

. Around half of 17 year old boys and a third of 17 year old girls had tried a cigar. Across all age groups, 31% of boys and 18% of girls said they had at least had a few puffs of a cigar.' Whether this apparent interest in cigar smoking is transient, and reflects the publicity associated with the rise of cigars bars and the promotion of cigar smoking, or whether it reflects a more permanent shift in the products students smoke, will be examined in the next survey,' Professor Hill said.

Professor Hill said the latest national snapshot of students smoking habits contained both good news and bad news. 'It's encouraging that the proportion of students buying cigarettes is decreasing across all age groups, and the decrease has been significant in students aged between 12-15.' 'Given the increased attention of many state governments on youth access to tobacco in the last 18 months, it will be interesting to see if the proportion of students buying cigarettes decreases again in the next survey.' 'It's also encouraging that rates in younger students have shown a significant decrease. This is the first time in over a decade that we have seen smoking rates in students of this age group fall.' 'Whilst smoking rates in older students have not followed the trend of rates in younger students,