



Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug Survey 2017

Western Australian Results – Tobacco

Purpose of the survey

The Australian Secondary Students' Alcohol and Drug (ASSAD) survey provides a snapshot of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among secondary school students aged 12 to 17 years. The survey has been conducted every three years since 1984, with the most recent survey conducted in 2017.

Who took part in 2017?

In 2017, 146 secondary schools were invited to take part in the survey. Of these, 109 schools declined to participate and 37 schools agreed to participate. This resulted in a response rate of 25.3%.

From the schools that took part in the survey, 3,518 students completed the questionnaire. Of these students, 3,361 (95.5%) provided valid responses for age and gender and were included in the final sample.

Students were randomly selected from government, Catholic and independent schools, and voluntarily completed the paper-based survey during school hours. The report presents estimates derived from the survey responses, which are then weighted to the Western Australian estimated residential population by age, gender and school type to address any over or under sampling.

Key findings

- The proportion of 12 to 17-year-old school students who have never smoked has increased significantly from 2011 to 2017. The upward trend seen in previous years has continued in 2017.
- An estimated 4.8% of students aged 12 to 17 years smoked in the week prior to the survey. The mean number of cigarettes smoked was 15.7.
- The prevalence of smoking during the past 12 months has continued to decline and is now just one-third of that recorded in 1993 (36.5% in 1993 compared with 12.2% in 2017).
- Of those students who had smoked in the last week, 6.7% felt certain they would not be smoking next year; 32.6% were undecided.
- Friends were the most common source of cigarettes (48.8%) for those who had smoked during the past week. One in five (26.3%) bought single cigarettes that were not in a full packet.
- The 2017 survey asked students about their use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). An estimated 13.5% of students aged 12 to 17 years have tried an e-cigarette. Of those who had tried an e-cigarette, most (66.6%) had not used one in the past 30 days.

Figure 1. Lifetime prevalence of school students aged 12 to 17 years who have never smoked, 1984–2017

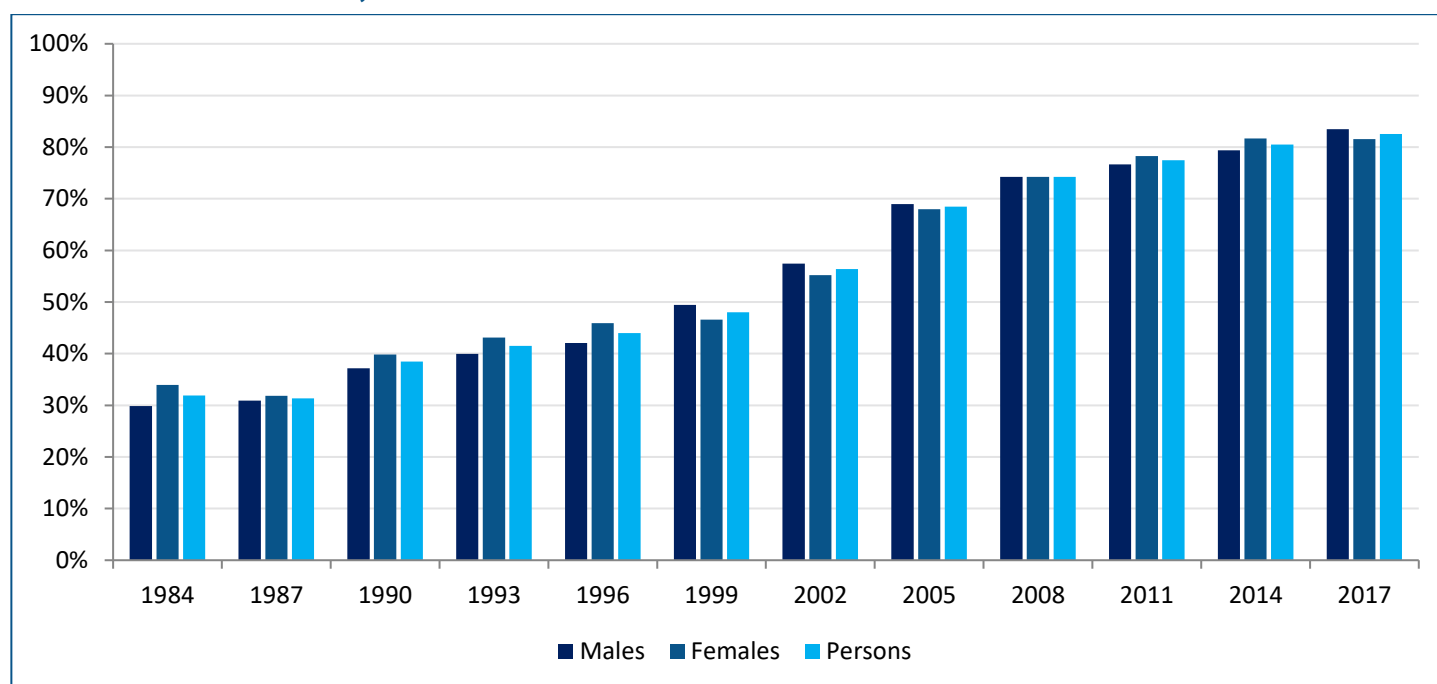


Table 1. Prevalence of tobacco use by school students aged 12 to 17 years by gender and recency of use, 2014 and 2017

	2014	2017		2014	2017
Ever smoked			Smoked in last 4 weeks		
Male	20.63%	16.53%*	Male	6.91%	6.75%
Female	18.30%	18.43%	Female	7.22%	7.22%
Persons	19.49%	17.48%*	Persons	7.06%	6.98%
Smoked in the last 12 months			Smoked in last 7 days		
Male	13.28%	11.05%*	Male	4.70%	4.65%
Female	13.59%	13.29%	Female	4.83%	5.09%
Persons	13.43%	12.17%*	Persons	4.76%	4.87%

*Significant change based on 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 2. Prevalence of tobacco use in school students aged 12 to 17 years by gender and recency of use, 1993–2017

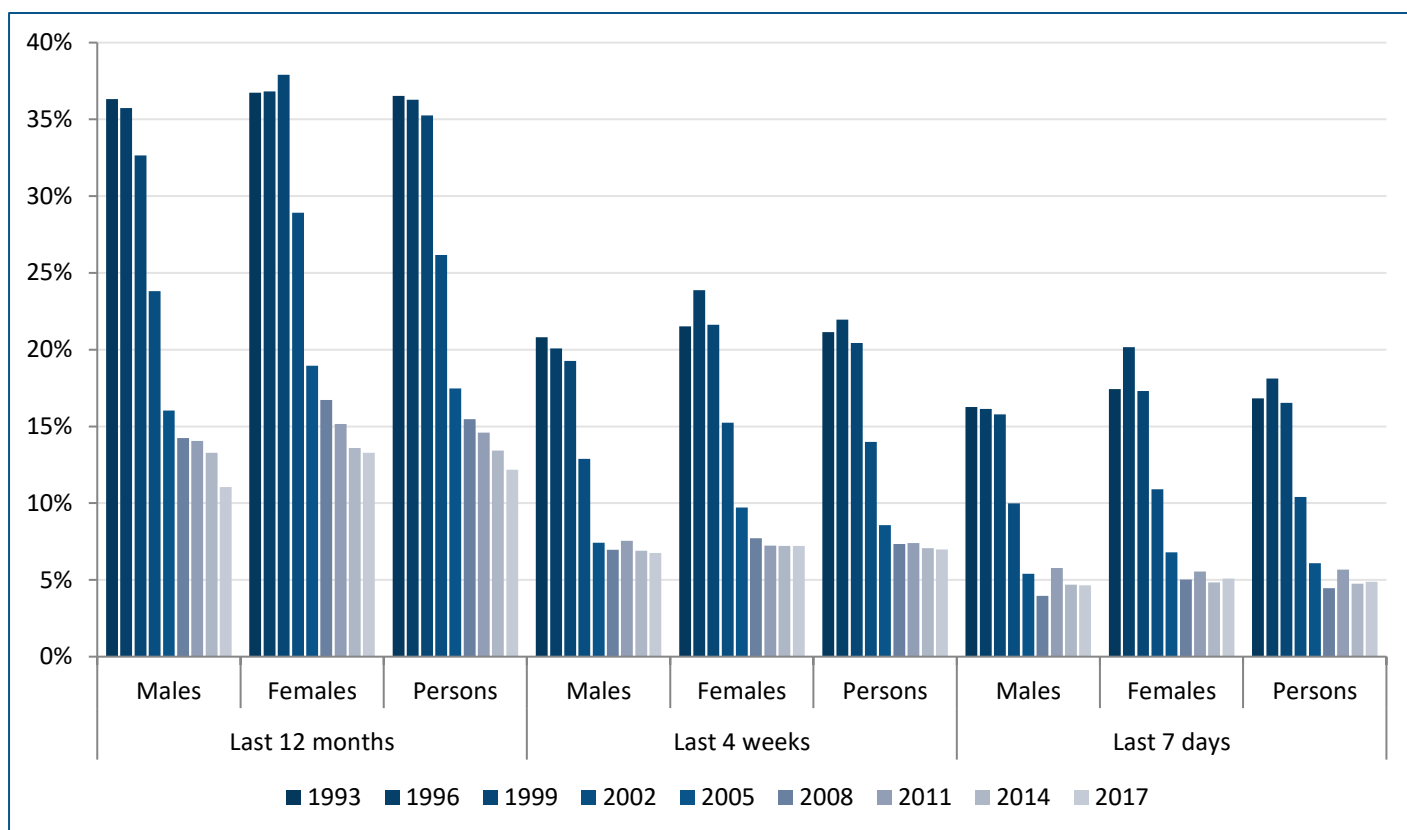


Table 2. Recency of tobacco smoking for school students by age, 2017

	12 yrs (%)	13 yrs (%)	14 yrs (%)	15 yrs (%)	16 yrs (%)	17 yrs (%)	12-17 yrs (%)
Never smoked							
Males	94.9%	91.8%	88.1%	78.0%	72.6%	68.2%	93.3%
Females	96.2%	89.5%	85.7%	78.6%	71.3%	64.6%	92.8%
Persons	95.5%	90.7%	86.9%	78.3%	71.9%	66.2%	93.0%
Smoked in the last year							
Males	2.6% *	4.7% *	7.8%	13.9%	20.0%	22.9%	11.1%
Females	1.7% *	6.2%	9.6%	16.4%	22.4%	26.3%	13.3%
Persons	2.2% *	5.4%	8.7%	15.1%	21.2%	24.8%	12.2%
Smoked in the last month							
Males	N/A	2.6% *	5.6%	7.9%	11.8%	15%	6.8%
Females	N/A	2.8% *	4.4% *	8.4%	13.3%	16% *	7.2%
Persons	1.0% *	2.7%	5.0%	8.2%	12.5%	15%	7.0%
Smoked in the last week							
Males	N/A	2% *	4.1% *	4.0% *	8.5%	11%	4.7%
Females	N/A	2% *	3.1% *	5.3%	9.5%	12% *	5.1%
Persons	N/A	2% *	3.6%	4.6%	9.0%	12%	4.9%
Of those who smoked in the last week – Mean number of cigarettes smoked¹							
Males	1.5 *	N/A	19.1 *	9.4 *	20.8 *	16.0	16.6
Females	N/A	3.0 *	3.2 *	11.6	17.4 *	20.7 *	14.9
Persons	2.1 *	11.1 *	12.7 *	10.6	19.1	18.7	15.7

* Relative standard error greater than 25% and value should be interpreted with caution.

N/A Relative standard error greater than 50% and is too unreliable for the majority of practical purposes.

¹ Estimates exclude students who smoked > 40 cigarettes on any one day of the week

Acknowledgements:

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This bulletin supersedes the version released in October 2019 following updates to the weights used in the statistical analyses.

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