

Council Victoria's Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer. Results released today are the findings of the most recent survey, conducted in 1999. The 1999 study is based on a survey of 25, 486 students aged between 12 and 17 from almost 400 schools across Australia. Director of the Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer and study author Professor David Hill says that if all of the 269,000 students who were current smokers in 1999 continued to smoke, 134,000 would die prematurely. Other key findings from the study released today include:

- Smoking rates in students increase with age while 6% of 12 year olds were current smokers, around a third of students aged 17 smoke
- The rate amongst students aged 12-15 was 14%, a fall of 2% from 16%
- Smoking rates amongst 16 and 17 year olds have changed little since the last surveyed in 1996; around one third of students in this age group are current smokers
- A third of boys and a quarter of girls surveyed who had smoked in the previous week had bought their last cigarette themselves.

In the 1999 survey, for the first time students were asked if they had ever tried a cigar