



ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE
PUERTO RICO
Departamento de Salud

TOBACCO USE IN PUERTO RICO 2014

**Promoting Smoke Free
Environments**

Puerto Rico



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**Tobacco Control and Oral Health Division
Secretariat for Health Promotion**



Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico
Departamento de Salud
Secretaría Auxiliar para la Promoción de la Salud

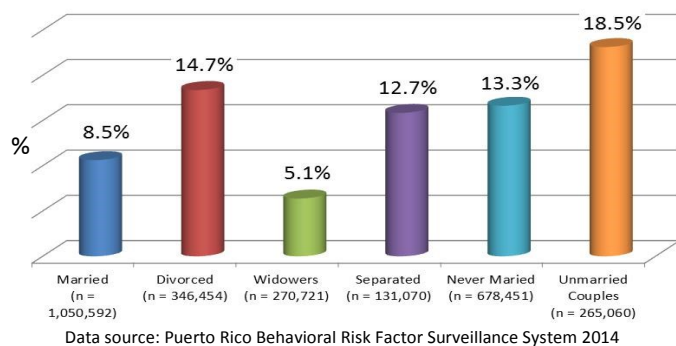


TOBACCO USE IN PUERTO RICO

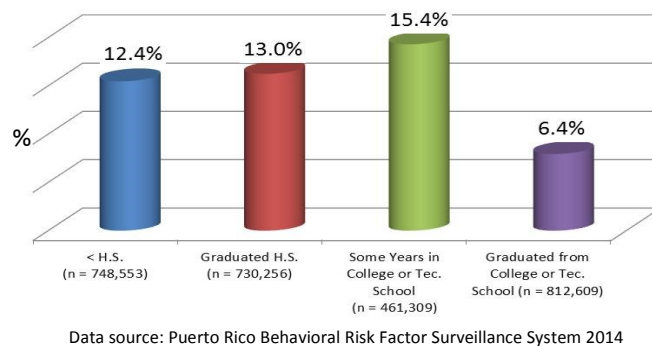
According to the Puerto Rico Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System in 2014:

- ♦ Tobacco use prevalence increased from 10.8% in 2013 to 11.3% in 2014.
- ♦ In terms of sex, 16.4% of men and 6.8% of females reported being smokers.
- ♦ In the category of marital status, the three groups with higher prevalence were: members of unmarried couples (18.5%), divorced (14.7%), and people who have never been married (13.3%) (See graphic 1).
- ♦ People with some years in the university or technical school reported a higher tobacco use prevalence (15.4%) (See graphic 2)
- ♦ The three age groups with highest tobacco use prevalence were: 25-34 years (16.6%), 35-34 years (13.8%), and 45-54 years (12.8%) (See graphic 3).
- ♦ The population with an annual income less than \$15,000 reported higher prevalence on tobacco use (15.1%) (See graphic 4).

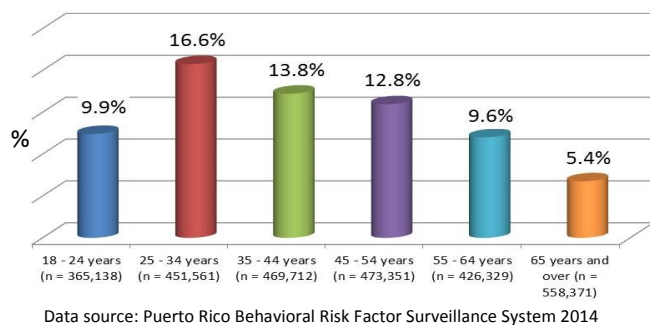
Graphic 1. Tobacco use prevalence in the general population of 18 years and over, Puerto Rico 2014



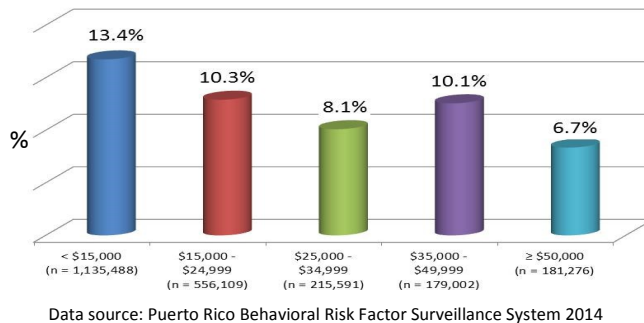
Graphic 2. Tobacco use prevalence by educational level in the general population of 18 years and over, Puerto Rico 2014



Graphic 3. Tobacco use prevalence by age group in the general population of 18 years and over, Puerto Rico 2014



Graphic 4. Tobacco use prevalence by annual income in the general population of 18 years and over, Puerto Rico 2014





MY SMOKEFREE COMMUNITY PROGRAM

(SUCCESS STORY)

The initiative was created in 2006 in order to prevent tobacco use among adolescents and young people. In the beginning, it was directed to children living at Public Housing. This program was then focused on fifth grade students of public schools to educate them about the harmful effects of tobacco use and related product exposure.

In 2013, slight but substantial changes were made to the content and design of the educational and evaluative materials, by the Puerto Rico Tobacco Control Program. Although the focus of the initiative continued to be the students of public schools, after the revision the objectives and the topics of the workshops were expanded. The objectives of the new version are:

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- ◆ Prevent the tobacco use initiation among adolescents and young people.
- ◆ Reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among adolescents and young people.
- ◆ Educate youth about the harmful consequences of cigarette smoke in the human health.
- ◆ Prevent exposure of adolescents and young people to second and third hand smoke.
- ◆ Educate parents about the effects of exposure to second and third hand smoke.





MY SMOKEFREE COMMUNITY PROGRAM

(SUCCESS STORY)

Likewise, the topics developed throughout the program include:

- ♦ The history of tobacco in Puerto Rico.
- ♦ Chemical components found in a cigarette.
- ♦ Tobacco effects on the human body.
- ♦ Laws that protect communities against tobacco smoke.
- ♦ Identifying the difference between positive and negative publicity.
- ♦ Building a strong self-esteem and managing peer pressure.

Until September 2015, the initiative was implemented in 6 schools reaching 126 students in the following municipalities; Aibonito, Barranquita, Coamo, Guanica, Isabela, and San German. After participating in the workshops, students were involved in different activities related to tobacco control in their municipalities. These activities include marches, visits to radio programs, orientations to other students, among others. Likewise, a group of these students was invited by the Governor of Puerto Rico to the signing of the Act. No. 41 of March 26, 2015 which banned the sale of electronic cigarettes to youth under 18 years.



At the continuous request of various entities and groups, the initiative has been inspired to follow a new path. My Smokefree Community Program has been documented for the benefit of professionals in the health education field. The educational task performed to prevent tobacco use in favor of the health of minors, including their families and friends, has taken the form of an Implementation Manual. This Manual is specific, though simple and it is used to facilitate the educational processes of the students and of those with whom the minor makes continuous connections, such as parents and neighbors. The Tobacco Control Division is now responsible to perform a new role: to train and equip future Program Facilitators that trust solely on the resources they possess and have developed over time to implement the educational activities in communities according to their needs.



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