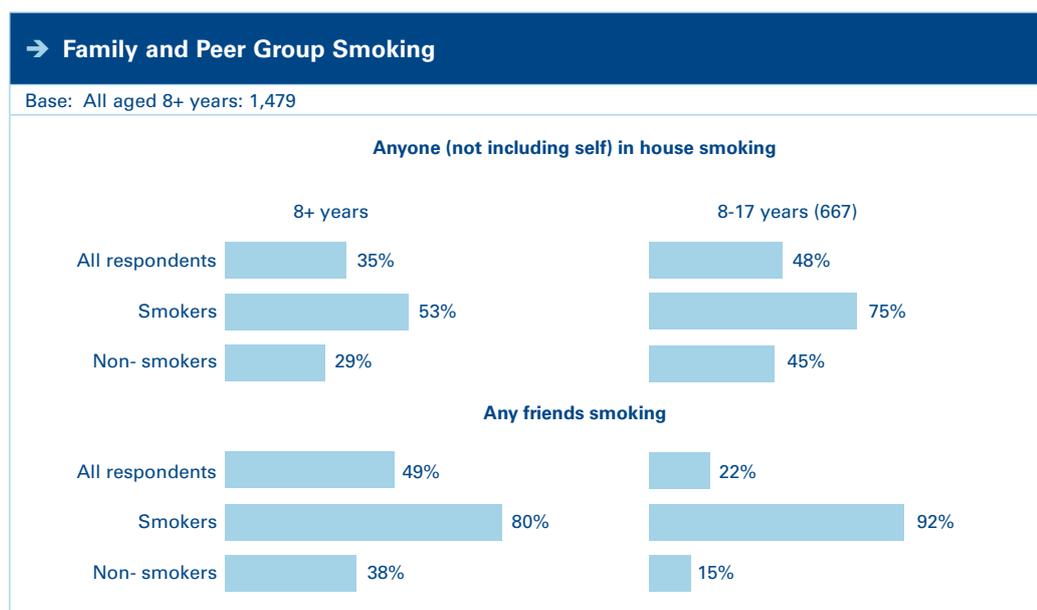
*Caution small base size

SMOKING BEHAVIOUR

There has been much discussion over the years about the influence smoking among family members and peers have on young people’s own behaviour. In order to examine this issue, this survey asked all respondents to name the people living in their household, together with their three best friends, and indicate whether these people smoked or not.

As the chart below shows, 75% of young people who smoke, live in a household where another household member smokes. This is compared to 53% of those who smoke among the full 8+ population.

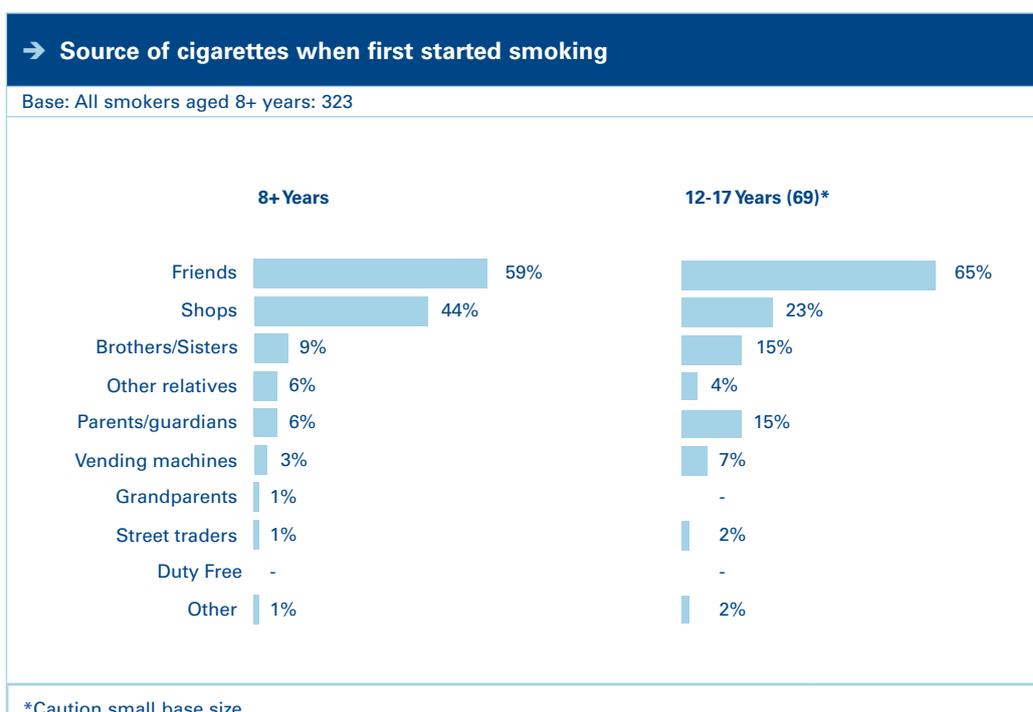
For people who have a friend who smokes, 92% of 8-17 year olds also smoke compared to 80% of the entire sample of smokers.



The influence of friends and relatives on smoking behaviour becomes even more apparent in the following chart, which outlines the sources of cigarettes when the smoker first started smoking². This chart shows that 65% of young people got cigarettes from friends, 23% from shops, 15% from brothers/sisters, 15% from parents/guardians, and 7% from vending machines.

² Respondents could identify more than one source.

Encouragingly, this chart shows that shops are now a less likely source of first cigarettes for 8-17 year olds than the full 8+ population (23% versus 44%). Equally, it is clear they remain an important source.



The smokers amongst the survey respondents were asked how many cigarettes, on average, they smoked per day. The average smoked by 8-17 year olds was just short of 10 cigarettes a day, with 12-15 year olds smoking almost 7 and 16-17 year olds almost 12 cigarettes per day. The numbers smoked by older people ranged from a high of 17.9 for those aged 25-64 years to a low of 14.5 for those aged 65 years and older.

In overall terms, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day – when all smokers in the survey are included – is 16.3. However, when one looks at the socio-economic backgrounds of the smokers interviewed, those on lower incomes smoked 17.2 cigarettes per day, while those on higher incomes smoked 14.1.

→ Cigarette Smoking Behaviour

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323

Average No. of Cigarettes per day

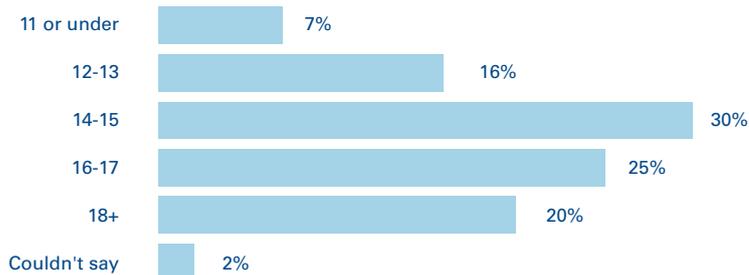
Age		Social Class	
Total	16.3	Total	16.3
8-17	9.7	ABC1F1	14.1
12-15	6.8	C2DEF	17.2
16-17	11.7		
18-24	14.6		
25-44	17.9		
45-64	17.9		
65+	14.5		

The interviewees were also asked when they started smoking. As the chart below shows, 78% of smokers say they started to smoke before they reached the age of 18 years, with 53% stating that they began smoking by the time they were aged 15. These high percentage levels clearly indicate that initiation into smoking is largely a childhood and teenage phenomenon.

→ Cigarette Smoking History

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323

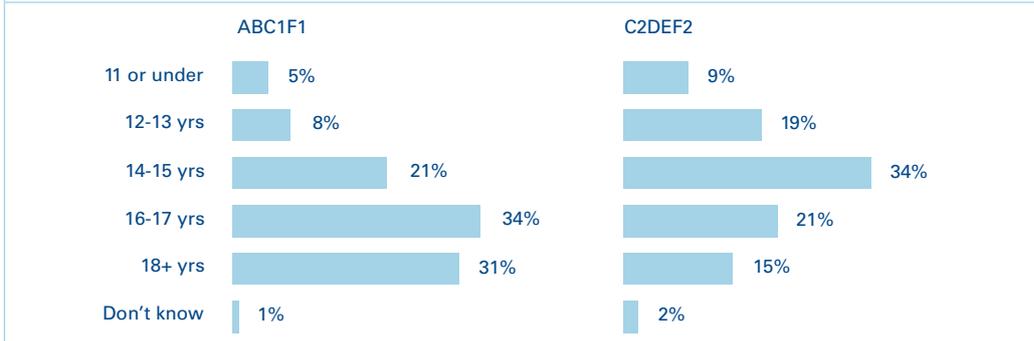
Age Started Smoking



When this statistic is further analysed from a socio-economic perspective, it shows that 83% of lower income smokers took up smoking by the age of 18 compared to 68% of higher income smokers. This gap in take up rate is even more pronounced for take up rates at a younger age, as 62% of lower income smokers took up smoking by the age of 15 compared to 34% of higher income smokers.

→ Smoking History - Age started Smoking

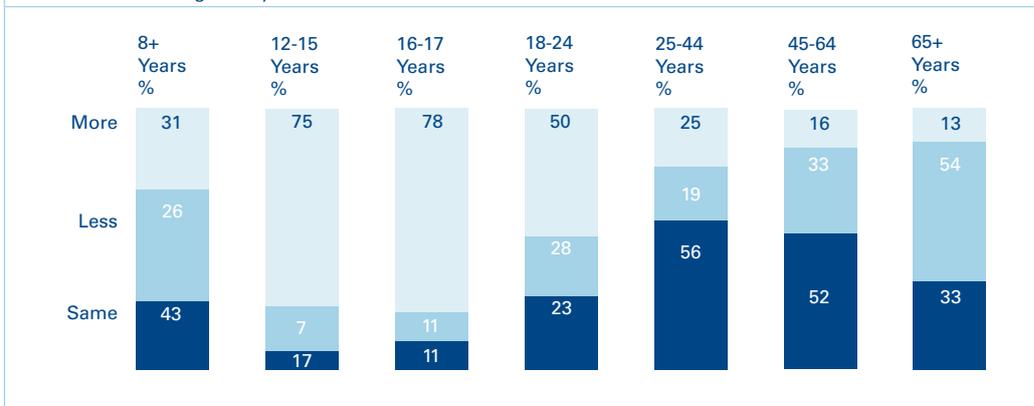
Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323



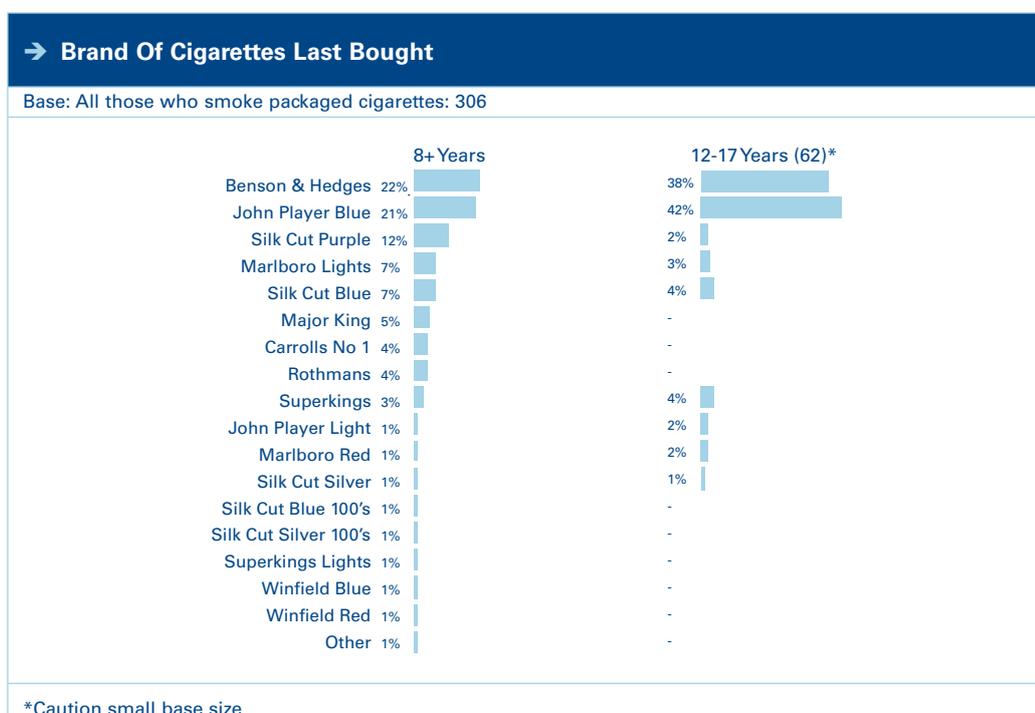
Those people who smoked were also asked whether they smoked more, less or the same number of cigarettes as three years ago. As the chart below shows, those aged 12-17 are now smoking more than they were three years ago (they would have been aged somewhere between 9 and 14 years at that time). Of those aged between 18 and 24, half are smoking more. As the sample increases in age, there is a major reversal in trends. For smokers aged 45-64 years of age, 33% are smoking less now than they were three years ago. For those aged 65+, this reduction is even more pronounced as 54% are smoking less now than three years ago while 13% are smoking more.

→ Smoking More, Less Or About The Same Amount Of Cigarettes As 3 Years Ago

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323



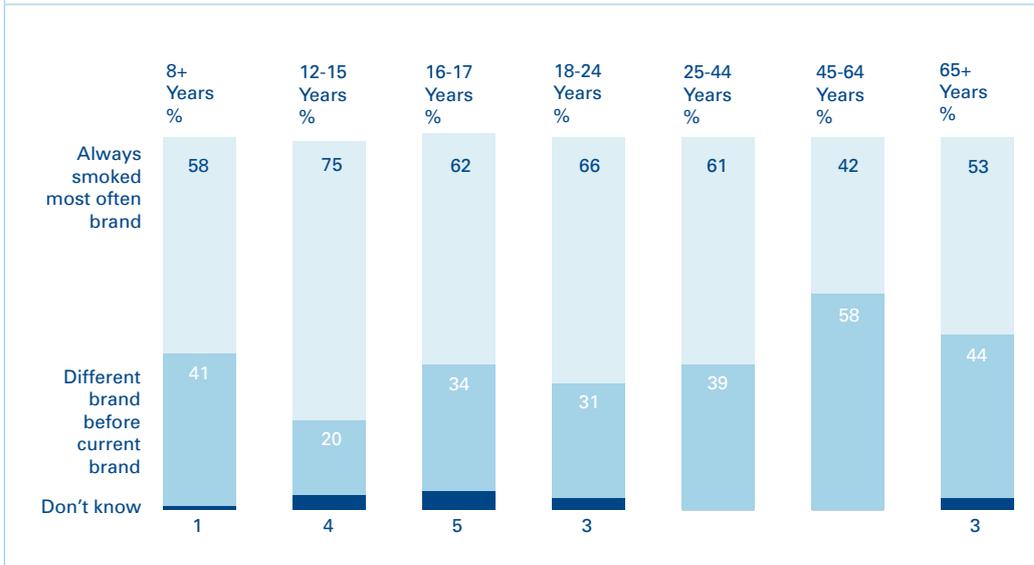
The sensitivity of young people to marketing and communications is an important issue to consider. This survey shows that 80% of young smokers buy either Benson and Hedges or John Player Blue – the most purchased brands in the Irish market place. This is compared to 43% of the entire sample of smokers. Indeed, three of the traditional brands – Major, Carrolls and Rothmans – which are now less promoted here, still have a 13% share of all smokers, but have no penetration among younger smokers.



The following chart shows how quickly and early smokers commit to a particular brand – even young smokers. Seventy-five per cent of 12 to 15 year olds have always smoked their ‘most often’ brand. These high brand commitment levels continue until the cohort reaches the age of 45 and over where it declines somewhat.

→ Smoking History - Brand

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323



The reasons for changing brands are explored in the following chart. For 12-15 year olds, 18% of smokers changed because the brand was well known/popular or smoked by friends, indicating again the importance of the peer group in starting smoking and smoking behaviour. For 16-17 year olds, 13% said they preferred the brand as a reason for changing, with 9% also identifying the taste/flavour, and a further 9% saying the brand was well known/popular and one which friends smoke. Among the 45+ age group, 22% of the 45-64 age group said they changed for a milder/lighter or lower in tar option, with 18% of 65+ smokers citing similar reasons. This reason for changing is possibly related to the misinformed perception that milder/lighter cigarettes are less harmful, indicating a concern for health among older smokers.

→ Reasons For Changing To Current Brand

Base: All smokers aged 8+: 323

	8+	12-15	16-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
	years						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Milder/lighter	8	-	2	7	6	11	15
Lower in tar	7	-	-	7	6	11	3
I prefer this brand	7	3	13	4	5	9	10
I like the taste/flavour	7	15	9	7	7	7	-
Just the right strength	4	3	4	-	4	6	6
Cheaper/less expensive/price	3	-	-	-	3	9	-
Well known/popular/my friends smoke	3	18	9	2	3	2	-
Not as bad for you as other brands	1	-	-	3	-	1	-
Easily available	1	-	2	-	1	-	-
Other	2	3	3	-	3	1	4
Don't know	60	80	69	71	61	42	61

Since 2001, it has been illegal for cigarettes to be sold to those aged under 18 years. However, this research found that 16% of those aged between 12 and 17 years are smoking. We also know that while friends and relatives are a major source of cigarettes, so too are retail outlets.

This survey explored this issue in more detail and asked all cigarette smokers from where they bought cigarettes on the last occasion. The majority of young smokers (51%) say they purchased them from newsagents, with 11% buying them in supermarkets, 11% in convenience stores and 6% in petrol stations.

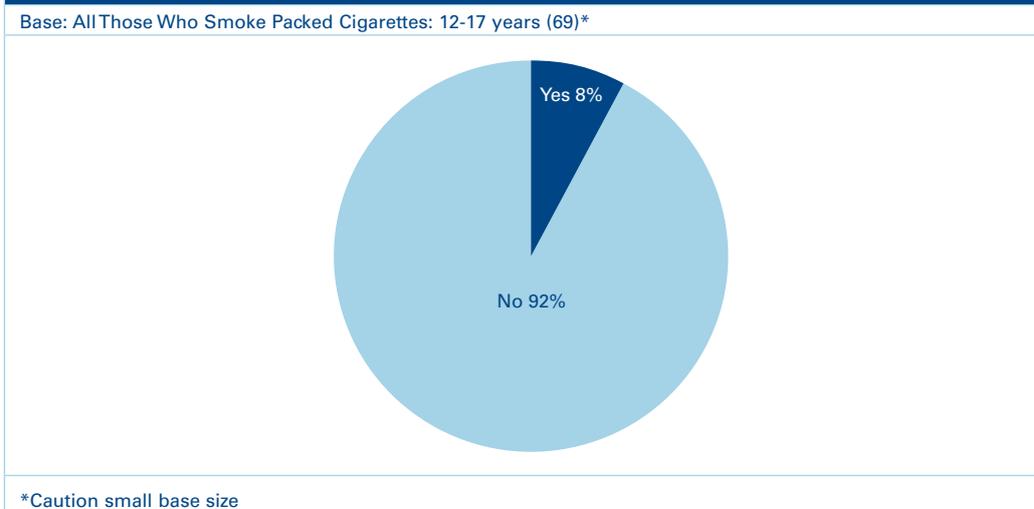
→ Where Cigarettes Bought On Last Occasion by Age

Base: All those who smoke packed cigarettes: 306		
	8+	12-17
	Years	Years
	(306)	(62)*
	%	%
Newsagents	39	51
Supermarket	19	11
Convenience Store	14	11
Petrol station/garage forecourt shop	13	6
Vending machine	6	8
Pub – over the counter	4	2
Duty free	3	-
Street trader	1	1
Friend	1	8
Restaurant	-	-
Other	1	2
Not stated	*	2

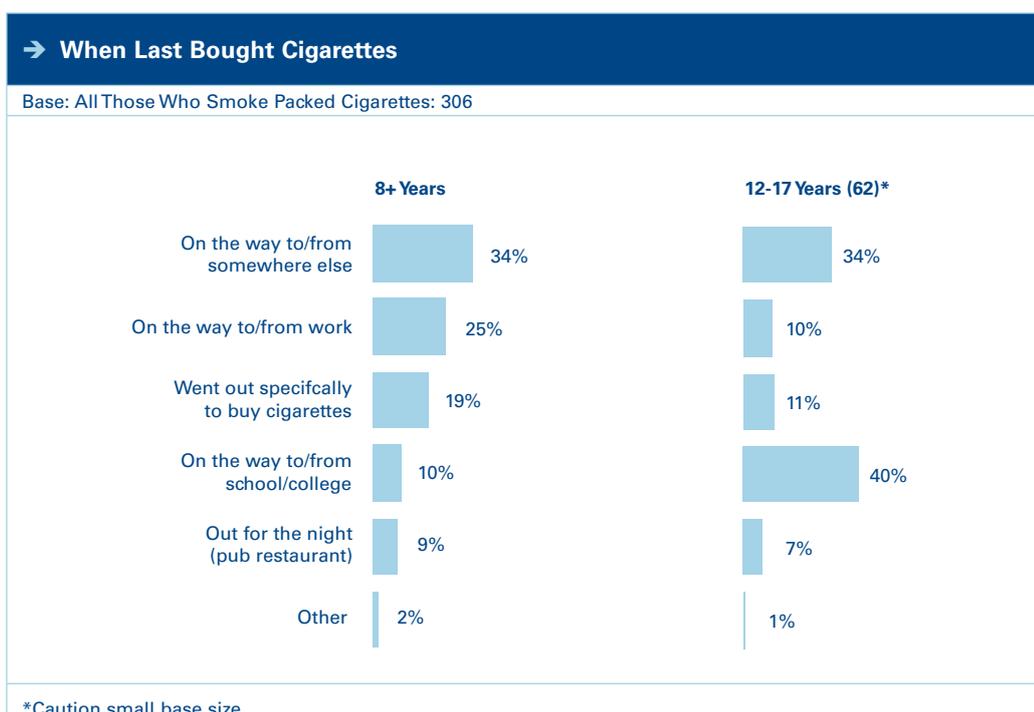
*Caution small base size

When younger smokers were asked if age identification was requested when they last bought cigarettes, 92% responded that they were not asked for such ID.

→ Was Age Identification Asked For When Last Bought Cigarettes?



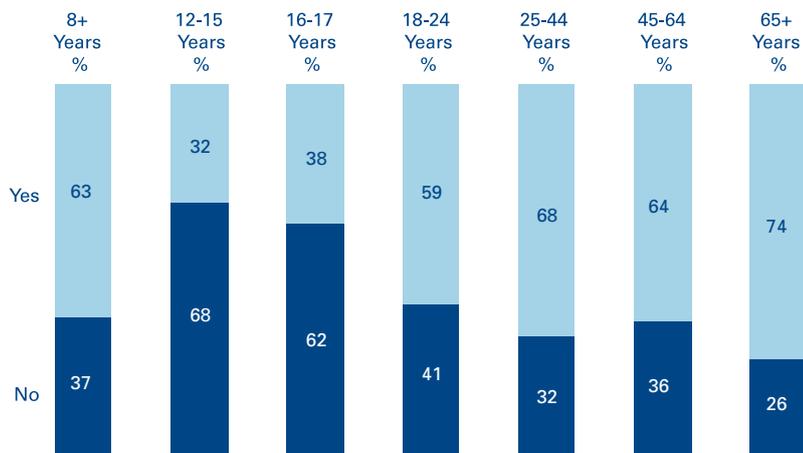
The survey shows that younger smokers tend to buy cigarettes going to or from school/college (40%) indicating a very specific time-frame of early morning, lunch-time and early evening as the most likely time for young people to buy cigarettes. Young people are less likely to make a specific trip to buy cigarettes than the overall 8+ smoking sample.



Finally in relation to people's smoking behaviour, all of the smokers in the sample were asked if they had ever tried to give up cigarettes. As can be seen from the following chart, almost two-thirds of all smokers aged 8+ indicated they have tried to give up cigarettes. As age increases, the percentage that have attempted to give up smoking also increases. Therefore among smokers aged 65+, almost three-quarters have tried to give up cigarettes. Perhaps, not surprisingly, as they were only becoming initiated to smoking, approximately two-thirds of smokers aged under 18 years of age said they hadn't ever tried to give up. Clearly however, the journey from experimentation to frustration remains short, as almost one-third of 12-15 year old smokers have tried to give up cigarettes, and 38% of 16-17 year olds have also tried to quit. Among the 18-24 year olds, more smokers have attempted to give up cigarettes than have not, a pattern that is evident among all smokers across the older age groups.

→ Ever Tried To Give Up Cigarettes

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323

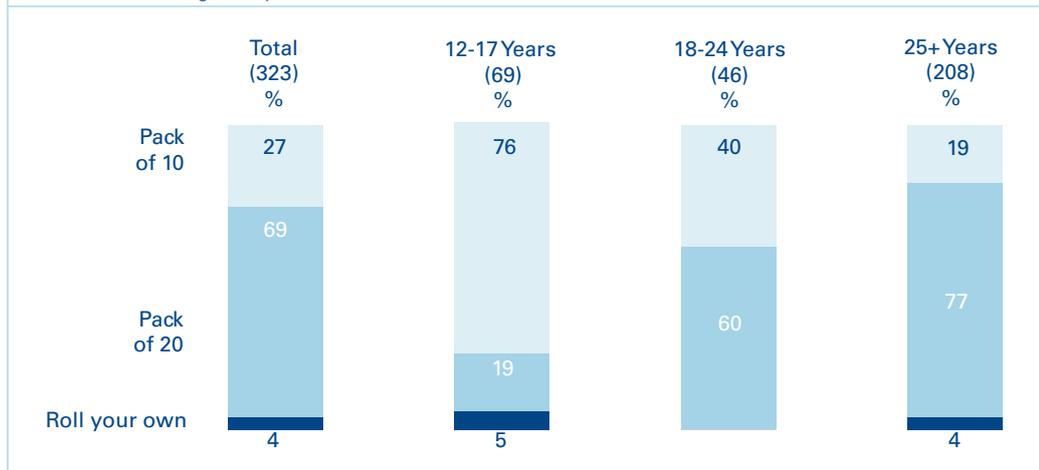


PRICING

As discussed earlier in this report, on average, young smokers tend to smoke 10 cigarettes per day. The chart overleaf shows that 10 packs are also the most often bought by younger smokers (76%), while older smokers are more likely to opt for packs of 20 (60% among 18-24 year olds and 77% among those aged 25 and over).

→ Pack Of Cigarettes Bought Most Often

Base: All smokers aged 8+ years: 323



Best national and international evidence indicates that the most effective means of addressing tobacco consumption and addiction is through price. For price sensitive young people this is especially important. Increases in price discourage experimentation by young people with tobacco products, and also discourages many of those who have started smoking from continuing. The discontinuation of the sale of 10 packs of cigarettes is specifically targeted at the highly price sensitive young smoker. For many young smokers, the 20 pack of cigarettes, which is priced at almost double the price of a 10 pack, will be a major disincentive to purchasing cigarettes.

In this context, the survey asked those who smoked 10 packs and 20 packs how they would respond to various levels of price increases. As the following charts show, 77% of all 10 pack smokers say they are fairly or very unlikely to continue smoking if there is a 100% increase in price. For 20 pack smokers, 64% said they would quit if prices were doubled, suggesting that these smokers – who tend to be over 18 – are somewhat less affected by price increases than younger smokers.

Conversely the tables show the impact of no price rises on likelihood to continue smoking. Some 94% of 10 pack buyers and 90% of 20 pack buyers said they were very or fairly likely to continue smoking if cigarettes stayed at the same price. Even a 10% increase in price is a limited disincentive, as 83% of both 10 pack and 20 pack buyers said they were very or fairly likely to continue smoking with such an increase. It is only when price rises reach 50% that a major downturn in likelihood to continue smoking is evident. Half of 10 pack buyers and 46% of 20 pack buyers say they are fairly or very unlikely to continue smoking with a 50% increase in price.

→ Impact Of Price Increases On Likelihood Of Continuing To Smoke

Base: Packs of 10 Buyers: 109

	Same Price	10%	25%	50%	100%	250%
Price	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very likely to continue smoking	65	49	32	12	7	7
Fairly likely to continue smoking	29	34	32	19	9	7
Neither likely nor unlikely to continue smoking	2	8	14	19	8	7
Fairly unlikely to continue smoking	3	6	13	29	35	18
Very unlikely to continue smoking	-	4	10	21	42	60
Couldn't say	-	-	-	-	-	-

→ Impact Of Price Increases On Likelihood Of Continuing To Smoke

Base: Packs of 20 Buyers: 201

	Same Price	10%	25%	50%	100%	250%
Price	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very likely to continue smoking	68	43	25	15	10	9
Fairly likely to continue smoking	22	40	37	22	13	7
Neither likely nor unlikely to continue smoking	5	9	16	16	13	8
Fairly unlikely to continue smoking	5	5	12	21	21	19
Very unlikely to continue smoking	-	3	10	25	43	58
Couldn't say	-	-	-	-	-	-

PUBLIC ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

The survey also examined public attitudes and perceptions on smoking and smokers, with results broken down between smokers and non-smokers. The following chart shows that among both smokers and non-smokers there is overwhelming agreement that smoking is addictive. However beyond this largely similar perception, key divergences emerge between attitudes of smokers and non-smokers.

Only 32% of smokers acknowledge that smokers die younger compared to 70% of non-smokers. A similar percentage of smokers and non-smokers (54/55%) felt that most smokers would like to give up, but they cannot. In relation to smoking's impact on people's sense of wellbeing, 57% of smokers think that smoking is calming and relaxing compared to 11% of non-smokers, while 45% of smokers consider smoking to be enjoyable and satisfying compared to 6% of non-smokers.

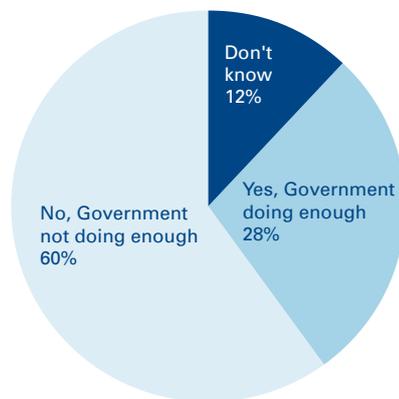
The survey also looked at perceptions of the social impact of smoking. Only 8% of smokers agree that smokers are less attractive to the opposite sex, compared to 33% of non-smokers. Twenty-six per cent of smokers agree that smokers tend to be very sociable and outgoing compared to 10% of non-smokers. Significantly, from a public policy point of view, only a small minority of smokers (17%) believe that smokers should be able to smoke when and where they want. This falls to 3% for non-smokers. In relation to value for money, at the bottom of the table, only 1% of smokers think smoking is good value for money, while earlier in the table, three-quarters of non-smokers and 56% of smokers agreed that smoking was poor value for money.

→ Attitudes To Smokers & Smoking - Smokers Vs. Non-Smokers			
Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479			
	Agree	Agree	Agree
	a lot	a lot	a lot
	Total	Smokers	Non-smokers
	(1479)	(323)	(1156)
	%	%	%
Smoking is addictive	84	85	83
Smoking is poor value for money	70	56	75
Smokers die younger	60	32	70
Most smokers would like to give up but they cannot	54	54	55
Smokers are looked down on by non-smokers	28	26	29
Smokers are less attractive to the opposite sex	26	8	33
Smoking is calming and relaxing	23	57	11
Smoking is becoming more popular	17	20	16
Smoking is enjoyable and satisfying	16	45	6
Smoking helps to keep weight under control	14	18	13
Smokers tend to be very sociable and outgoing people	14	26	10
Smokers tend to lack confidence	8	3	9
Smokers tend to be fashionable and style concious	8	13	6
Smokers should be able to smoke when and where they want	7	17	3
Smoking is good value for money	2	1	2

Returning to the issue of public policy, support is evident among the electorate for stronger action to be taken by Government in relation to the illegal sale of cigarettes to young people. The survey shows that 60% of those age 18 years and over believe that the Government is not doing enough on this issue.

→ **Is The Government Doing Enough To Ensure That Retailers Are Not Selling Cigarettes To Persons Aged 17 Years Or Under?**

Base: All aged 18+ years: 809



This support for stronger action to tackle youth smoking is indicated very clearly in the following charts, with smokers and non-smokers alike endorsing a wide range of measures.

In relation to tobacco marketing, 77% of smoking voters and 91% of non-smoking voters support the introduction of a ban on all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion or communication. There are similar high levels of support for banning product placement in the media by tobacco companies, as well as a ban on celebrities being paid to smoke in public.

As outlined above, public support for Government action to tackle the illegal sale of cigarettes by retailers to young people is quite strong – and is spread evenly among smokers and non-smokers alike. Some 86% of those surveyed support the introduction of licensing for tobacco products so that shops selling to underage smokers could have their licenses revoked, and 85% support the doubling of fines for such illegal sales.

In relation to Government action on cigarette prices, 62% support the banning of the sale of packs of less than 20 cigarettes – 10 packs – while 59% support the doubling of cigarette prices, including four-out-of-ten smokers. In addition, 41% of those surveyed support the imposition of prison sentences for anybody selling cigarettes to underage smokers.

**→ Attitudes To Initiatives To Discourage Young People From Smoking
– Smokers Vs. Non-Smokers**

Base: All aged 18+ years: 809			
	Introduce? Total (809)	Introduce? Smokers (254)	Introduce? Non- Smokers (555)
	Yes	Yes	Yes
	%	%	%
Ban all forms of advertising, promotion or communication	87	77	91
Introduce licensing for tobacco products, so that shops selling to underage smokers could have their licences revoked	86	79	90
Ban product placement i.e. cigarette companies paying for their brand to be shown in movies or on TV	86	76	90
Ban celebrities from accepting payment to smoke in public	85	77	88
Double the fines for anybody selling cigarettes to underage smokers	85	78	88
Include pictures of smoking related diseased organs on cigarette packets	78	64	84
Double the space allocated to health warnings on cigarette packets	76	62	82
Double the amount of money allocated to anti-smoking advertising	75	65	79
Raise the legal minimum smoking age from 18-21	66	54	71
Ban the use of the term 'mild' or 'low tar' on cigarettes	63	51	69
Ban the sale of cigarettes in pack of less than 20	62	46	69
Double the price of cigarettes overnight	59	41	67
Impose a custodial/prison sentence for anybody selling cigarettes to underage smokers	41	32	46

The survey explored in even more detail the support for different types of penalties for selling to underage smokers. There is overwhelming support for most of these measures including the removal of licenses to sell cigarettes, the imposition of a fine, and publication and display of notices stating that the retailer has been prosecuted. The support for the imposition of prison sentences mentioned above rises in relation to the age of the younger people to whom the cigarettes have been sold, with 60% endorsing such penalties for sales to those aged 13 years and under.

→ **Penalties That The Government Could Apply To Retailers Who Sell Cigarettes To Underage Smokers Aged 17/15/13 Years or Under**

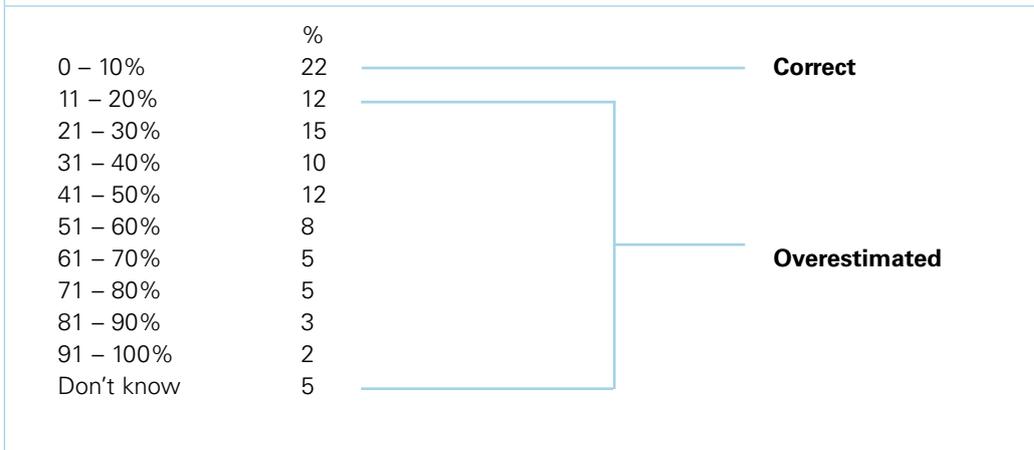
Base: All aged 18+ years: 809

	17 years or under	15 years or under	13 years or under
Would Support Penalty	%	%	%
Permanent removal of license to sell cigarettes	69	76	84
Temporary removal of license to sell cigarettes	82	86	90
Fine of up to €3,000	79	85	92
Custodial sentence of up to 3 months	34	46	60
A notice is displayed on the window of any shop to state that the retailer has been prosecuted	70	75	82
Parents allowed to take legal action against retailers for any damage caused to their children from smoking	54	62	73
A notice is published in the newspaper to state that the retailer has been prosecuted	77	81	87

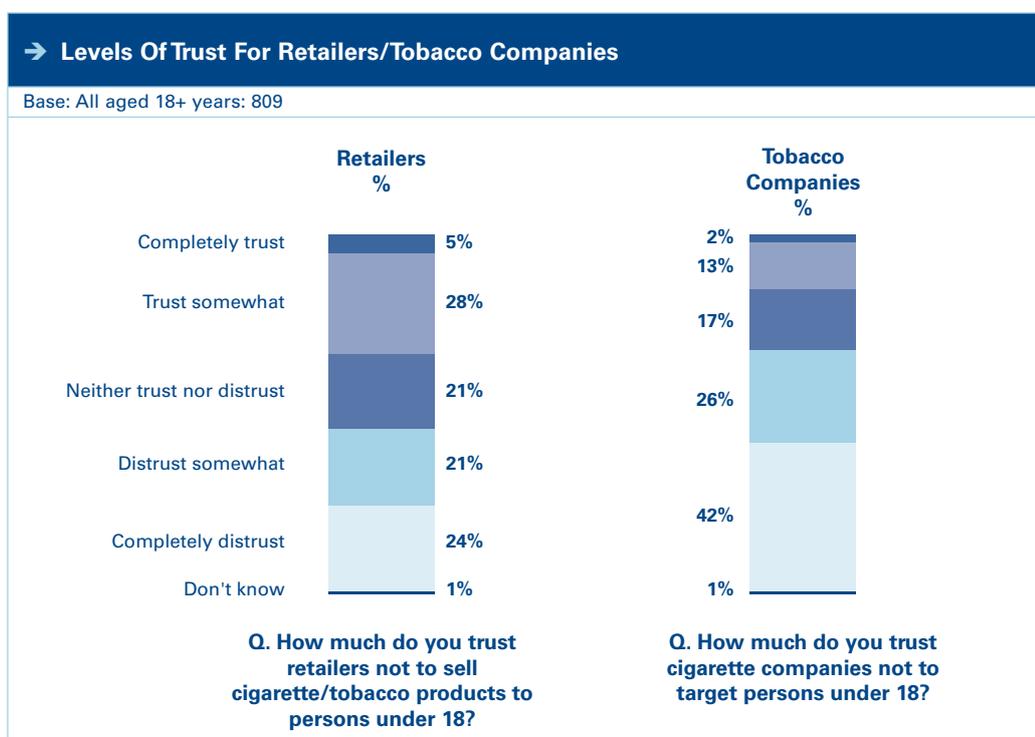
As this report pointed out earlier, 92% of underage smokers say that they were not asked for age identification the last time they bought cigarettes. This survey shows that 78% of the adult population mistakenly assumes that retailers are asking for such identification.

→ **Percentage Of People Aged 17 Years Or Under Thought To Have Been Asked For Age/Identification When Purchasing Cigarettes**

Base: All aged 18+ years: 809



Finally, in relation to public perceptions and attitudes, those aged 18 years and over were asked about their attitudes to retailers and tobacco companies. In relation to the tobacco companies, 68% of the sample said they either completely or somewhat distrusted the industry, with only 15% expressing some level of trust. Based on this survey, the public invest much more trust in the retail industry, with 33% expressing some level of trust in retailers.



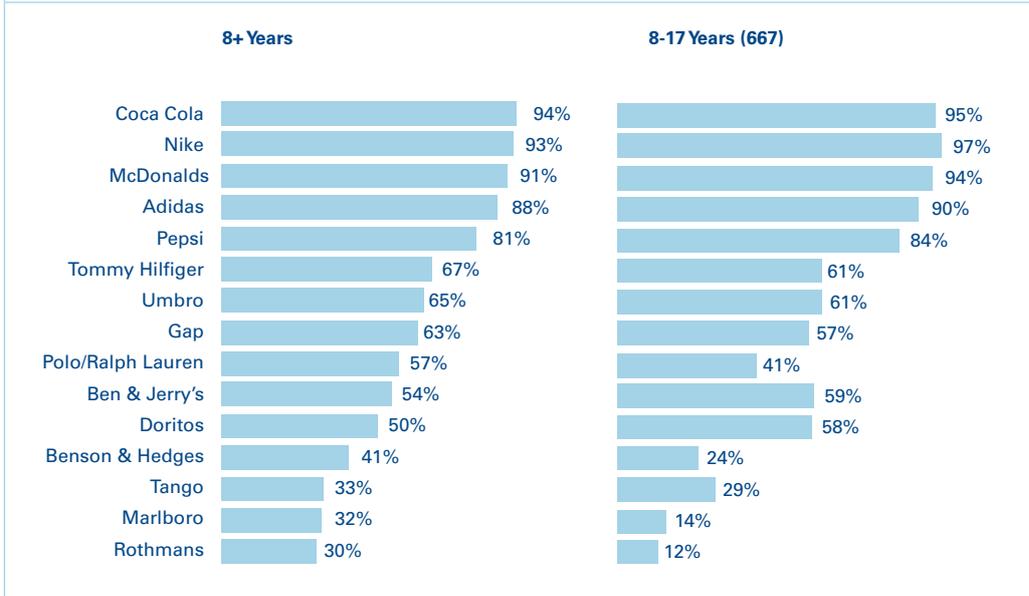
BRAND AWARENESS

The data gleaned by this survey shows that young people are remarkably aware of brands and acknowledge that many high profile brands are quite appealing to them.

The law restricting the marketing and advertising activities of tobacco companies means the exposure of today's young people to such messages has been much more limited than the population as a whole. Despite this, a substantial proportion of young people, when asked what brands appeal to them, still see particular tobacco brands as having an appeal, with 24% of 8-17 year olds mentioning Benson and Hedges in this regard, 14% Marlboro and 12% Rothmans.

→ Brands That Are Seen To Appeal To Young People (Prompted)

Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479



When asked in particular about what tobacco brands appeal to young people, the following chart shows that the two brands that are marketed most heavily in Ireland emerge as those most often mentioned. Benson and Hedges emerges as the leading brand, followed by Marlboro and then by Rothmans. The appeal of Benson and Hedges in particular is quite marked. This brand is perceived by 41% of the population as a whole to appeal to younger people, but has a far higher appeal rate among 16-17 year olds at 54%.

→ Tobacco Brands That Are Seen To Appeal To Younger People

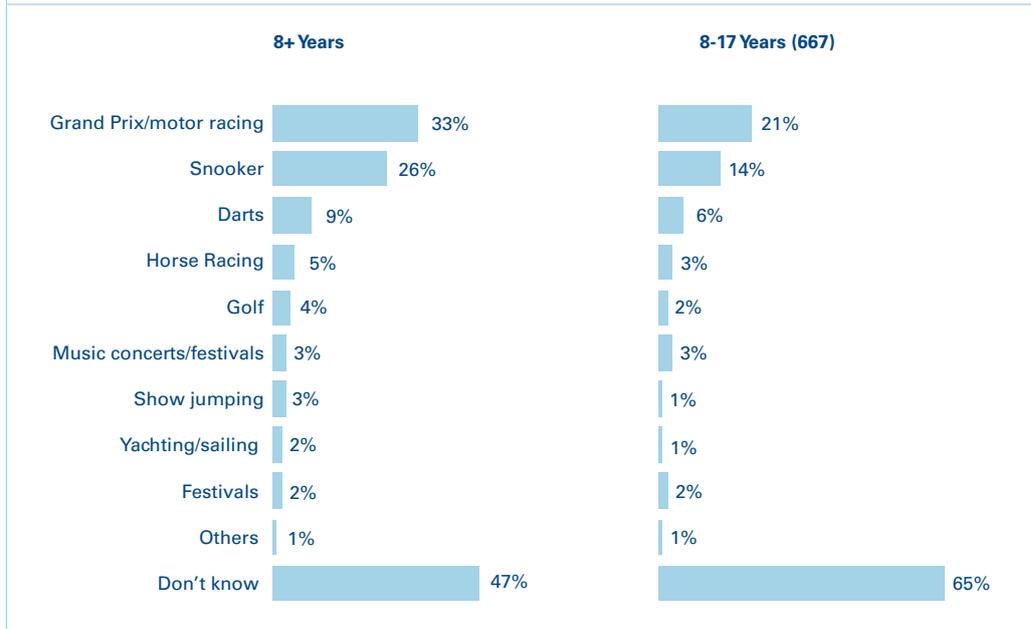
Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479

		8-11	12-15	16-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
		Years (225)	Years (297)	Years (145)	Years (110)	Years (336)	Years (249)	Years (114)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Benson & Hedges	 41%	6	24	54	49	45	47	41
Marlboro	 32%	4	13	33	44	40	39	20
Rothmans	 30%	3	12	26	29	34	40	33

This sensitivity to marketing and communications is further emphasised in the next chart which examines awareness of sports or events sponsored by cigarette companies. In recent years, tobacco sponsorship of many major sporting events, such as motor racing in Europe and the World Snooker Championship, has ended. While the population as a whole would have been much more exposed to such sponsorship than younger people, 21% of 8-17 year olds are still aware of tobacco sponsorship for motor racing and 14% for snooker.

→ Prompted Awareness Of Sports Or Events Sponsored By Cigarette Companies

Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479

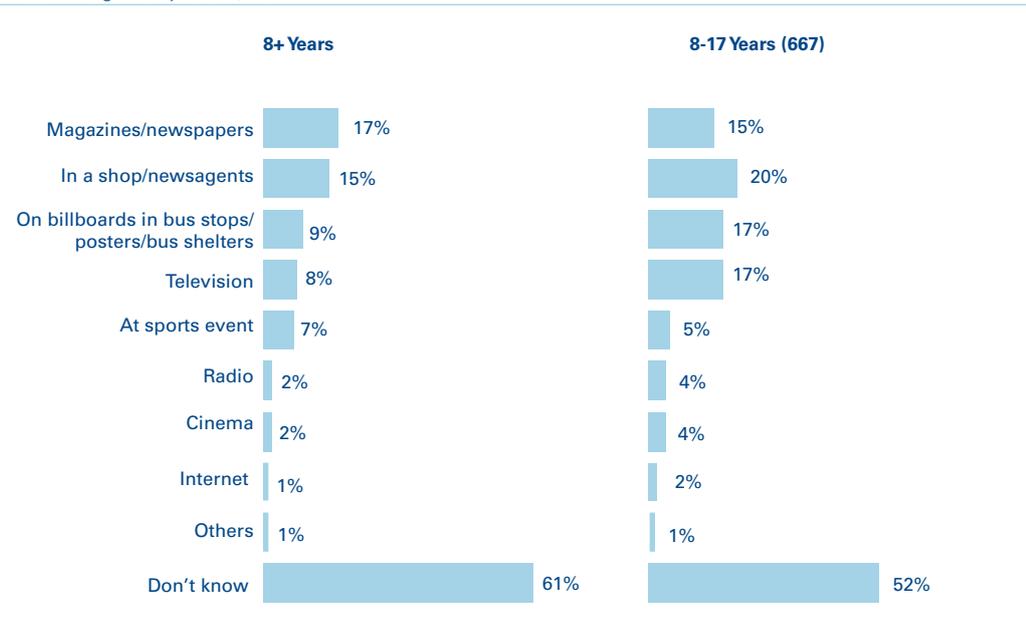


This compares to 33% and 26% for the population aged 8+, indicating, as expected, that the younger age group is less aware of this sponsorship than the population as a whole.

While 65% of 8-17 year olds did not know of sports or events sponsored by cigarette companies, the following charts show that this age group appears to have higher levels of awareness than the overall population about where cigarette brands or companies are advertised. Twenty per cent of young people mentioned shops and newsagents (as against 15% for the overall sample), 17% mentioned billboards (9% for the overall sample) and 17% television (8% for the overall sample).

→ Prompted awareness of where cigarette brands or companies are advertised

Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479



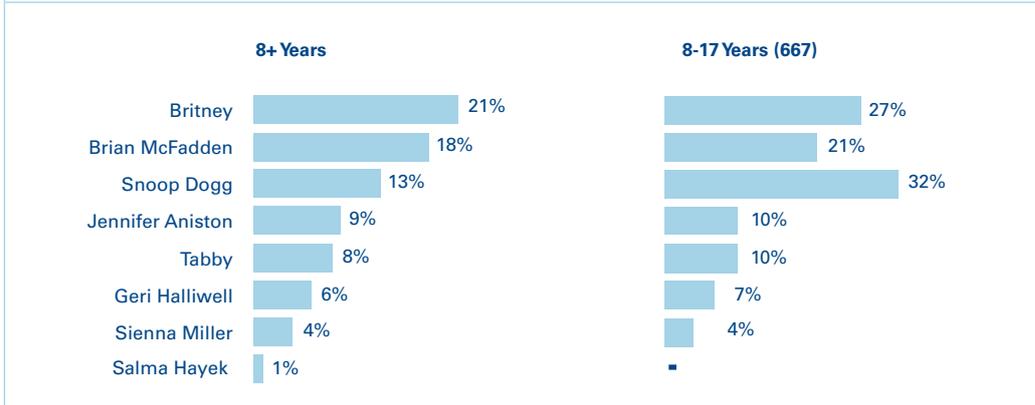
Research undertaken by the Tobacco Free Initiative of the World Health Organization has shown that young people who see smoking in films and on television are more likely to smoke:

- Research in the US has found that non-smoking teens, whose favourite stars frequently smoke on screen, are 16 times more likely to have positive attitudes towards smoking in the future;
- 31% of teens who saw more than 150 occurrences of smoking in movies, in theatres, on video or on television, had tried smoking, compared to only 4% of teens who had seen less than 50 such occurrences.

The impact of television on young people is highlighted by the fact that 17% of 8-17 year olds are aware of tobacco in this media, compared to 8% of the overall sample. Well-known personalities in the media also make more of an impression on young people than the population as a whole with 32% of young people being aware of Snoop Dogg smoking in the media (13% of the entire sample) and 27% aware of Britney Spears smoking (compared to 21% of the entire sample).

→ Prompted Awareness Of Celebrities Smoking On TV/ In A Movie/In A Newspaper/Magazine

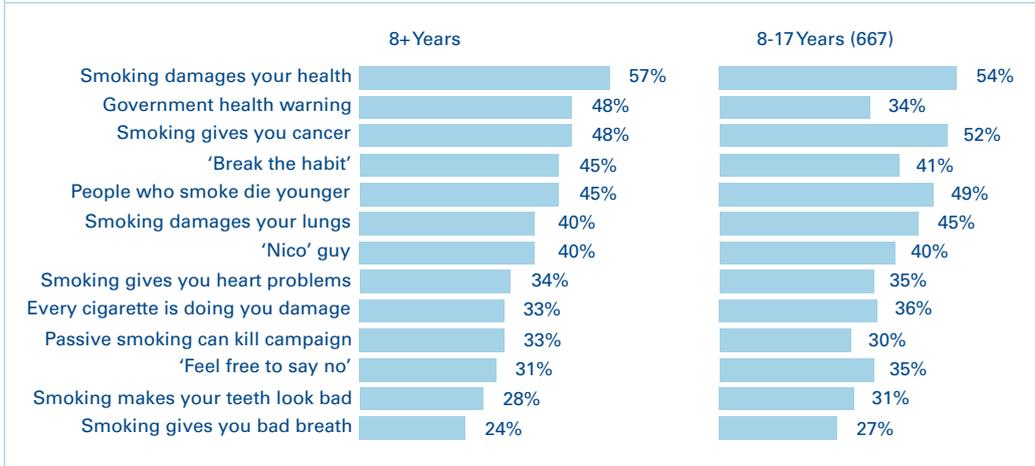
Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479



In terms of anti-smoking messages, the chart below shows, there is little or no difference between young people and the population as a whole in terms of awareness of different anti-smoking messages. 'Smoking damages your health' is the most recognised message among both the population aged 8+ at 57% and the 8-17 year olds at 54%.

→ Prompted Awareness Of Anti -Smoking Communications

Base: All aged 8+ years: 1,479



conclusion

This study provides us with a wealth of information concerning young people and smoking together with the attitudes of young people and adults concerning smoking. It tells us that:

- 16% of 12-17 year olds smoke;
- Peer and family influence is a strong factor, with 92% of young smokers reporting that a friend smokes and 75% that a family member smokes;
- More than 9 out of 10 under-age smokers were not asked for ID the last time they purchased cigarettes. About half of these under-age smokers purchased cigarettes from newsagents and 76% of them purchased 10 packs;
- In terms of the 8+ population as a whole, 78% of smokers started smoking before they reached the age of 18, and 53% before they reached the age of 15, indicating that initiation into smoking is largely a childhood and teenage phenomenon.

Overall, the survey shows there is high support among the adult population towards measures to address the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products to under 18s including the removal of licenses to sell cigarettes and the imposition of a fine. From a public policy perspective, only 7% of the 8+ respondents felt that smokers should be able to smoke when and where they want, another resounding seal of approval for the smoke-free workplaces legislation.



Office of Tobacco Control

Willow House,
Millennium Park,
Naas, Co. Kildare

Tel: +353 45 852 700
Fax: +353 45 852 799

email: info@otc.ie
Website: www.otc.ie

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