

6 July 2004

Coverage
Great Britain
Theme
Health and Care

Fewer people smoke if children are in the room

Sixty-eight per cent of smokers said they do not smoke at all when they are in a room with a child compared with 66 per cent in 2002 and 63 per cent in 2001 according to a survey report* published today by the Office for National Statistics. Twenty four per cent said they would smoke fewer cigarettes in the presence of a child (21 per cent in 2002 and 26 per cent in 2001).

The report presents the results of a survey on smoking behaviour and attitudes carried out in 2003. The survey is the latest in a series of surveys carried out for the Department of Health as part of the ONS Omnibus Survey. The surveys were designed to explore views on giving up smoking, second-hand smoking and smoking restrictions.

Other key findings include:

Giving up smoking

- The percentage of current smokers who said they would like to give up smoking (70 per cent) was not significantly different from figures for previous years (70 per cent in 2002, 72 per cent in 2001).
- More than eight out of ten (84 per cent) smokers who wanted to give up mentioned at least one health-related reason for wanting to give up smoking, the most common, mentioned by 67 per cent, being that it would be better for their health in general. More than one in four smokers (28 per cent) said they wanted to give up smoking because they could not afford to smoke or considered smoking a waste of money.

Issued by
National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone
Press Office 020 7533 5702
Email press.office@ons.gov.uk
Public Enquiries 0845 601 3034

Statistician
Deborah Lader 020 7533 5500
Email deborah.lader@ons.gov.uk

Internet
www.statistics.gov.uk/releases

***Smoking related behaviour and attitudes, 2003**
The Stationery Office. ISBN 1 85774 547 7.

Available free on the National Statistics website:



www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=1638

- Just over half (53 per cent) of smokers said that they intended to give up smoking within the next 12 months - this was not significantly different from the figures for previous years (51 per cent in 2001 and 2002). Compared with other smokers, those who intended to give up tended to be younger, to have children aged 5 to 10 at home, to be smokers of packeted cigarettes, and to be aware of the effects of second-hand smoking.

Attempts to give up smoking

- Nearly four-fifths (78 per cent) of current smokers had tried to give up smoking in the past, and over a half (52 per cent) of current smokers had made a serious attempt in the past five years. The corresponding figures for 2002 were almost identical, at 79 per cent and 53 per cent respectively.

Awareness of the effect of second-hand smoking

- Awareness of the effects of second-hand smoking was widespread. People thought second-hand smoking increased a child's risk of getting chest infections (90 per cent of respondents) and asthma (84 per cent). Over 80 per cent thought that second-hand smoking would increase a non-smoking adult's risk of lung cancer, bronchitis and asthma. The percentages were similar to those found in 2002.

Non-smokers' attitudes towards people smoking near them

- Fifty-six per cent of those who did not smoke (51 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women) said they would mind if other people smoked near them compared with 55 per cent in 2002.

Smokers' behaviour in the presence of non-smokers

- Most smokers said they would modify their smoking in the company of adult non-smokers - 46 per cent would not smoke at all and 36 per cent would smoke fewer cigarettes compared with 52 per cent and 30 per cent respectively in 2002.

Smoking restrictions in public places

- Fifty per cent of people who were in work said that smoking was not allowed at all on the premises where they worked - a significant increase from 40 per cent in 1996
- About four-fifths or more of those interviewed agreed that there should be restrictions on smoking at work (86 per cent), in restaurants (87 per cent), in indoor shopping centres (85 per cent), in indoor sports and leisure centres (91 per cent), in indoor areas at railway and bus stations (78 per cent) and in other public places such as banks and post offices (90 per cent). A smaller percentage of respondents, 56 per cent, thought that smoking should be restricted in pubs.
- Support for smoking restrictions has been increasing since 1996. The percentage in favour of restrictions in restaurants increased from 85 per cent to 87 per cent, in pubs from 48 per cent to 56 per cent and in other public places from 82 per cent to 90 per cent. The percentage in favour of restrictions at work rose from 81 per cent in 1996 to 86 per cent in 2000 and has remained stable at 86 per cent.
- About half the respondents thought that pubs should be mainly non-smoking with smoking allowed in designated areas (51 per cent), and a fifth (19 per cent) thought the premises should be mainly smoking with a designated non-smoking area. A fifth (20 per cent) said that smoking should not be allowed anywhere. Less than a tenth (8 per cent) thought there should be no restrictions on smoking at all.
- Overall, the vast majority (92 per cent) of respondents agreed that there should be smoking restrictions in places where there are, or are likely to be, children under the age of 16.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
2. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality



assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2004.