

TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL REGIONAL
PROFILE: **ANCHORAGE/MATANUSKA-SUSITNA**

FY2019

Tobacco Prevention and Control Regional Profile:

Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna

August 2019

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PREFACE

Tobacco use remains Alaska’s leading preventable cause of disease and death. More Alaskans die from the direct effects of tobacco use than from suicide, motor vehicle crashes, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, homicide, and HIV/AIDS combined.ⁱ Tobacco use exacts an enormous burden on the State of Alaska and its residents, causing premature death and millions of dollars of avoidable medical care expenditures.ⁱ The single best thing that Alaskans who use tobacco can do to improve their health and the health of those around them is to quit using all tobacco products.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified tobacco use as one of the most important “winnable battles” in public health – priorities with large-scale impact on health and known, effective strategies to address them.ⁱⁱ The CDC offers guidance to the states about how to reduce the burden of tobacco use through comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs described in Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, 2014.ⁱⁱⁱ These evidence-based, comprehensive, sustained statewide tobacco control programs have been shown to reduce smoking rates, tobacco-related deaths, and diseases caused by smoking.

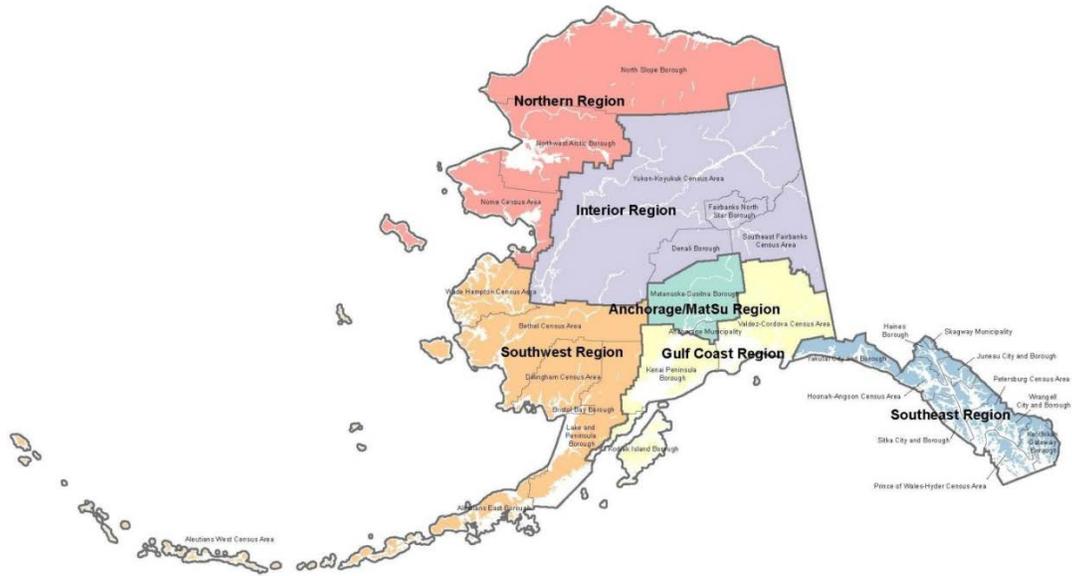
The State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control (TPC) Program has achieved success by implementing an evidence-based comprehensive tobacco prevention and control program, including a tobacco quit line, counter-marketing media, and grants to promote tobacco-free policies in communities, schools and health care organizations. These program elements combine to address the four goals of the TPC Program:

1. prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth;
2. promote cessation for tobacco users;
3. eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS); and
4. identify and eliminate tobacco use disparities.

The TPC Program had previously supported grant programs to independently fund work in these four goal areas, including community organizations, health care systems, and schools across the state. In 2013, the TPC Program streamlined this approach by offering a comprehensive, regional funding scenario in which partners can approach tobacco prevention and control at the community level.

Regional profiles have been compiled to support this innovative streamlined approach to comprehensive tobacco prevention and control in Alaska. Tobacco use varies considerably by region, with twice the rate of smoking and four times the rate of smokeless tobacco use in some regions when compared with the statewide estimates. These regional profiles summarize key demographic data, tobacco indicators, tobacco-related policies in the region, and potential partner organizations and infrastructure that could support regional tobacco prevention and control efforts. While this report is specific to the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, data for the other regions and statewide are included in Appendix A, and regional reports are available for each of the six Public Health/Labor Market regions in Alaska (see map on page 4, and details on included census areas/boroughs in Appendix E).

The Six Public Health/Labor Market Regions in Alaska



OVERVIEW

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development estimates 401,108 people living in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region of Alaska in 2018, accounting for 54.5% of the total population in Alaska.^{iv} Most of these people (n=295,365) live in the Municipality of Anchorage, with the remainder living in the Matanuska-Susitna (“Mat-Su”) Borough (n=105,743).

Anchorage is the state’s financial and commercial center, as well as one of the major transportation hubs in Alaska. Mat-Su Borough is the fastest growing borough or census area in the state, primarily due to its proximity to Anchorage. The annual average unemployment rate for the Anchorage/Mat-Su region was 6.6% in 2017, up slightly from the 2016 rate of 6.2%.^v The most common occupation in 2016 was retail sales, and the trade, transportation, and utilities industry employed the most people.^{vi}

Alaska Native Regional Corporations were established when the US Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971. ANCSA settled land and financial claims made by the Alaska Native people and provided for the establishment of 13 regional corporations in the state to administer those claims. The ANCSA Corporation in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region is the Cook Inlet Region, Inc.^{vii}

The Anchorage/Mat-Su region contains two school districts, the Anchorage School District and the Mat-Su Borough School District. The Anchorage/Mat-Su region accounts for 50.2% of the 128,800 K-12th grade students in Alaska, including 50.0% of the state’s 38,092 high school students.

Table 1. School District Enrollment in the Anchorage/Mat-Su Region as of October 1, 2018

District Name	Total High School	Total K-12 th
Anchorage School District	13,532	45,811
Mat-Su Borough School District	5,504	18,871
TOTAL	19,036	64,682

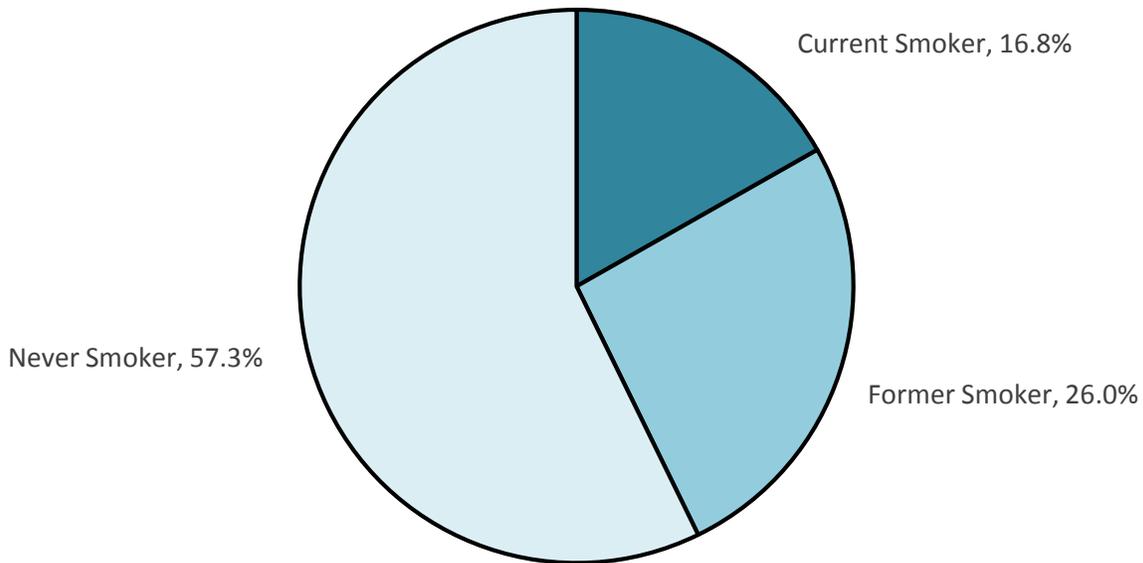
Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development: Assessment and Accountability, District Enrollment as of October 1, 2018 FY19. <http://education.alaska.gov/stats/>

TOBACCO USE

Adult Smoking

Adult tobacco use data are gathered using both the standard and supplemental surveys of the Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS; see Appendix E for details on both surveys). For this report it was necessary to combine 2015-2017 data to calculate regional estimates. An estimated 16.8% of adults in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region currently smoke cigarettes, similar to the statewide estimate of 19.7% over the same time period. (See Appendix A for all regional and statewide estimates.)

Figure 1. Adult Smoking Status, Anchorage/Mat-Su Region, 2015-2017



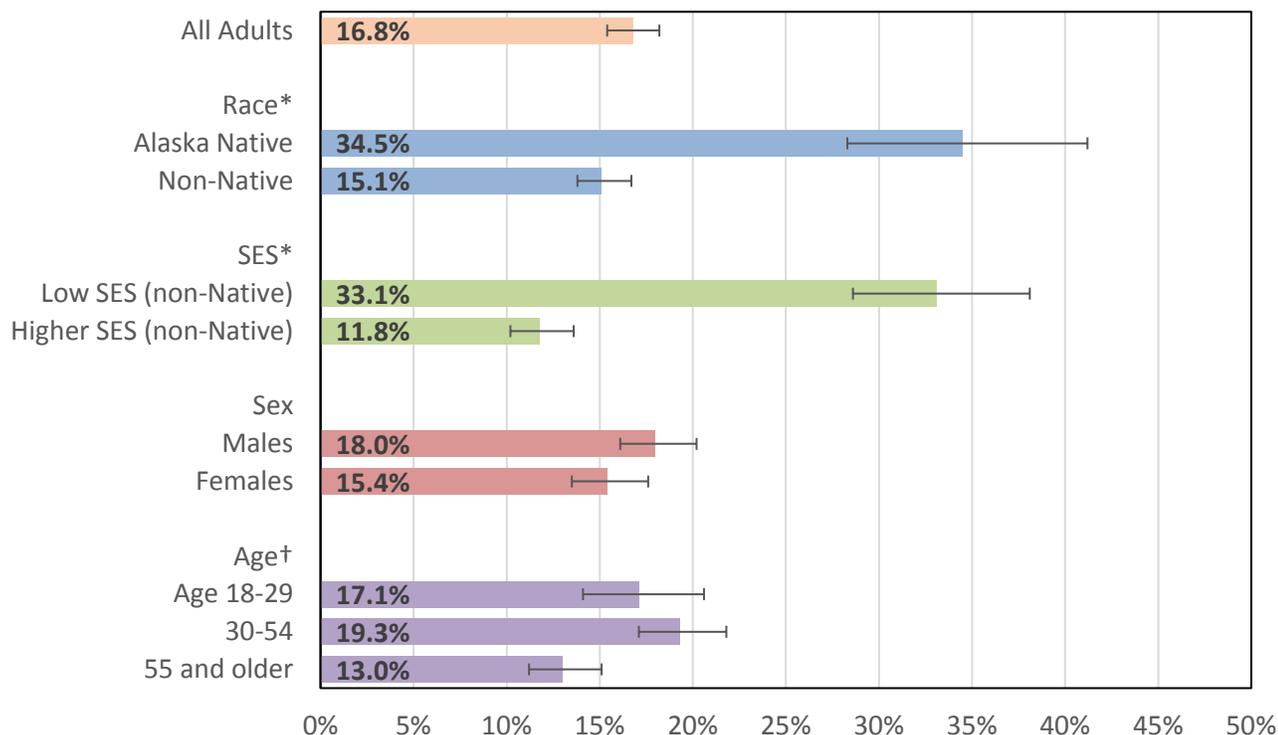
Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File, 2015-2017

Certain priority populations, including Alaska Native people, people with low socio-economic status (SES)^{viii}, and young adults, may experience higher rates of tobacco use than others. The figure below summarizes data for specific population groups. These data are useful to monitor tobacco use in these populations and to help identify where to focus programmatic efforts for the Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control (TPC) Program and its partners.

Among Alaska Native people in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, the prevalence of smoking was significantly higher than among non-Native people, 34.5% compared to 15.1%. Likewise, smoking prevalence was significantly higher among people of low SES as compared to those with higher SES, 33.1% compared to

11.8%. Smoking prevalence was also significantly higher among young adults (17.1%) and middle-aged adults (19.3%) compared to adults age 55 and older (13.0%).

Figure 2. Percent of Alaska Adults Who Currently Smoke, Anchorage/Mat-Su Region, 2015-2017



* Significant difference between or among subgroups

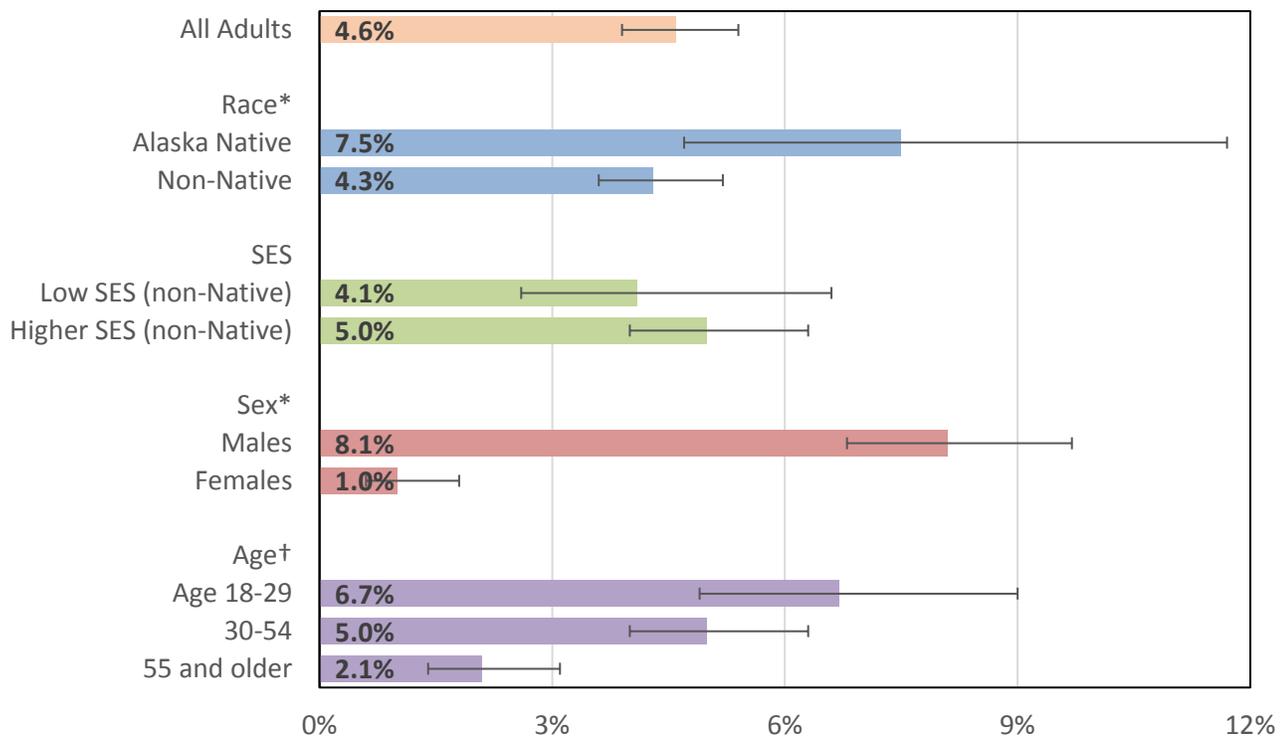
† Significant differences between ages 18-29 and 55 and older, ages 30-54 and 55 and older

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File, 2015-2017

Adult Smokeless Tobacco Use

In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, an estimated 4.6% of adults use smokeless tobacco, lower than the statewide estimate of 5.7% for the 2015–2017 time period. Males used smokeless tobacco significantly more than females in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, 8.1% compared to 1.0%. Smokeless tobacco use was also significantly higher among Alaska Native people than among non-Native people, 7.5% compared to 4.3%. Young adults (6.7%) used smokeless tobacco significantly more than middle aged adults (5.0%) and older adults (2.1%).

Figure 3. Percent of Alaska Adults Who Use Smokeless Tobacco, Anchorage/Mat-Su Region, 2015-2017



* Significant difference between or among subgroups

† Significant differences between ages 18-29 and 55 and older, and 30-54 and 55 and older

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File, 2015-2017

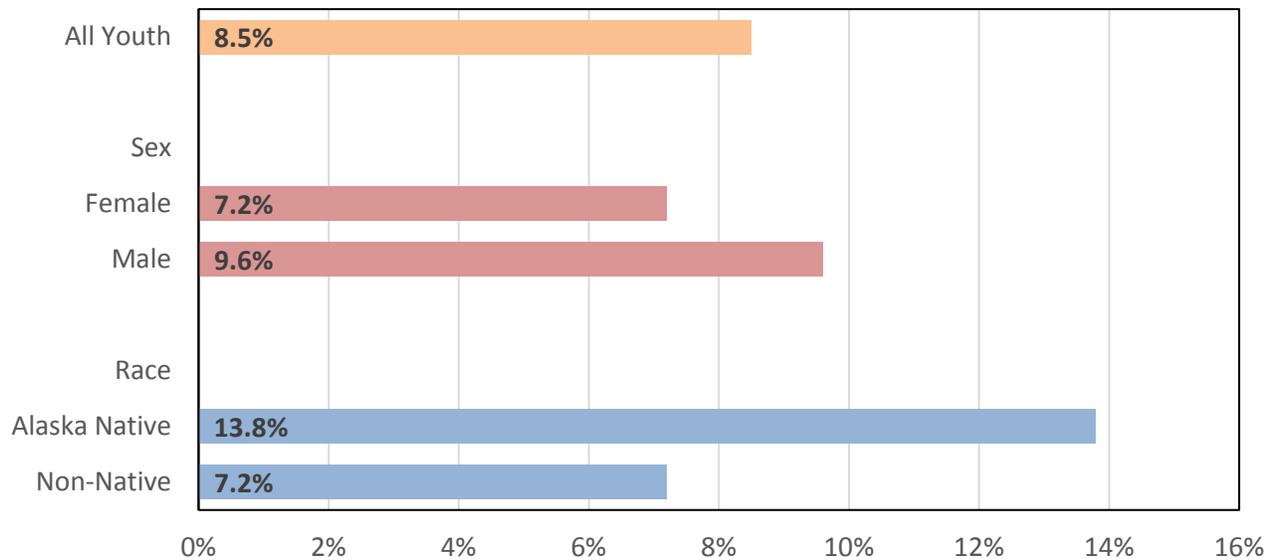
Youth Smoking

Information about youth tobacco use and other related indicators comes from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), conducted in a sample of high schools every other year. Although the official state estimates are based on a scientifically selected statewide sample of schools and students, the regional data include a combination of the scientific statewide sample and schools that volunteered to participate as part of a local sample. (In Alaska, individual school districts can also conduct a local YRBS). For this reason, regional estimates may not be generalizable to all students in the region (see Appendix E for additional detail). Because of the mixed sample, regional estimates are presented without confidence intervals. Estimates for this report are based on the two most recent years of YRBS data combined (2015 and 2017).

An estimated 8.5% of high school students in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days, compared with the statewide estimate of 10.5% for 2015 and 2017 combined. An estimated 2.6% of students smoked cigarettes on 20 or more of the past 30 days.

As seen in Figure 4, the estimated male cigarette use in this region was slightly higher than female use, 9.6% and 7.2% respectively. Likewise, more Alaska Native youth than non-Native youth reported smoking within the past 30 days, 13.8% compared to 7.2%.

Figure 4. Youth Cigarette Use in Past 30 Days, Anchorage/Mat-Su Region, 2015 and 2017

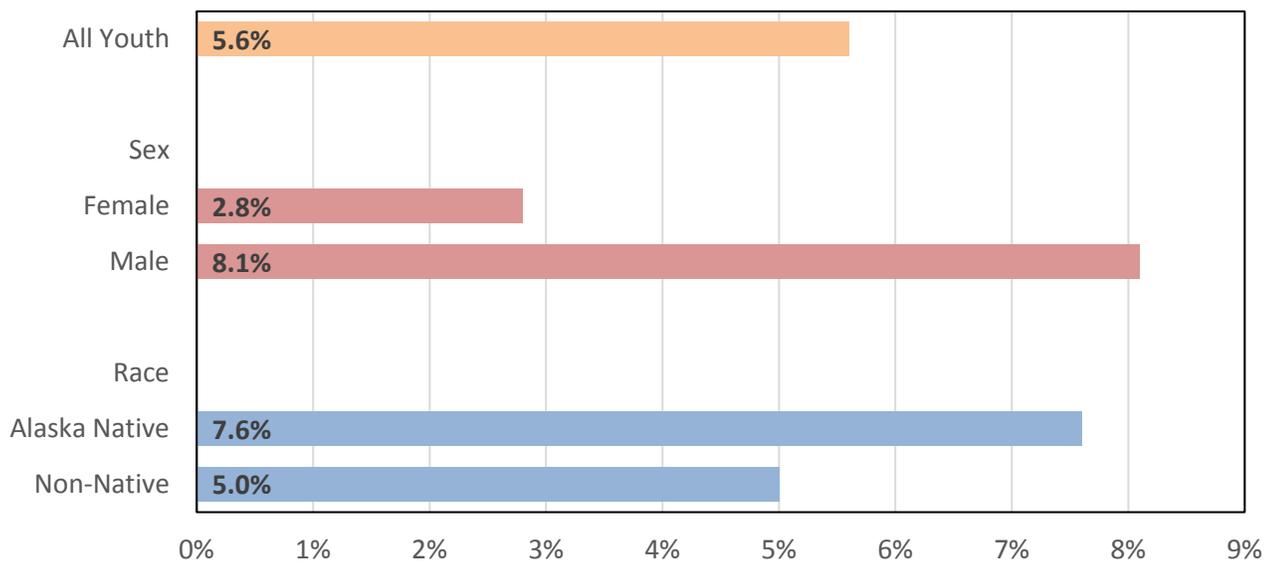


Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Local File, 2015 and 2017

Youth Smokeless Tobacco Use

For 2015 and 2017 combined, an estimated 5.6% of high school students in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region used smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days, less than the statewide estimate of 9.7%. Males in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region were over twice as likely as females to have used smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days, 8.1% compared to 2.8%. Similar to cigarette use, smokeless tobacco use was higher among Alaska Native youth as compared to non-Native youth, 7.6% and 5.0% respectively.

Figure 5. Youth Smokeless Tobacco Use in Past 30 Days, Anchorage/Mat-Su Region, 2015 and 2017



Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Local File, 2015 and 2017

ELIMINATING EXPOSURE TO SECONDHAND SMOKE

Secondhand Smoke (SHS) Indicators

There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Creating completely smokefree indoor areas is the only way to protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke. Policies establishing smokefree environments are the most effective way to eliminate secondhand smoke.^{ix} In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, there is overwhelming support for both smokefree restaurants (85.5%) and workplaces (88.8%).

Table 2. Adult Secondhand Smoke (SHS) Indicators, Anchorage / Mat-Su Region, 2015-2017

	Prevalence (95% Confidence Interval)
Has home smoking ban	92.1% (90.3%-93.6%)
No home SHS exposure	94.3% (93.1%-95.3%)
Support for smokefree workplaces	88.8% (87.2%-90.3%)
Support for smokefree restaurants	85.5% (83.7%-87.2%)
Smoking not allowed in work areas (indoor workers)	85.3% (82.4%-87.8%)
No indoor workplace SHS exposure (all workers)	94.8% (93.2%-96.0%)
No indoor workplace SHS exposure (indoor workers)	95.7% (94.0%-96.9%)

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Modified File, 2015-2017

Although the vast majority of adults did not report secondhand smoke exposure in homes and workplaces, 31.1% of high school students surveyed in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region during 2015 and 2017 reported being in the same room with someone who was smoking in the past seven days.^x

Secondhand Smoke Policies

The Alaska TPC Program collects information on smokefree tribal resolutions, community ordinances, multi-unit housing policies and healthcare policies. These policies are evaluated in comparison to a model policy. Policies are grouped into four distinct categories based on the percentage of the model policy elements each contains: comprehensive, strong, fair, and incomplete. A comprehensive policy contains at least 90% of the model policy elements and a strong policy has at least 80%, while a fair policy has at minimum 70% of the model policy elements. Anything under 70% of the model policy elements is classified as an incomplete policy. Using these classification categories allows the TPC Program to rate the quality of tobacco control policies among different organizations as well as throughout the state.

Tribal Resolutions

Many tribes across Alaska have adopted smokefree or tobacco-free resolutions. In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, the TPC Program has one smokefree and two tobacco-free tribal resolutions on record as of February 21, 2019. Ivanof Bay Village and Ugashik Village have both passed strong tobacco-free workplace and public

place resolutions. Additionally, the Knik Tribe has passed a fair smokefree workplace and public place resolution. The remaining five tribes in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region did not have a policy.^{xi}

Smokefree Community Ordinances

Two communities in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region have passed smokefree ordinances as of February 21, 2019. Both the Municipality of Anchorage and the City of Palmer have passed ordinances that prohibit smoking in public places as well as places of employment. The City of Palmer ordinance is comprehensive while the Municipality of Anchorage policy is strong; it provides exemptions for 25% of hotel sleeping rooms as well as an exemption for private clubs.

Multi-Unit Housing Policies

Three multi-unit housing properties have added smokefree addendums to their leases in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region as of February 21, 2019. Two of these policies have been rated as incomplete while the other has been rated as fair. The Meadow Lakes senior housing addendum (“fair” rating) prohibits smoking by all residents and guests on the property grounds, with the exception of a designated smoking area. The Cook Inlet Housing Authority and Neighborworks Anchorage have both implemented incomplete smokefree policies, which lack “No Smoking” signs as well as a statement of penalties for violating the smokefree policy.

Healthcare Policies

Healthcare facilities exist to promote the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve. As such, healthy behaviors should be encouraged while activities known to cause harm should be prevented. In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, three healthcare facilities have adopted fair tobacco-free policies. An additional three facilities have adopted incomplete tobacco-free policies, meaning the policies lack key elements which are considered essential for effective policies.

Table 3. Healthcare Policy Report for the Anchorage/Mat-Su Region: Current Status as of February 21, 2019

Healthcare Facility	Current Policy Status
Alaska Family Services	Fair
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium	Fair
Southcentral Foundation	Fair
Alaska Native Health Board	Incomplete
Providence Health and Services Alaska	Incomplete
Providence St. Joseph Health	Incomplete

Source: State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

PREVENTING THE INITIATION OF TOBACCO USE

Youth Prevention Indicators

The YRBS data offer key indicators for tracking youth initiation of tobacco use and youth perceptions of social norms around tobacco use. An estimated 7.1% of high school students surveyed during 2015 and 2017 in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region started smoking prior to age 13. Although nearly all (91.1%) of the youth reported that their parents would consider it wrong for them to smoke cigarettes, 17.3% thought that smoking one or more packs per day posed no risk or only slight risk to their health. The majority (66.2%) of high school students thought their friends would consider it wrong for them to smoke cigarettes (see Appendix C for all youth prevention indicators).

Tobacco Taxes

Numerous economic studies have documented that tobacco tax or price increases reduce both adult and underage smoking. States, municipalities, and boroughs are allowed to levy a local tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products including cigars and chewing tobacco.

Alaska's statewide cigarette tax is \$2.00 for a pack of 20 cigarettes. Two communities in the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough, have passed an additional local cigarette tax.

Alaska's statewide tax on other tobacco products (cigars and chewing tobacco) is 75% of the wholesale price. The communities of Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough have placed an additional local tax on other tobacco products. See Table 4 for the cigarette and other tobacco product taxes in these communities.

Table 4. Tax Rates for Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products as of February 21, 2019: Anchorage/Mat-Su Region

Community	Local Cigarette Tax	State Base Cigarette Tax	Total State and Local Tax per Pack	E-cigarettes	Other Tobacco Products Local Tax*
Anchorage	\$2.39	\$2.00	\$4.39	N/A	55% of wholesale
Mat-Su Borough	\$2.28	\$2.00	\$4.28	55% of wholesale	55% of wholesale

Source: State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Top Combined State-Local Cigarette Tax Rates, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0267.pdf>

School District Policy Reports

In an effort to promote tobacco-free schools, the TPC Program recently revised the evaluation of tobacco-free school policies into four distinct categories: comprehensive, strong, fair, and incomplete. Each tobacco-free school policy is compared to a model policy, which is the ideal policy for tobacco-free schools. A comprehensive tobacco-free school policy has all or nearly all of the elements of a model policy, while strong and fair policies have progressively fewer elements of the model policy, respectively. An incomplete policy is lacking too many components for the policy to be considered an effective tobacco-free school policy.

The tobacco-free policy adopted by the Mat-Su Borough School District is considered comprehensive, while the Anchorage School District policy is strong. Both policies have nearly all of the components of a model policy.

School policies are subject to change, and the TPC Program reviews and updates school district tobacco policies quarterly. The policy summaries here are current as of February 21, 2019.

Table 5. School Policy Report for the Anchorage/Mat-Su Region: Current Status as of February 21, 2019

School District	Current Policy Status
Anchorage	Strong
Mat-Su Borough	Comprehensive

Source: State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

Post-Secondary Institutions

Similar to school district policies, post-secondary policies are evaluated based on a model policy, which contains all of the elements needed for an effective tobacco control policy. In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, the Alaska Job Corps Center has implemented a comprehensive policy, while both the Alaska Pacific

University and the University of Alaska Anchorage have adopted strong tobacco-free policies. Wayland Baptist University has an incomplete policy, lacking specificity on who the policy applies to and the types of activities that are prohibited (i.e., tobacco advertising, tobacco sales, enforcement procedures, etc.).

Table 6. Post-Secondary Policy Report for the Anchorage/Mat-Su Region: Current Status as of February 21, 2019

Institution	Current Policy Status
Alaska Job Corps Center	Comprehensive
Alaska Pacific University	Strong
University of Alaska Anchorage	Strong
Wayland Baptist University	Incomplete

Source: State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

EVIDENCE-BASED TOBACCO CESSATION INTERVENTIONS

Cessation Indicators

Quitting tobacco provides health benefits at any age.^{xii-xiii} Tobacco cessation programs are cost-effective and increase longevity while reducing health care costs.^{xiv} Alaska has a statewide quit line accessible to all Alaska adults. In addition, the Anchorage/Mat-Su region has local cessation resources at the Alaska Native Medical Center, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and Eastern Aleutian Tribes, Inc.

In the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, 62.6% of adults aged 25 and older who have ever smoked regularly have quit (i.e., quit ratio, as shown in Table 7). Among adults who currently smoke, 56.3% have attempted to quit smoking in the past 12 months, and an estimated 5.8% of past-year smokers achieved a long-term quit of three months or more.

Table 7. Adult Cessation Indicators, Anchorage / Mat-Su Region, 2015-2017

	Prevalence (95% Confidence Interval)
Quit ratio (among ever smokers age 25 and older)	62.6% (59.7%-65.4%)
Attempted to quit (among current smokers)	56.3% (51.6%-61.0%)
Quit for 3+ months (among past year smokers)	5.8% (3.9%-8.7%)
Aware of quit line (among current smokers)	86.5% (81.2%-90.4%)
Advised to quit by health care provider (among smokers who had a health care visit in the past year)	70.8% (62.5%-77.8%)

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File (first two metrics) & Modified File (last three metrics), 2015-2017

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Adult Tobacco Use

Table A-1. Percent of Alaska Adults Who Currently Smoke, by Public Health Region, 2015-2017							
	Anchorage / Mat-Su	Gulf Coast	Interior	Northern	Southeast	Southwest	Statewide Total
All Adults	16.8% (15.4%-18.2%)	21.2% (18.9%-23.7%)	20.9% (19.1%-22.8%)	40.7% (35.3%-46.4%)	21.2% (19.1%-23.4%)	28.0% (24.0%-32.3%)	19.7% (18.8%-20.7%)
Alaska	34.5% (28.3%-41.2%)	41.2% (30.3%-53.1%)	29.1% (24.5%-34.3%)	49.5% (42.7%-56.4%)	35.6% (29.4%-42.3%)	38.9% (33.3%-44.8%)	38.1% (35.2%-41.1%)
Native	15.1% (13.8%-16.7%)	18.5% (16.4%-20.7%)	20.0% (18.1%-22.1%)	21.2% (12.9%-32.7%)	18.4% (16.3%-20.7%)	12.9% (8.9%-18.2%)	16.7% (15.7%-17.7%)
Non-Native	33.1% (28.6%-38.1%)	34.5% (28.6%-40.8%)	38.5% (32.5%-44.8%)	‡	38.2% (31.2%-45.7%)	28.8%*†	34.7% (31.6%-37.9%)
Low SES (non-Native)	11.8% (10.2%-13.6%)	13.9% (11.5%-16.8%)	17.2% (14.9%-19.8%)	14.2% (8.6%-22.6%)	15.6% (13.0%-18.5%)	8.4% (4.8%-14.1%)	13.3% (12.1%-14.5%)
Higher SES (non-Native)	18.0% (16.1%-20.2%)	24.9% (21.4%-28.7%)	23.6% (21.0%-26.5%)	44.9% (37.1%-53.0%)	23.4% (20.4%-26.8%)	33.4% (27.6%-39.8%)	22.1% (20.8%-23.5%)
Males	15.4% (13.5%-17.6%)	17.1% (14.3%-20.3%)	17.8% (15.5%-20.3%)	34.7% (28.0%-42.0%)	18.8% (16.2%-21.7%)	21.0% (16.5%-26.2%)	17.1% (15.9%-18.5%)
Females	17.1% (14.1%-20.6%)	23.5% (17.6%-30.8%)	23.6% (19.4%-28.5%)	45.1% (33.8%-56.9%)	25.0% (19.2%-31.8%)	42.2% (30.8%-54.6%)	21.8% (19.6%-24.2%)
Age 18-29	19.3% (17.1%-21.8%)	24.5% (20.7%-28.7%)	23.4% (20.6%-26.5%)	42.7% (34.8%-51.0%)	24.4% (21.1%-27.9%)	27.8% (22.7%-33.5%)	22.4% (20.9%-23.9%)
30-54	13.0% (11.2%-15.1%)	16.9% (13.9%-20.5%)	15.6% (13.5%-18.0%)	28.0% (21.0%-36.3%)	16.0% (13.5%-18.9%)	18.3% (14.1%-23.4%)	14.9% (13.7%-16.2%)
55 and older							

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File, 2015-2017

* Inadequate sample size for uncommon or very common events. For means and proportions < 25% or >75%, an estimate is flagged if it is based on a denominator which is less than 8 times a broadly calculated design effect, over the prevalence estimate.

† Large coefficient of variation

‡ Denominator is less than 50 or numerator is less than 5

Table A-2. Percent of Alaska Adults Who Currently Use Smokeless Tobacco, by Public Health Region, 2015-2017

	Anchorage / Mat-Su	Gulf Coast	Interior	Northern	Southeast	Southwest	Statewide Total
All Adults	4.6% (3.9%-5.4%)	5.4% (4.3%-6.6%)	5.4% (4.5%-6.4%)	15.2% (11.0%-20.7%)	3.5% (2.6%-4.5%)	20.2% (16.8%-24.1%)	5.7% (5.2%-6.3%)
Alaska	7.5% (4.7%-11.7%)	8.1%* (4.6%-13.8%)	11.1% (8.0%-15.1%)	18.9% (13.5%-25.9%)	1.9%*† (0.8%-4.6%)	32.4% (27.1%-38.2%)	13.9% (12.0%-16.1%)
Native	4.3% (3.6%-5.2%)	5.0% (3.9%-6.3%)	4.7% (3.8%-5.8%)	7.6%† (2.7%-19.9%)	3.8% (2.9%-5.0%)	4.1% (2.4%-6.8%)	4.4% (3.9%-5.0%)
Non-Native	4.1% (2.6%-6.6%)	7.8% (4.9%-12.0%)	6.0% (3.7%-9.6%)	‡	4.8%*† (2.6%-8.9%)	‡	5.3% (4.0%-6.9%)
Low SES (non-Native)	5.0% (4.0%-6.3%)	5.5% (3.9%-7.5%)	4.5% (3.3%-6.0%)	4.5%*† (1.6%-11.7%)	4.3% (3.0%-6.2%)	5.2%† (2.8%-9.7%)	4.9% (4.2%-5.7%)
Higher SES (non-Native)	8.1% (6.8%-9.7%)	9.8% (7.8%-12.1%)	9.4% (7.8%-11.3%)	20.4% (14.2%-28.5%)	6.7% (5.1%-8.7%)	21.9% (17.1%-27.6%)	9.5% (8.6%-10.5%)
Males	1.0% (0.6%-1.8%)	0.4%*† (0.2%-0.8%)	0.8%* (0.5%-1.4%)	7.7%† (3.8%-15.2%)	N/A‡	18.0% (13.7%-23.4%)	1.7% (1.3%-2.2%)
Females	6.7% (4.9%-9.0%)	4.5%*† (2.4%-8.2%)	6.8% (4.6%-9.9%)	19.1% (11.0%-31.1%)	4.1%* (2.2%-7.3%)	28.8% (19.0%-41.1%)	7.8% (6.5%-9.5%)
Age 18-29	5.0% (4.0%-6.3%)	7.5% (5.6%-9.9%)	6.6% (5.1%-8.4%)	15.8% (9.6%-24.9%)	5.0% (3.4%-7.1%)	21.5% (17.0%-26.8%)	6.7% (5.9%-7.6%)
30-54	2.1% (1.4%-3.1%)	3.6% (2.4%-5.4%)	2.7% (1.9%-3.8%)	9.7% (5.6%-16.1%)	1.6% (1.0%-2.5%)	12.7% (9.5%-17.0%)	3.0% (2.5%-3.5%)
55 and older							

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File, 2015-2017

* Inadequate sample size for uncommon or very common events. For means and proportions < 25% or >75%, an estimate is flagged if it is based on a denominator which is less than 8 times a broadly calculated design effect, over the prevalence estimate.

† Large coefficient of variation

‡ Denominator is less than 50 or numerator is less than 5

Appendix B: Eliminating Exposure to Secondhand Smoke

	Anchorage / Mat-Su	Gulf Coast	Interior	Northern	Southeast	Southwest	Statewide Total
Has home smoking ban	92.1% (90.3%-93.6%)	91.2% (88.1%-93.5%)	90.1% (87.9%-91.9%)	91.2% (85.9%-94.6%)	91.4% (88.8%-93.5%)	95.2% (92.7%-96.9%)	91.7% (90.6%-92.7%)
No home SHS exposure	94.3% (93.1%-95.3%)	91.2% (88.5%-93.3%)	92.5% (90.9%-93.9%)	95.3%* (91.9%-97.3%)	93.4% (91.3%-94.9%)	94.3% (90.6%-96.6%)	93.6% (92.8%-94.3%)
Support for smokefree workplace policies	88.8% (87.2%-90.3%)	82.8% (79.3%-85.9%)	87.9% (85.9%-89.6%)	90.4% (85.4%-93.9%)	89.1% (87.0%-91.0%)	88.2% (83.9%-91.5%)	88.0% (86.9%-89.0%)
Support for smokefree restaurant policies	85.5% (83.7%-87.2%)	83.0% (80.2%-85.4%)	76.9% (74.3%-79.3%)	89.7% (84.3%-93.4%)	84.4% (82.0%-86.6%)	88.2% (83.7%-91.6%)	84.0% (82.8%-85.1%)
Smoking not allowed in work areas (indoor workers)	85.3% (82.4%-87.8%)	84.7% (79.3%-88.8%)	85.3% (82.3%-87.9%)	92.1%* (86.2%-95.6%)	88.2% (84.6%-91.1%)	78.7% (70.4%-85.1%)	85.5% (83.7%-87.1%)
No indoor workplace SHS exposure (all workers)	94.8% (93.2%-96.0%)	88.5% (84.0%-91.9%)	91.8% (89.6%-93.5%)	91.8% (85.3%-95.6%)	94.1% (91.9%-95.8%)	90.2% (83.3%-94.5%)	93.2% (92.1%-94.1%)
No indoor workplace SHS exposure (indoor workers)	95.7% (94.0%-96.9%)	89.2% (83.9%-92.9%)	93.7% (91.5%-95.3%)	94.2%* (87.0%-97.6%)	94.3% (91.4%-96.2%)	93.4% (85.6%-97.1%)	94.4% (93.2%-95.3%)

* Inadequate sample size for uncommon or very common events. For means and proportions < 25% or >75%, an estimate is flagged if it is based on a denominator which is less than 8 times a broadly calculated design effect, over the prevalence estimate.

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Modified File, 2015-2017

National Center for Health Statistics Data Quality Measures

Appendix C: Preventing the Initiation of Tobacco Use

Table C-1. Youth Tobacco Prevention Indicators, by Public Health Region, 2015-2017

		Anchorage / Mat-Su	Gulf Coast	Interior	Northern	Southeast	Southwest
Initiated smoking prior to age 13	%	7.1%	8.4%	6.7%	20.5%	8.1%	18.9%
	N	4,410	3,328	1,261	1,376	2,412	1,147
Perceives no risk or only slight risk from smoking*	%	17.3%	15.8%	12.6%	37.2%	13.9%	45.6%
	N	4,454	3,335	1,282	1,405	2,414	1,121
Thinks parents consider it wrong for them to smoke**	%	91.1%	90.3%	92.8%	85.5%	92.1%	80.5%
	N	4,395	3,320	1,278	1,374	2,398	1,153
Thinks friends consider it wrong for them to smoke (2017)†	%	66.2%	68.1%	63.4%	65.6%	64.3%	60.0%
	N	2,158	1,983	690	658	1,058	848

*Students who think smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day is no or slight risk

**Students who think parents feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to smoke cigarettes

† Students who think friends feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to smoke cigarettes, 2017 data only

Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Local File, 2015-2017

Appendix D: Evidence-Based Tobacco Cessation Interventions

Table D-1. Adult Cessation Indicators, by Public Health Region, 2015-2017

	Anchorage / Mat-Su	Gulf Coast	Interior	Northern	Southeast	Southwest	Statewide Total
Quit ratio (among ever smokers age 25 and older)	62.6% (59.7%-65.4%)	60.1% (56.0%-64.0%)	58.3% (55.1%-61.5%)	37.4% (30.5%-44.9%)	58.4% (54.7%-62.0%)	50.4% (44.9%-56.0%)	59.5% (57.8%-61.2%)
Attempted to quit (among current smokers)	56.3% (51.6%-61.0%)	53.6% (47.0%-60.1%)	52.8% (47.7%-57.9%)	52.3% (42.6%-61.8%)	62.0% (56.3%-67.3%)	59.6% (51.1%-67.6%)	55.9% (53.2%-58.6%)
Quit for 3+ months (among past year smokers)	5.8% (3.9%-8.7%)	3.7%*† (2.0%-7.0%)	5.6% (3.5%-8.8%)	3.0%*† (1.0%-8.1%)	7.4% (4.2%-12.7%)	9.1%*† (4.4%-18.0%)	5.7% (4.5%-7.3%)
Aware of quit line (among current smokers)	86.5% (81.2%-90.4%)	85.2% (75.5%-91.5%)	84.5% (78.9%-88.9%)	84.3%* (73.7%-91.2%)	87.4% (81.6%-91.6%)	81.1% (69.4%-89.0%)	85.6% (82.7%-88.1%)
Advised to quit by health care provider (among smokers who had a health care visit in the past year)	70.8% (62.5%-77.8%)	65.7% (53.6%-76.1%)	61.8% (52.9%-69.9%)	61.2%* (42.2%-77.3%)	59.4% (49.6%-68.5%)	63.8% (47.3%-77.5%)	66.5% (61.8%-70.9%)

* Inadequate sample size for uncommon or very common events. For means and proportions < 25% or >75%, an estimate is flagged if it is based on a denominator which is less than 8 times a broadly calculated design effect, over the prevalence estimate.

† Large coefficient of variation

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Combined File (first two metrics) & Modified File (last three metrics), 2015-2017

National Center for Health Statistics Data Quality Measures

Appendix E: Data Sources

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

The YRBS is a systematic biennial survey of high school students that assesses prevalence of behaviors related to the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among youth. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sponsor national and state surveys every two years, most recently in 2017.

The statewide Alaska traditional high school YRBS is conducted using a two-stage sampling design. The sampling frame is traditional public schools containing grades 9, 10, 11, or 12. Schools are selected first with a probability of inclusion proportional to the size of their enrollment. Once a school is chosen, classes are selected, with each student having an equal opportunity for inclusion. From 2001 through 2017, active parental consent was required for each student participating in the YRBS. On the appointed survey day, students completed written questionnaires and returned them in class in unmarked, sealed envelopes.

In a typical YRBS administration, about 1,200 to 1,400 students are surveyed from about 40 to 45 high schools that are scientifically selected to represent all public traditional high schools (excluding boarding schools, alternative schools, correspondence and home study schools, and correctional schools) in Alaska. Data are weighted to reflect the true distribution of Alaska traditional high school students by gender, race/ethnicity, and grade level, but not by region of the state. These results are considered to be representative of Alaska's more than 30,000 high school students in grades 9-12 in traditional public high schools.

The traditional school-based YRBS does not estimate risk behaviors associated with youth who drop out of school or do not attend school. Beginning in 2009, about 1,600 students from 13 alternative high schools in Alaska have been surveyed in each survey cycle to evaluate and address the health risks of this unique population. Further information about the YRBS, including survey results for the statewide traditional high school sample, the alternative high school sample, and the correctional high school sample is available at <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/YRBSresults.htm>.

Reporting by Region

Although not all schools are selected for the state sample, schools can participate on a volunteer basis to receive aggregated data on their students. For regional reporting, the sample includes all traditional public schools containing grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 who participated in the survey, whether they were part of the statewide official sample, or chose to participate in the local school district sample. Schools were not systematically and randomly selected, and the regional group of participants may not be representative of all schools within that region. However, in each region, students from at least two school districts participated in the survey.

Data were weighted by school enrollment (or by district enrollment if there were 20 or fewer students in the school) by gender and grade only if 50% or more of the school's sampled students participated in the survey. Not all of the participating schools met these requirements. Therefore, the regional estimates are based on a combination of weighted and unweighted responses. Due to the sampling limitations, confidence intervals are not calculated for these regional data.

To protect the anonymity of school districts and students, the data may be publicly distributed if specific criteria are met. First, regional YRBS data are based upon aggregated school districts and do not report information about any single school district. Second, prevalence estimates are reported when a minimum of 100 student responses were received; otherwise, the results are suppressed as Data Statistically Unreliable (DSU).

Reporting by Race Group within Region

In this Profile, we report race/ethnicity by whether the survey participant reported being Alaska Native or not. All YRBS survey participants who report being Alaska Native, either alone or in combination with other race groups or Hispanic ethnicity, are categorized in this report as Alaska Native. We combine all other race groups

to report a category called “Non-Native”. This category includes students who report being White, Hispanic, African American, Asian, Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or who report multiple race groups excluding Alaska Native. Those who did not report a race group or ethnicity are not included in the reporting.

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

The BRFSS is an anonymous telephone survey conducted by the Alaska Division of Public Health in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It aims to estimate in the general adult population, the prevalence of health-related risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and use of preventive services that are known to be associated with the leading causes of morbidity and mortality. The BRFSS has operated continuously in Alaska since it began in 1991.

The BRFSS uses a probability (or randomized) sample in which all Alaska households with landline telephones have a known, nonzero chance of selection. The sample is stratified into regions, with roughly equal numbers of interviews conducted in each region. This method deliberately over-samples rural areas of the state. Respondents are randomly selected from among the adult members of each household reached through a series of random telephone calls. Historically, those living in institutions (i.e., nursing homes, dormitories) are not surveyed. In 2011, the sample was stratified into six geographic regions. In addition, the sampling frame was expanded to include a random sample of cell phone owners as well as landline or household phones. This step was important because the proportion of households served only by cellular telephones has increased rapidly. By June 2010, about 20% of Alaska households were cell-only.^{xv} Since 2011, Alaska’s cell phone sample has been large enough to include it in weighting and reporting of data.

Interviews are conducted by trained interviewers during weekdays, evenings, and weekends throughout the year. In addition to tobacco use, the BRFSS questionnaire covers such topics as general health status, health care access, nutrition, physical activity, diabetes, alcohol use, women’s health, injury prevention, and HIV/AIDS awareness. There are also questions on the demographic characteristics of respondents.

Alaska presently conducts two BRFSS surveys: the Standard BRFSS and a Supplemental BRFSS. The Supplemental Survey contains mostly additional tobacco-related questions, some of which have been adapted from the CDC’s Adult Tobacco Survey. Both surveys are conducted throughout the year, using separate samples drawn using the same methodology. In 2017, approximately 265 Alaska adults were interviewed each month for the Standard BRFSS, to reach an annual sample size of 3,200 (530 per region); an additional 319 Alaska adults were interviewed each month for the Supplemental BRFSS in 2017, reaching an annual sample size of 3,833. Because sample size is lower per region and for some subpopulation reporting groups, data from 2015 to 2017 have been combined to report some key indicators.

BRFSS data are weighted to adjust the distribution of the sample data so that they reflect the total population of the sampled area, and to compensate for the over-representation or under-representation of persons in various subgroups. Beginning with the 2011 BRFSS, the CDC uses a new weighting method known as iterative proportional fitting, or raking. Raking allows for the inclusion of several key demographic factors in adjusting survey data to the adult population totals. The changes that have been made help ensure that the BRFSS can continue to be a valuable source of information for health planning and improvement.

The Standard and Supplemental BRFSS are each weighted separately for analysis of questions that are unique to that version. In addition, a combined dataset (Standard plus Supplemental) is created and weighted for analysis of questions that occur in both versions, so that some data can be reported for a total of 5,000 or more survey respondents each year since 2004. The larger sample sizes allow for more precision in the estimates. For tobacco-related items, this includes smoking and SLT use prevalence.

Regional Reporting

Alaska Public Health Regions were defined using borough designation. Although the BRFSS survey data do not provide enough representation for reporting by most of the individual boroughs, combining boroughs provides a useful geographic factor for analyses.

Regional groups for this report are as follows:

- 1) Anchorage/Mat-Su – Municipality of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough
- 2) Gulf Coast – Kenai Peninsula Borough, Kodiak Island Borough, and Valdez-Cordova Census Area
- 3) Interior – Denali Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Southeast Fairbanks Census Area, and Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area
- 4) Northern – Nome Census Area, North Slope Borough, and Northwest Arctic Borough
- 5) Southeast – Haines Borough, Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, Juneau City and Borough, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Petersburg Census Area, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Sitka City and Borough, Skagway Municipality, Wrangell City and Borough, and Yakutat City and Borough
- 6) Southwest – Aleutians East Borough, Aleutians West Census Area, Bethel Census Area, Bristol Bay Borough, Dillingham Census Area, Lake and Peninsula Borough, and Kusilvak Census Area (formerly Wade Hampton Census Area)

Reporting by Race Group

Information by race group is reported by Alaska Native and non-Native status. For this report, Alaska Native includes all survey respondents who reported “Alaska Native/American Indian” as their primary or only race group. Those who report being Hispanic or reported their race as something other than Alaska Native or American Indian were included in the “non-Native” group.

Reporting by Socio-Economic Status (SES)

In Tobacco Facts, the low SES priority population is defined as 'non-Native adults (age 25-64) of low socio-economic status.' Reporting by SES is restricted to non-Native because reporting for Alaska Native as a priority population is already done separately. Reporting by SES is also restricted to age 25 to 64 because younger adults (age 18-24) may not have had a chance to complete their education and begin to earn an income. Older adults age 65 and over are similarly excluded because income and education might be inadequate SES markers for those who are potentially retired and eligible for Medicare.

Poverty level (as calculated by income and household size) and education level were identified as key indicators of SES that are available using BRFSS. The State of Alaska guideline for Medicaid eligibility – household incomes at or below the 185% poverty guideline - was adopted as the poverty measure. Therefore, “low SES” was calculated as those persons with less than a High School education or less than 185% of the Alaska Poverty Level Guideline.

Data Suppression Guidelines

In this report, BRFSS information is suppressed or flagged based on statistical guidelines developed by Alaska’s Division of Public Health in the Department of Health and Human Services, which are based upon the national Joint Policy of Variance Estimation and Statistical Reporting Standards for the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES-III) and the Continuing Survey of Food Intake by Individuals (CSFII) Reports. An asterisk is used to indicate that the estimate may lack statistical precision. Estimates are flagged if the coefficient of variation (ratio of the standard error to the mean expressed as a percent) is greater than 30. In some cases, the flag also denotes that estimates are based on an inadequate sample size, as determined by whether the event, or risk factor, is very common, common, or very uncommon. Finally, information is suppressed if the unweighted sample size for the denominator (N) is less than 50, or if the numerator (n) is less than 5.

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