

2024 South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

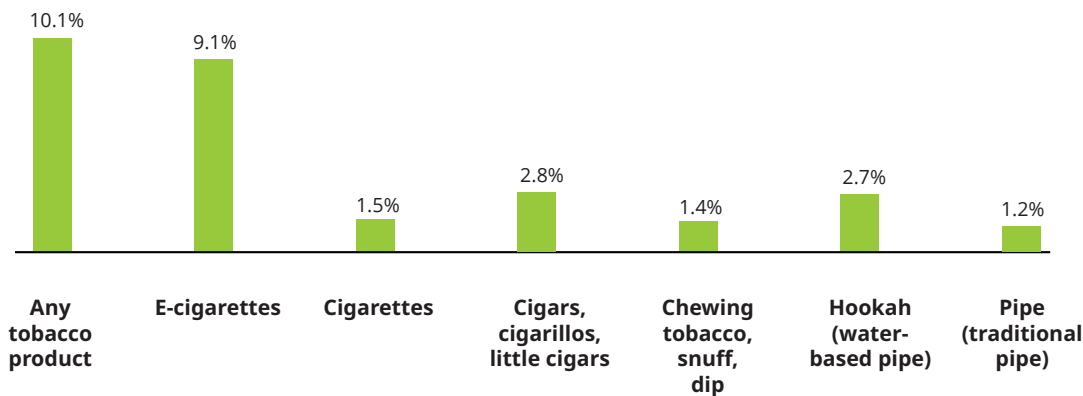
The South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey (SCYTS) is a comprehensive survey designed to evaluate prevalence of tobacco use, age of initiation and access to tobacco products. SCYTS monitors key behaviors and attitudes toward tobacco among SC teens and helps the South Carolina Department of Public Health (DPH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Unit recognize groups at risk and identify areas to strengthen youth prevention activities and strategies.

Current Tobacco Use

10.1% of SC high school students reported current (past 30 days) use of any kind of commercial tobacco product, which is the same as the national youth commercial tobacco use rate.

E-cigarettes/vapes were the most commonly used commercial tobacco product among SC youth, followed by cigars, hookah, cigarettes, smokeless tobacco products (chew, snuff, or dip), and traditional pipe.

**Percentage of High School Youth
Currently Using Tobacco**



E-cigarettes

Use of e-cigarettes/vapes among SC high school youth remains an important public health issue in South Carolina. In 2023, 9.1% of SC high school students reported e-cigarette/vape use, which is higher than the national rate of 7.8%. SC teens primarily use all three types of e-cigarette/vape devices – disposable, prefilled/refillable cartridge-based, and tank/mod-based devices. The most popular brands include Puff Bar, Elf Bar, and VUSE/VUSE Alto. Nicotine in any form is harmful to the adolescent brain and can worsen anxiety and depression while disrupting focus.¹²³ Vaping more than triples the odds that teens will use combustible commercial tobacco products.⁴

1. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (US) Office on Smoking and Health. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US); 2014.
2. Lechner WV, Janssen T, Kahler CW, Audrain-McGovern J, Leventhal AM. Bi-directional associations of electronic and combustible cigarette use onset patterns with depressive symptoms in adolescents. *Prev Med*. 2017 Mar;96:73-78. doi: 10.1016/j.ypmed.2016.12.034. Epub 2016 Dec 23. PMID: 28024859; PMCID: PMC5510594.
3. Bierhoff J, Haardörfer R, Windle M, Berg CJ. Psychological Risk Factors for Alcohol, Cannabis, and Various Tobacco Use among Young Adults: A Longitudinal Analysis. *Subst Use Misuse*. 2019;54(8):1365-1375. doi: 10.1080/10826084.2019.1581220. Epub 2019 Apr 26. PMID: 31023112; PMCID: PMC6510654.
4. Donna M Vallone, Siobhan N Perks, Lindsay Pitzer, Michael Liu, Jennifer M Kreslake, Jessica M Rath, Elizabeth C Hair, Evidence of the impact of a national anti-tobacco prevention campaign across demographic subgroups, *Health Education Research*, Volume 36, Issue 4, August 2021, Pages 412–421, <https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyab025>

Flavored Tobacco

E-cigarettes/vapes: Currently, rechargeable cartridge-based devices are only available in tobacco and menthol flavor. Disposable vapes, refillable devices, and tank/mod style devices offer fruit, candy, and “concept flavors” like Blue Dream. 26.1% of SC high school students who vape reported using e-cigarettes because of the flavors.

Cigars, little cigars, and cigarillos: These products come in a variety of flavors, including menthol, as well as candy and fruit flavors like sour apple, cherry, grape, and chocolate. Current flavored cigar use is 1.8% among SC high school students.

Cigarettes: Menthol cigarettes are easier to smoke and harder to quit. Among SC high school cigarette smokers, 43.3% smoke menthol flavored cigarettes.

Smokeless tobacco: Smokeless tobacco products include chew, snuff, snus, and dissolvable tobacco. Oral nicotine pouches and lozenges are a new category of tobacco product that come in many flavors and are increasing in popularity. Most oral nicotine products are derived from tobacco and contain nicotine, though some claim to use synthetic nicotine, which has not yet been regulated by the FDA. 11.8% of SC teens reported ever using products like snus, nicotine pouches, and dissolvable tobacco.

Exposure to Tobacco Marketing

Exposure to tobacco marketing increases the likelihood that youth will use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes/vapes. In 2022, the tobacco industry spent \$8.6 billion in nationwide marketing – of which \$191.6 million was spent in SC.⁵



- Approximately 74.7% of SC high school youth were exposed to tobacco ads in convenience stores, gas stations, or supermarkets – more than double the rate of 32.6% in 2021.



- More than 47.3% of SC high school youth were exposed to tobacco ads on the internet.



- Almost 33.9% of SC high school youth were exposed to tobacco ads in newspapers or magazines.



- More than 26.5% of SC high school youth reported seeing actors using tobacco products on TV and/or in movies.

5. U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Cigarette Report for 2022, October 2023; FTC, Smokeless Tobacco Report for 2022, October 2023; FTC, E-Cigarette Report for 2021, April 2024. The Toll of Tobacco in South Carolina Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids