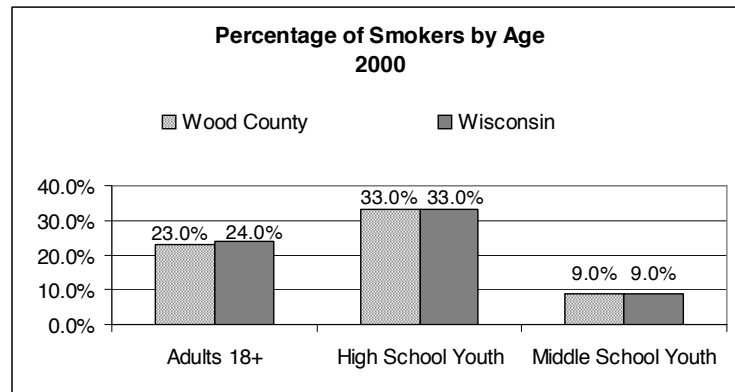


## Decreasing Youth Experimentation with Tobacco



### Key Facts

- In 2003, 54% of students reported experimenting with cigarette smoking, compared to 64% in 2001.
- Prevalence of students who smoked a cigarette before the age of 13 years decreased from 27% in 1993 to 17% in 2003.
- Youth acquire cigarettes and other tobacco products illegally from family, friends, purchases or theft.
- In the past year, 56% of smokers trying to quit indicated they quit smoking for 1 day or longer.

### Why is this Information Important?

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease and death. It is responsible for killing more people than alcohol use, illegal drug abuse, car accidents, murders and suicides combined. Tobacco use is a major risk factor for heart disease, lung cancer and chronic lung disease, clearly having a negative effect on the health of a community.

### Tobacco Use

It is estimated that in Wood County, 23% of adults 18 and older regularly smoke tobacco. Additionally, 20% of students in Wood County junior high and high school are smokers. It is significant to note that youth smoking rates are decreasing, since tobacco addiction generally begins in youth.

Tobacco not only has negative affects on tobacco users, it also impacts those who live or work around it. Secondhand smoke can cause the same risks for non-smokers as smokers. Additionally, both non-smokers and smokers pay for lost productivity on the job, property damage and increased health care costs.

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services*