

## **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Tobacco Behavior and Public Opinion Survey, Baseline Results, August 2010**

The Tobacco Behavior and Public Opinion Survey (TBPOS) was developed to assess changes over time in social norms, awareness and attitudes toward a wide range of policy issues present in the national tobacco control landscape. The TBPOS is a random-digit-dial, cross-sectional phone survey conducted in English and Spanish. The survey was conducted in August 2010 and will be repeated in April 2011 and February 2012. Participants are identified through landline (90% of sample) and cell-phone (10% of sample) numbers. Each of the three surveys will include a total of 1,440 adults respondents (18 years and older), including 720 smokers and 720 non-smokers. Smokers are over-sampled, and the results are weighted based on New York City's 2009 smoking prevalence of 15.8%.

### **Results:**

#### Secondhand Smoke

Over half (60%) of New Yorkers surveyed said that secondhand smoke is a problem in outdoor public places within a few feet of them. Compared to smokers, non-smokers are twice as likely to find secondhand smoke a problem in outdoor public places in New York City (30% vs. 66%).

Secondhand smoke is a problem in lines in outdoor waiting areas for a bus or taxi at New York City airports and at the Port Authority and George Washington Bridge Bus Terminals, according to 36% of smokers and 70% of non-smokers. Only 26% of New Yorkers surveyed know that smoking is prohibited in lines in these areas, and 19% were not sure. In the past three months, 15% of New Yorkers noticed signs prohibiting smoking in lines in these areas, while 16% were not sure if they noticed such signs.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72%) reported secondhand smoke is a problem in the areas around hospital entrances or hospital grounds. While almost half of New Yorkers know that smoking is prohibited in these areas (48%), 15% of respondents were not sure. More smokers knew smoking is prohibited in these areas than non-smokers (60% vs. 45%). In the past three months, 39% of New Yorkers noticed signs prohibiting smoking in these areas, while 14% were unsure.

Secondhand smoke is a problem in outdoor areas on college campuses or facilities in New York City, according to 30% of smokers and 61% of non-smokers surveyed. Nearly one-quarter of survey respondents (22%) believe that smoking is prohibited in these areas, and more than a quarter (26%) weren't sure. In the past three months, 13% of New Yorkers noticed signs prohibiting smoking in these areas, and 28% were not sure. Prohibiting smoking in all outdoor areas of New York City colleges and university campuses and facilities is favored by 50% of respondents (smokers 29%, non-smokers 53%).

Nearly half of survey respondents (48%) favor prohibiting smoking in all public parks (smokers 30%, non-smokers 52%). Prohibiting smoking in recreational areas, such as basketball courts and baseball fields, is favored by 59% of New Yorkers. Prohibiting smoking in outdoor markets and street fairs and prohibiting smoking on all public beaches is favored by 52% of New Yorkers. More than half of respondents (55%) favor prohibiting smoking in front of the entrances to buildings, while 39% favor prohibiting smoking on sidewalks.

#### Attitudes about Smoking

Two-thirds of New Yorkers agree that someone can be a good role model even if they smoke (smokers 87%, non-smokers 62%). And two-thirds of New Yorkers disagree with the statement "If someone I like smokes, I would think less of him or her" (smokers 87%, non-smokers 62%). However, more than three-quarters of New Yorkers (76%) agree that smoking is unattractive (smokers 51%, non-smokers 80%).

Sixty percent of New Yorkers think that smoking is an addiction, 17% think that it is a choice and 16% think that it is a habit.

### Retail Policies

Fifty-four percent of New Yorkers surveyed favor limiting the number of tobacco retail licenses. Only one-third of smokers (33%) favor limiting the number of tobacco retail licenses, compared with 58% of non-smokers surveyed.

Overall, 46% of those surveyed favor not granting new licenses to sell tobacco, with smokers being half as likely to favor this idea compared with non-smokers (25% vs. 50%).

More than half of New Yorkers surveyed (60%) favor prohibiting pharmacies from selling tobacco – 39% of smokers and 63% of non-smokers.

Prohibiting grocery stores from selling tobacco is favored by half of New Yorkers (30% of smokers and 54% of non-smokers).

When asked about prohibiting tobacco sales in stores located near schools, two thirds of respondents (66%) were in favor – 55% of smokers and 68% of non-smokers.

Requiring tobacco sales to be limited to stores that sell only tobacco products is favored by 49% of New Yorkers (27% of smokers and 53% of non-smokers).

Keeping tobacco products out of customers' view is favored by more than half of those surveyed (58%) – 42% of smokers and 62% of non-smokers.

More than half of survey respondents (55%) favor prohibiting tobacco companies from paying New York City retailers to display their products and advertisements – 42% of smokers and 58% of non-smokers.

Prohibiting price promotions such as coupons and two-for-one deals on cigarette packs are favored by over half of New Yorkers surveyed (55%). More non-smokers favor prohibiting price promotions than do smokers (57% vs. 41%).

### Tax Increases

Almost two-thirds of New Yorkers surveyed (63%) favor increasing state or city taxes on a pack of cigarettes (21% of smokers and 71% of nonsmokers). The percent in favor jumps considerably if collected taxes are earmarked for programs to prevent and treat smoking (71% overall, or 48% of smokers and 76% of non-smokers) or to fund health care programs (78% overall, or 58% of smokers and 81% of non-smokers).

More than two-thirds of New Yorkers (69%) favor increasing state or city taxes on tobacco products other than cigarettes, such as cigars, cigarillos, loose tobacco and smokeless products. However, smokers are less than half as likely to favor tax increases on other tobacco products as non-smokers (36% vs. 75%).

### Minimum Age

About two-thirds of smokers (66%) and non-smokers (67%) favor raising the legal minimum age to purchase cigarettes from 18 to 21.