

Most support raising age to buy tobacco, smoke-free laws

While most people know that smoking is unhealthy, 18% of adults nationwide reported being smokers in 2014.¹ This is higher than the Healthy People 2020 goal of 12%.

This percentage is even higher in Ohio. The 2016 **Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP)** found that 22% of Ohio adults reported that they were current smokers. OHIP asked Ohio adults their opinions about issues that may affect access to and the use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes.

Majority favors raising the minimum age to buy tobacco to 21

Raising the minimum legal age to buy tobacco products is likely to delay young adults from starting to smoke and, in the long run, reduce smoking-related health problems.² As of September 2016, two states and 200 local jurisdictions in 17 states, including

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Prevalence and Trends Data. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/brfss/data_tools.htm.

² Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products, March 2015. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/1NIIGxj>.

Do you favor or oppose raising the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 years to 21 years of age? (Percentages do not add to 100 because the response "don't know" is not included.)



Do you favor or oppose laws that create smoke-free environments in most outdoor places, including parks, pools, playgrounds and other outdoor recreation areas? (Percentages do not add to 100 because the response "don't know" is not included.)



Cleveland, had raised the legal age to buy tobacco to 21.³

OHIP asked Ohio adults whether they favored or opposed raising the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21 years of age. Statewide, 53% of adults favored raising the age to 21. This support was consistent among men and women and across education and income levels. Smoking status did not affect support. About half of current smokers (51%), previous smokers (54%) and adults who had never smoked (53%) favored raising the age to 21.

³ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. States and Localities that have Raised the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco Products to 21, September 2016. Retrieved from www.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what_we_do/state_local_issues/sales_21/states_localities_MLSA_21.pdf.

Most support laws to create smoke-free outdoor environments

More than half of Ohio adults (55%) favored laws that would create smoke-free environments in most outdoor public places, including parks, pools, playgrounds and other outdoor recreation areas.

Support for such laws did not vary by age. However, about 6 in 10 adults who never smoked (64%) supported smoke-free outdoor environments, while only 5 in 10 previous smokers (50%) and 4 in 10 current smokers (38%) supported them.

Continued on back

Smoke-free indoor policies remain popular after 10 years

In November 2006 Ohio prohibited smoking in any public place or place of employment.⁴ Support for indoor smoke-free environments remains high 10 years later, with more than 8 in 10 Ohio adults (82%) in favor. Adults ages 18 to 29 were most likely to support smoke-free indoor environments (94%). The law has been in place for all of their adult lives.

2 in 10 Ohio adults have used an e-cigarette

Nicotine can also be delivered through an electronic system known as an electronic cigarette or e-cigarette. Such a device uses a battery and a heating element to deliver nicotine vapor to the user. This is widely known as “vaping.”

Two in 10 Ohio adults (19%) reported that they had ever used

⁴ Ohio Department of Health. Smoke-free Workplace Program, October 2008. Retrieved from www.odh.ohio.gov/smokefree/sf1/.

an e-cigarette. Men (23%) were more likely than women (15%) to report this. Young adults ages 18-29 (38%) were also more likely than adults 65 and older (7%) to have used an e-cigarette. (See graph.)

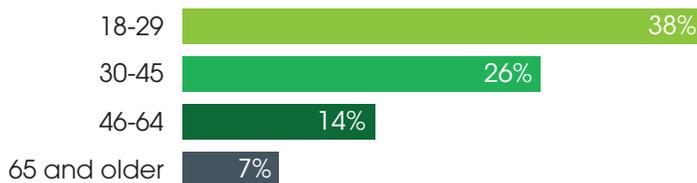
The relationship between tobacco use and e-cigarette use remains unclear, as does whether one of those activities leads to the other. However, OHIP found that 51% of current smokers reported having ever used an e-cigarette. Only 18% of former smokers and 7% of adults who have never smoked reported doing so.

Opinions vary about safety of e-cigarettes

OHIP also asked respondents if they would say that e-cigarettes were safer or less safe than tobacco cigarettes, or whether there was no difference. About 3 in 10 Ohio adults (28%) thought they were safer. About 1 in 10 (13%) thought they were less safe. Nearly half (47%) thought there was no difference, and another 1 in 10 (12%) reported that they did not know.

Percentage of Ohio adults who have ever used an e-cigarette

By age



By smoking status

