

ASH Year 10 Snapshot Survey 2021

Topline – Youth Smoking and Vaping

The ASH Year 10 Snapshot surveys 20,000-30,000 students every year on their smoking and vaping behaviour and attitudes – one of the largest ongoing youth smoking surveys in the world. It uses robust and validated measures and is conducted to a high methodological standard, that has been subject to peer review and ethics approval. The Survey was not carried out in 2020 due to Covid-19. All results are shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Key findings

Daily smoking decreases and daily vaping increases

- Daily smoking rates have decreased significantly (to 1.3%) in 2021 from about 2% between 2015-2019
- Daily vaping rates increased significantly (3.1% in 2019 to 9.6% in 2021)

Daily smoking rates significantly decrease for Māori students – particularly Māori girls; daily vaping rates increase for all ethnicities

- Daily smoking rates for Māori students have decreased significantly for the first time since 2015 (from around 5-6% between 2015-2019 to 3.4% in 2021)
- Daily vaping rates increased significantly for all ethnicities (Māori, Pacific, Asian, NZ European), particularly for Māori (from 5.9% in 2019 to 19% in 2021), Pacific (3.9% in 2019 to 11% in 2021), and NZ European (from 2.6% in 2019 to 7.8% in 2021)
- The biggest increases in daily vaping were seen for Māori girls (5.2% in 2019 to 21% in 2021), along with Māori boys (6.3% in 2019 to 17% in 2021) and Pacific girls (3.1% in 2019 to 11% in 2021)
- These three groups (who have historically high daily smoking rates) also showed significant decreases in daily smoking, again particularly for Māori girls who had the biggest decline in daily smoking of any group (6.8% in 2019 to 3.7% in 2021).

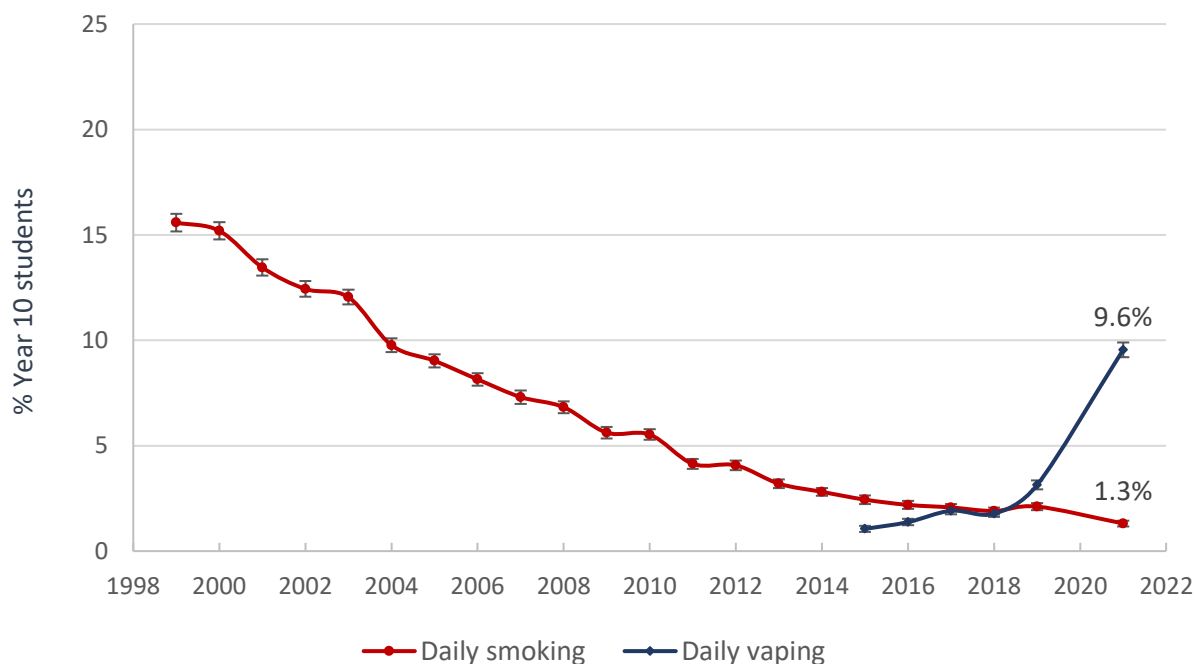
Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%; daily vaping rates for daily smokers increased to 80%

- Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%
- Daily smokers reported increased rates of daily vaping. This was a particularly large increase – 30% in 2019 to 80% in 2021.

Daily smoking decreases and daily vaping increases

Daily smoking rates showed a significant decrease to 1.3% after hovering around 2% since 2015. **Daily vaping rates increased significantly** from 3.1% in 2019 to 9.6% in 2021. Daily use is those who answer that they vape or smoke at least once a day.

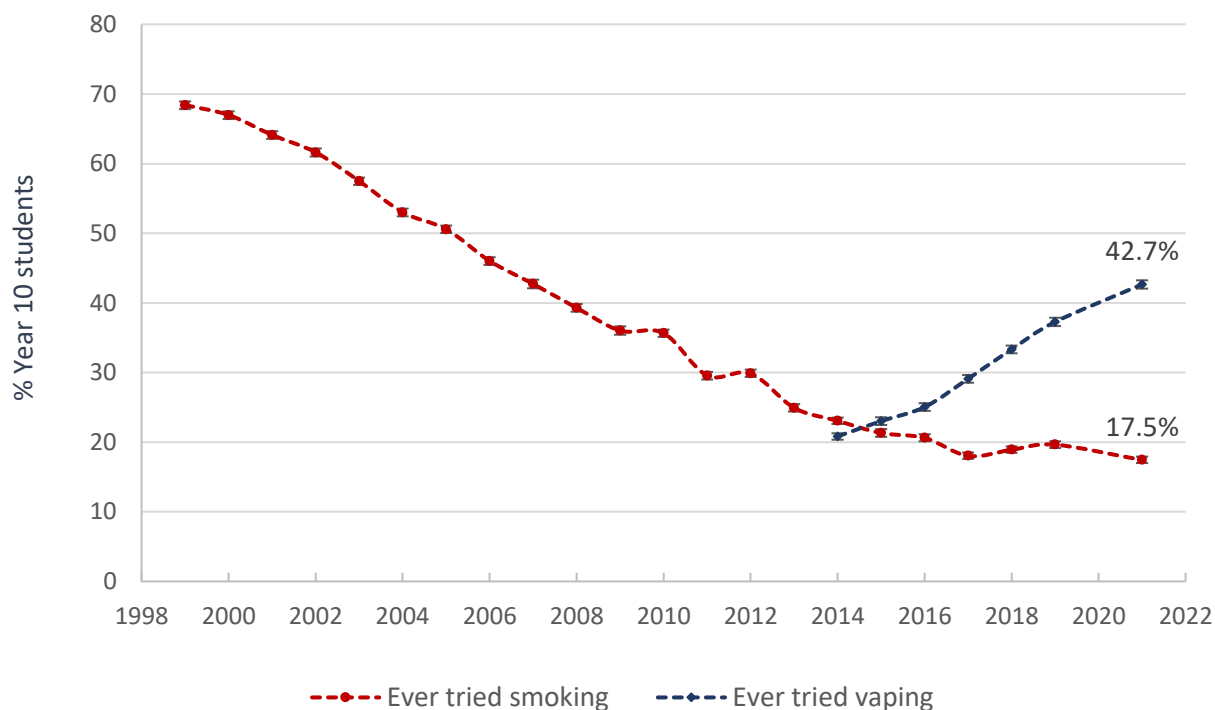
Figure 1: Youth daily smoking (1999-2021) and daily vaping prevalence (2015-2021)



Similar results were seen in the 2020/21 NZ Health Survey (NZHS) with a sharp increase in daily vaping (3.5% to 6.2%) that was accompanied with a significant decrease in daily smoking rates (11.9% to 9.4%). NZHS results (2020/21) for 15–17-year-olds also showed a corresponding increase in vaping and decrease in smoking.¹

“Ever tried” smoking or vaping is defined as having ever tried a cigarette (or e-cigarette/vape), even if it is just a few puffs (or vapes). Ever tried vaping is a measure of overall experimental use and includes both current vapers and one-off experimental use. Ever tried smoking showed a significant decrease from 2019 (19.6%) to 2021 (17.5%). The percentage of Year 10 students reporting ever trying vaping increased from 37.3% in 2019 to 42.7% in 2021.

Figure 2: Ever tried smoking (1999-2021) and ever tried vaping prevalence (2014-2021)

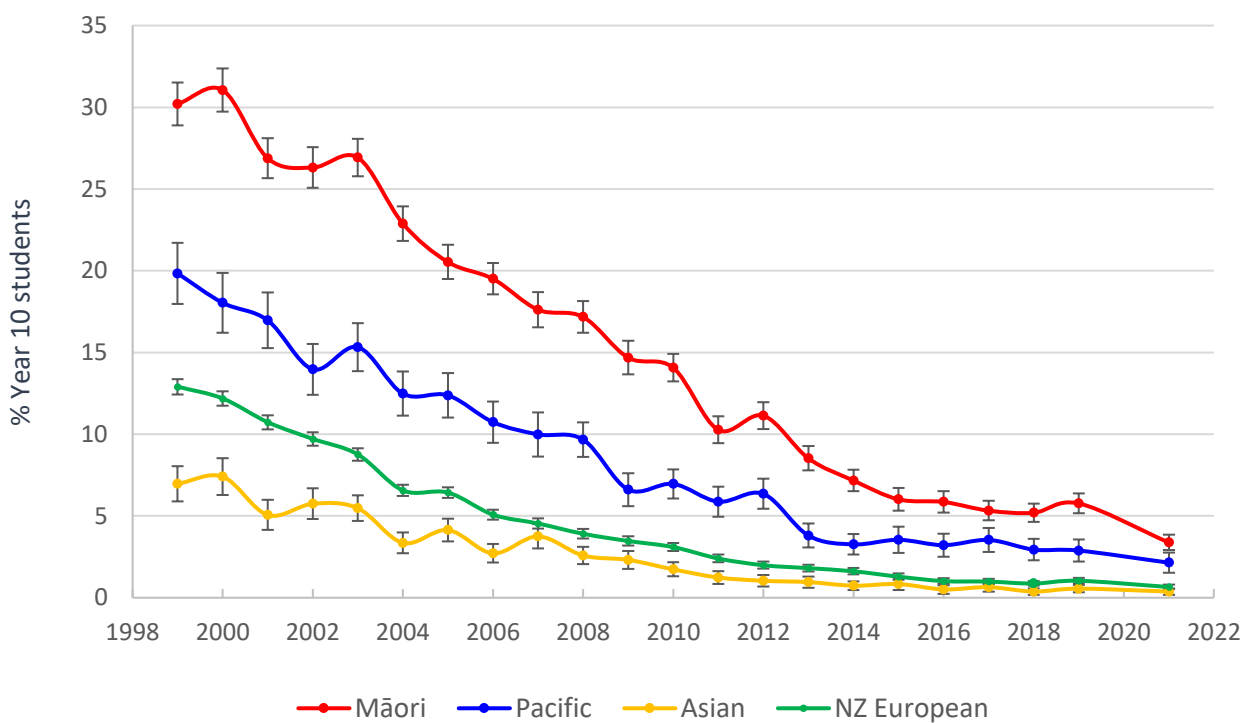


Ever tried vaping in the Great Britain is lower for youth (aged 11-17) than in NZ, with ASH UK reporting ever use at 11.2% for 2021.² This has decreased since 2020, when it was 13.9%. While not as current, experimental vaping in Ireland appears to be following a similar trend to NZ – 23% youth (16-year-olds) had ever tried vaping in 2015, increasing to 39% in 2019.³

Daily smoking rates significantly decrease for Māori students – particularly Māori girls; daily vaping rates increase for all ethnicities

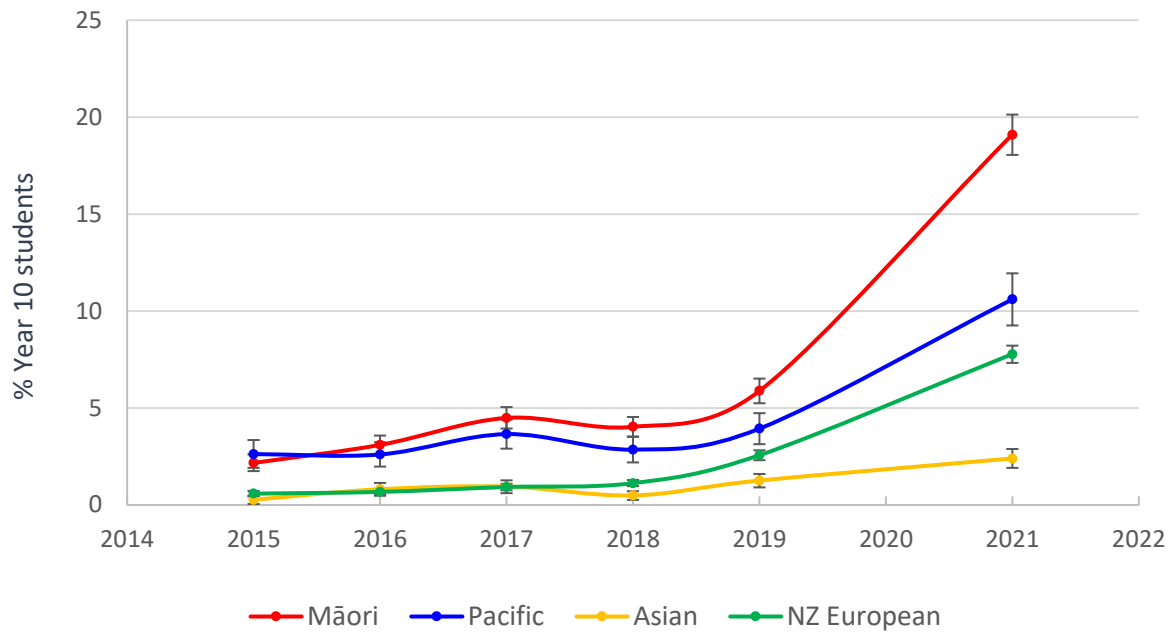
Daily smoking rates decreased significantly for Māori students for the first time since 2015 (5.8% in 2019 to 3.4% in 2021; 5-6% between 2015-2019). There was also a very small but significant decrease in daily smoking rate for NZ European students (1.0% in 2019 to 0.7% in 2021). Pacific students and Asian students had non-significant decreases in daily smoking. See Figure 3.

Figure 3: Daily smoking prevalence by ethnicity (1999-2021)



There have been increases in reported daily vaping for all ethnicities, with the biggest increase being for Māori students – for whom daily vaping increased from 5.9% in 2019 to 19.1% in 2021. Daily vaping for Pacific students increased from 3.9% in 2019 to 10.6% in 2021. Daily vaping for NZ European students increased from 2.6% in 2019 to 7.8% in 2021. Asian students still have the lowest daily use at 2.4% in 2021. See Figure 4.

Figure 4: Daily vaping prevalence by ethnicity (2015-2021)



Daily vaping rates increased significantly for boys and girls of all ethnicities, particularly for Māori boys and girls, and Pacific girls. Māori girls showed the biggest increase. For all ethnicities girls showed bigger increases than boys. See Figure 5.

At the same time that daily vaping increased, **daily smoking rates for these same key populations has decreased significantly.** The biggest decrease since 2019 has been for Māori girls. Some of these groups had previously shown little change in daily smoking rates since 2015. See Figure 6.

Figure 5: Daily vaping prevalence by ethnicity and gender (2015-2021)

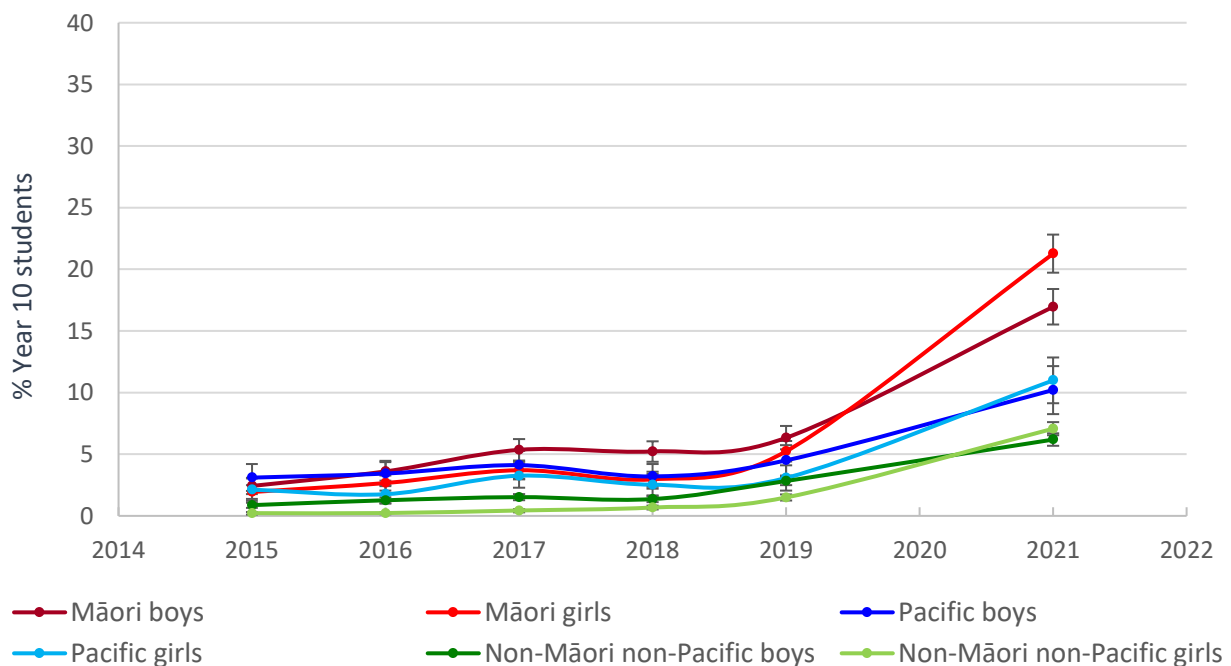
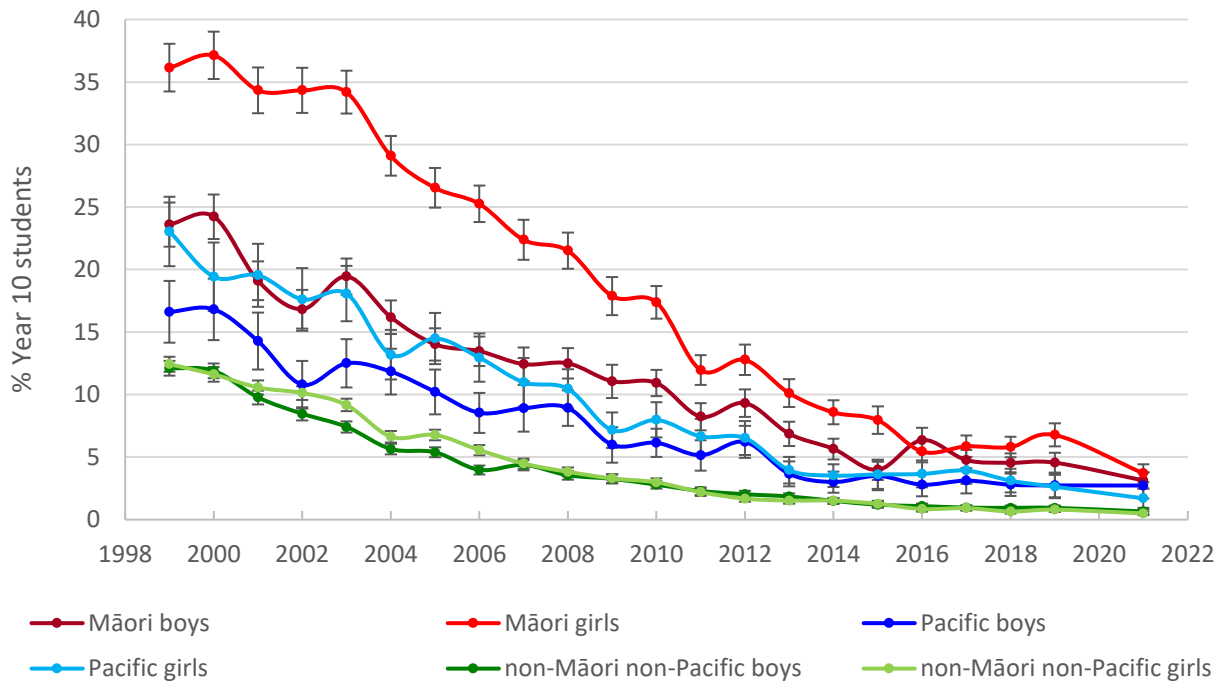


Figure 6: Daily smoking prevalence by ethnicity and gender (1999-2021)

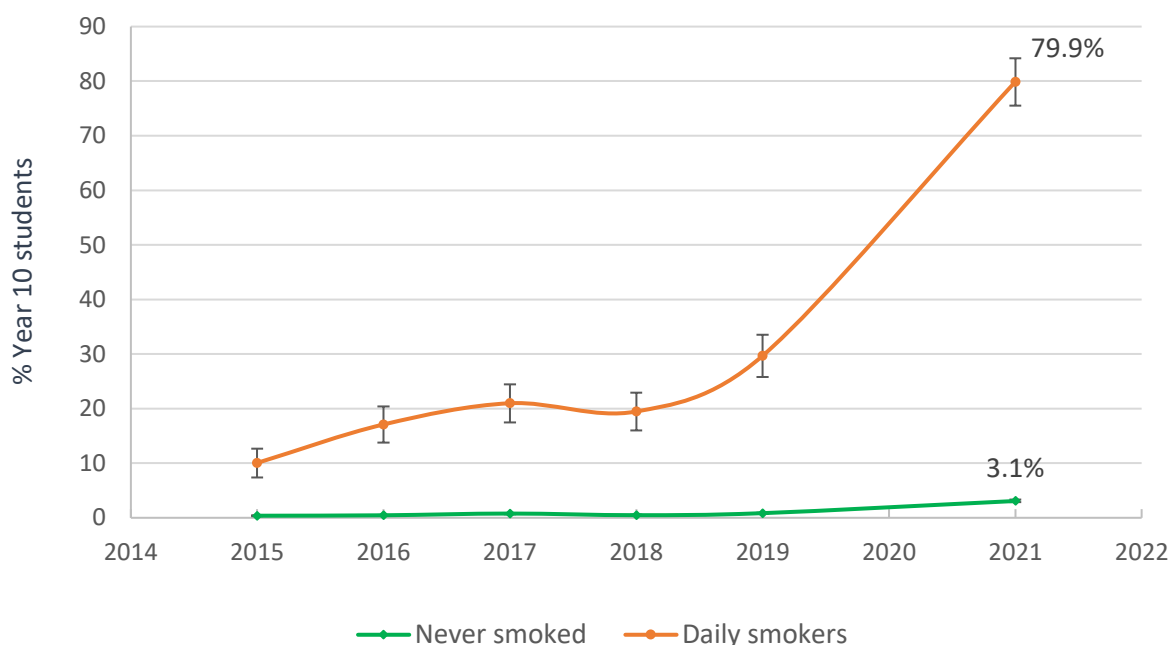


These results were echoed in the 2020/2021 NZ Health Survey, with large increases in Māori vaping rates accompanied by large decreases in Māori smoking rates. Māori women, in particular, showed significant increases in vaping and significant decreases in smoking.¹

Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%; daily vaping rates for daily smokers increased to 80%

Daily smokers and those who have never smoked reported increased rates of daily vaping. Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%. There was a particularly large increase for daily smokers (30% in 2019 to 80% in 2021).

Figure 7: Daily vaping prevalence by smoking status (2015-2021)



Suggested citation

Action for Smokefree 2025 (ASH). 2022. ASH Year 10 Snapshot Survey 2021: Topline – Youth smoking and vaping. Available from: <http://ash.org.nz>

References

- ¹Ministry of Health. Annual Data Explorer 2020/21: New Zealand Health Survey [Data File]. Ministry of Health. Published 2021. Available from <https://www.health.govt.nz/>
- ²ASH UK. Use of E-Cigarettes among Young People in Great Britain; 2021. Available from: <https://ash.org.uk/>
- ³Hanafin J, Sunday S, Clancy L. Friends and family matter most: A trend analysis of increasing e-cigarette use among Irish teenagers and socio-demographic, personal, peer and familial associations. BMC Public Health. 2021;21(1):1988. doi:10.1186/s12889-021-12113-9