



## Younger people

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia

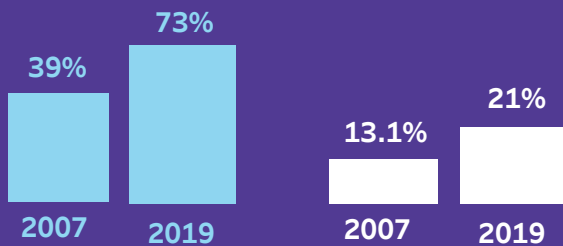
In 2018, **alcohol and illicit drug** use were the **leading causes of total burden of disease** in males aged 15–24 and the second and third leading causes (respectively) for females. [1]



**Tobacco smoking** and the use of **alcohol** and **illicit drugs** are **declining** among young people, however the **consumption of alcohol at risky levels remained high** in 2019. [2]



An increasing proportion of people aged **14–17** and **18–24** are reporting alcohol abstinence. [2]



In 2020–21, over **1 in 10** (11%) clients who sought treatment for their own use of alcohol and other drugs were **aged 10–19**, and **1 in 4** (26%) were **aged 20–29**. [4]

**Risky drinkers** aged 14–19 in the last 12 months in 2016–17:

- **83% injured** as a result of their drinking,
- **7%** attended the emergency department for an **alcohol related injury**. [3]

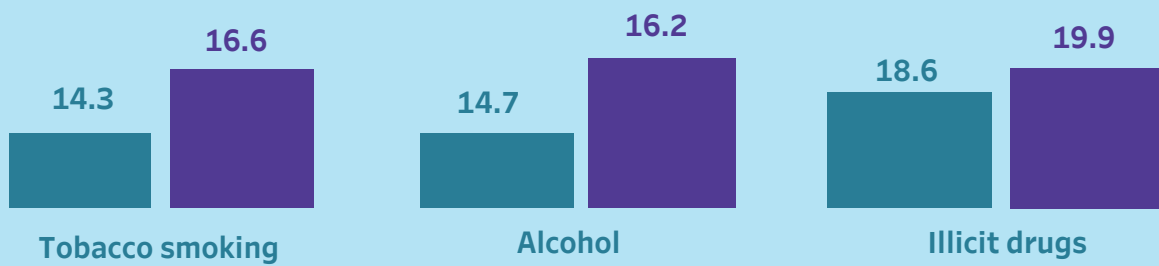




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Age of initiation increased between 2001–2019.<sup>[2]</sup>





## Younger people: (12–17 year olds)

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Among students aged 12–17, **cannabis** was the **most commonly used** illicit substance in 2017.<sup>[5]</sup>



**82%** of secondary school students had **never tried smoking** (not even a single puff) in 2017 compared to 77% in 2011.<sup>[5]</sup>



In 2017, **46%** of secondary students aged 12–17 **drank alcohol in the past year**.<sup>[5]</sup>



**22%** of current smokers in secondary school aged 12–17 **smoked daily** in 2017.<sup>[5]</sup>



**5%** of secondary school students aged 12–17 in 2017 were **current smokers**, this is significantly lower than the 7% reported in 2011.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 2017, **48%** of current secondary school smokers stated their most **common source for cigarettes was from friends**.<sup>[5]</sup>



Among secondary school students aged 12–17 years, **14%** had **tried e-cigarettes** in 2017.<sup>[5]</sup>



**48%** of secondary school students who had **tried vaping** reported in 2017 that they had **not previously smoked a cigarette**.<sup>[5]</sup>

Among secondary school students aged 12–17, **29%** of past month smokers had used **roll your own** at **least 20 times or more** in 2017, up from 24% in 2014.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Younger people: (12–17 year olds)

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**7%** of secondary school students aged 12–17 in 2017 had **smoked in the last month**, down from 9% in 2011.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 2017, **43%** of students who were current drinkers **obtained alcohol from their parents**.<sup>[5]</sup>





## Younger people (18-24 year olds)

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**41%** of young adults aged 18–24 **exceeded the single occasion risk guideline** in 2019 by consuming on average more than 4 standard drinks in one occasion. [2]



In 2019, **14.6%** of young adults aged 18–24 consumed **11 or more standard drinks** on one occasion. [2]

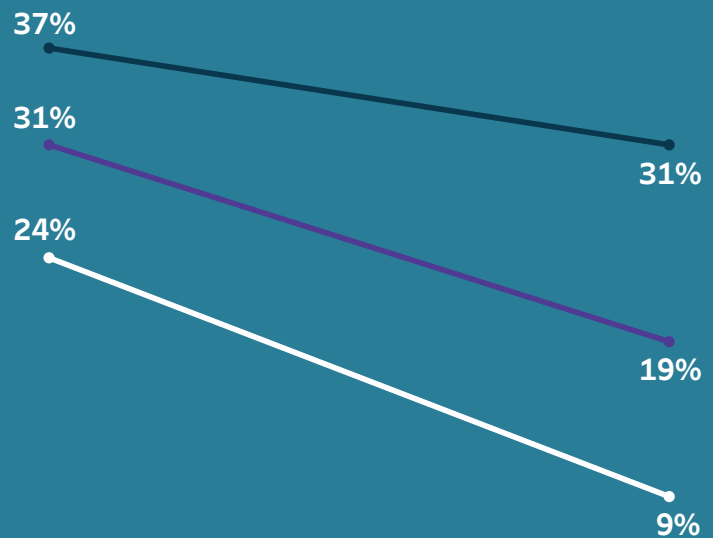


Average number of **cigarettes smoked per day** for 18–24 year olds:

**11** in 2001,  
**8** in 2019. [2]



**Daily smoking**, drinking at levels **exceeding lifetime alcohol risk** and recent use of **illicit drugs** have all **decreased** for young adults aged 18–24. [2]



- Daily Smoking
- Exceeding lifetime risk alcohol
- Recent use of illicit drugs

In 2019, 18–24 year olds were the **most likely age group** to have used **illicit drugs** in the last 12 months (31%, down from 37% in 2001). [2]

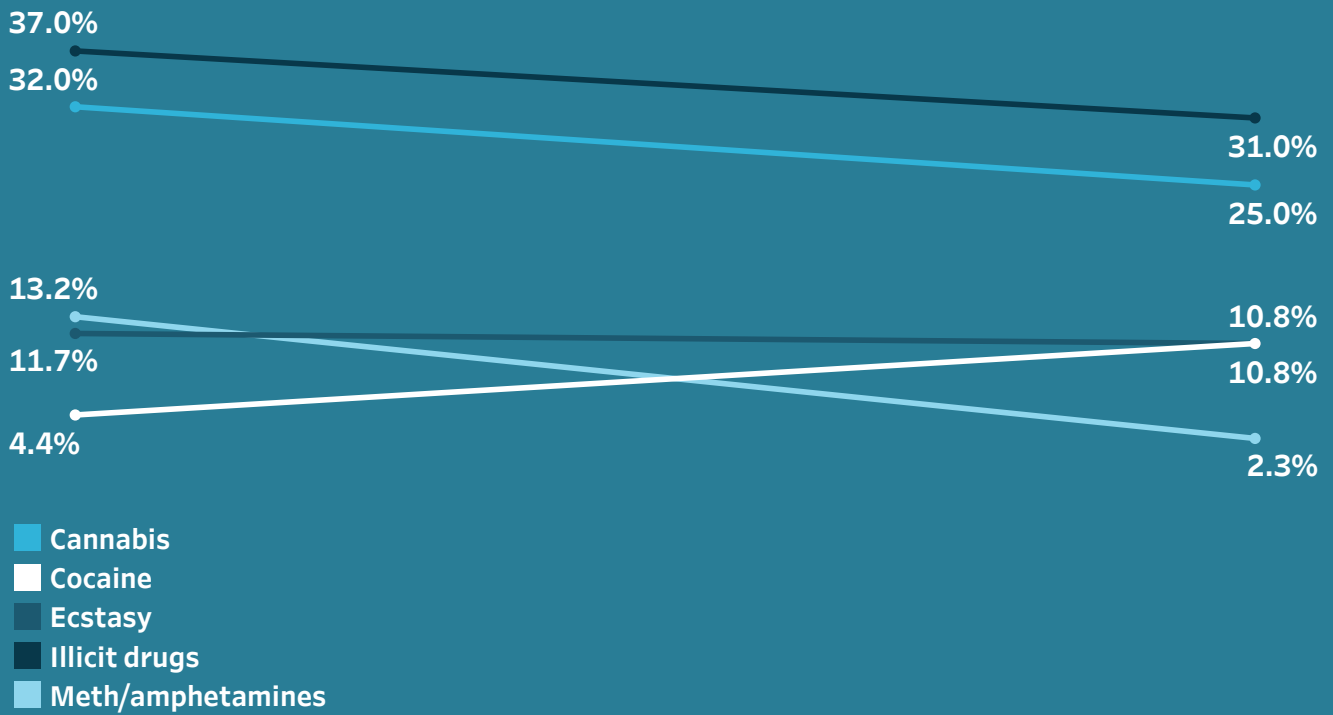




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18-24 year olds **drug use** in the last 12 months [2]





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### References

National Drug Strategy Household Survey findings relate to people aged 14 or older unless specified. An adult is a person aged 18 or older. New Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol were released in December 2020. Data for alcohol risk in this fact sheet are measured against the 2009 guidelines, reflecting the time period in which the data were collected.[2]

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Australian Burden of Disease Study: Impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2018, AIHW, Australian Government. doi:10.25816/5ps1-j259
2. AIHW 2020. National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019. Drug statistics series no. 32. Cat. no. PHE 270. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 31 July 2020.
3. Lam T, Lenton S, Chikritzhs T, Gilmore W, Liang W, Pandzic et al. 2017. Young Australians' Alcohol Reporting System (YAARS): National Report 2016/17. National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia.
4. AIHW 2022. Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia: Early Insights 2020–21. Cat. no. HSE 242. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 30 March 2022.
5. Guerin N & White V (2020). ASSAD 2017 Statistics & Trends: Australian Secondary Students' Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Over-the-counter Drugs, and Illicit Substances. Second Edition. Cancer Council Victoria. Viewed 21 July 2020.

Source: Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia

(<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia>).

