

Forty-five children
in Washington
start using tobacco
every day.

Tobacco **FACT** Sheet

www.tobaccoprevention.org

Youth and smoking

Youth smoke for different reasons than adult smokers. Youth initially smoke to be social, out of curiosity, family or social norms, to fit in, be cool, and to be slightly rebellious.

The younger you are when begin to smoke, the more likely you are to be an adult smoker. Almost 90% of adult smokers became addicted to tobacco at or before the age of 18. Young people who start smoking at an earlier age are more likely to develop long-term nicotine addiction than people who start later in life.

Most youth agree that smoking is gross and that they would like to quit by the time they reach adulthood. 3 out of 100 high school smokers think they will be smoking in 5 years, but in reality, studies show that 60 out of 100 will still be smoking 7 to 9 years later.

Concerns about youth smoking:

Research has shown that young tobacco users are more likely to use alcohol and to try illegal drugs. Cigarette smokers also get into more fights, are more likely to carry weapons, attempt suicide, suffer from mental health problems, and engage in high-risk sexual behaviors.

Short term health effects from smoking include coughing, shortness of breath, respiratory illnesses, reduced physical fitness, and poor lung growth. Youth smokers have more colds that last longer and miss more days of school due to illness.

King County youth use rates:

Data for Washington were collected as part of a statewide sample of youth for the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) in Fall 2004 showed us that:

10th grade: 12.2% in King County, and 13.0% statewide, reported they currently smoke cigarettes.

12th grade: 16.7% in King County, and 19.7% statewide, reported they currently smoke cigarettes.

If you want to help:

Show you care. Try and talk about tobacco use in a non-threatening way. Have youth talk with a caring physician, this can help to heighten the severity of tobacco use.

Five tips for quitting

Studies have shown that these five steps will help you quit and quit for good. You have the best chances of quitting if you use these five steps to develop and maintain your own quit plan.

1. *Get ready.*
2. *Get support.*
3. *Learn new skills and behaviors.*
4. *Get medication and use it correctly.*
5. *Be prepared for difficult situations.*

Talk to your health care provider, they can help. If you do not have insurance or just need to talk call the Washington Tobacco Quitline:

1-877-270-7876

For Spanish call:

1-877-2NO Fume

Visit the Quitline website:

www.quitline.com

We also recommend:
www.seethruthesmoke.com
www.thetruth.com