

**Secondhand smoke (SHS) is the poisonous mixture of smoke that comes from a burning tobacco product, such as a cigarette, cigar, or pipe, and smoke exhaled by the smoker. It contains over 7,000 chemicals, and at least 250 have been shown to damage your health. Children and babies are especially vulnerable to its toxic effects. There is no safe level of SHS. It is dangerous to anyone who breathes it in.<sup>1</sup>**

### Estimates from the 2013 Connecticut Youth Tobacco Survey

- 27.4% of middle and high school students who have never smoked live with someone who smokes cigarettes, cigars, or pipes.
- Among the 10.5% of middle and high school students who reported having an episode of asthma or an asthma attack in the past 12 months, 48.9% were living with a smoker or had been exposed to SHS at home or in a car during the seven days before the survey.
- About 88% of students think that smoking tobacco products should never be allowed inside their homes.
- 16.5% of middle and high school students live in a home where smoking is always allowed or allowed at some times or in some places.
- Among the 51.7% of middle and high school students who were exposed to SHS during the past seven days, 93.1% believe that it is very or somewhat harmful to one's health.
- 15.4% of students who are non-tobacco users rode in a vehicle during the past seven days when someone was smoking a tobacco product.
- 17.0% of students report that smoking is always or sometimes allowed in the vehicles they or their family members who live with them own or lease.
- In high school, 30.4% of never smokers, who have a job and worked during the seven days before the survey, were recently exposed to SHS at work.

#### Key Points:

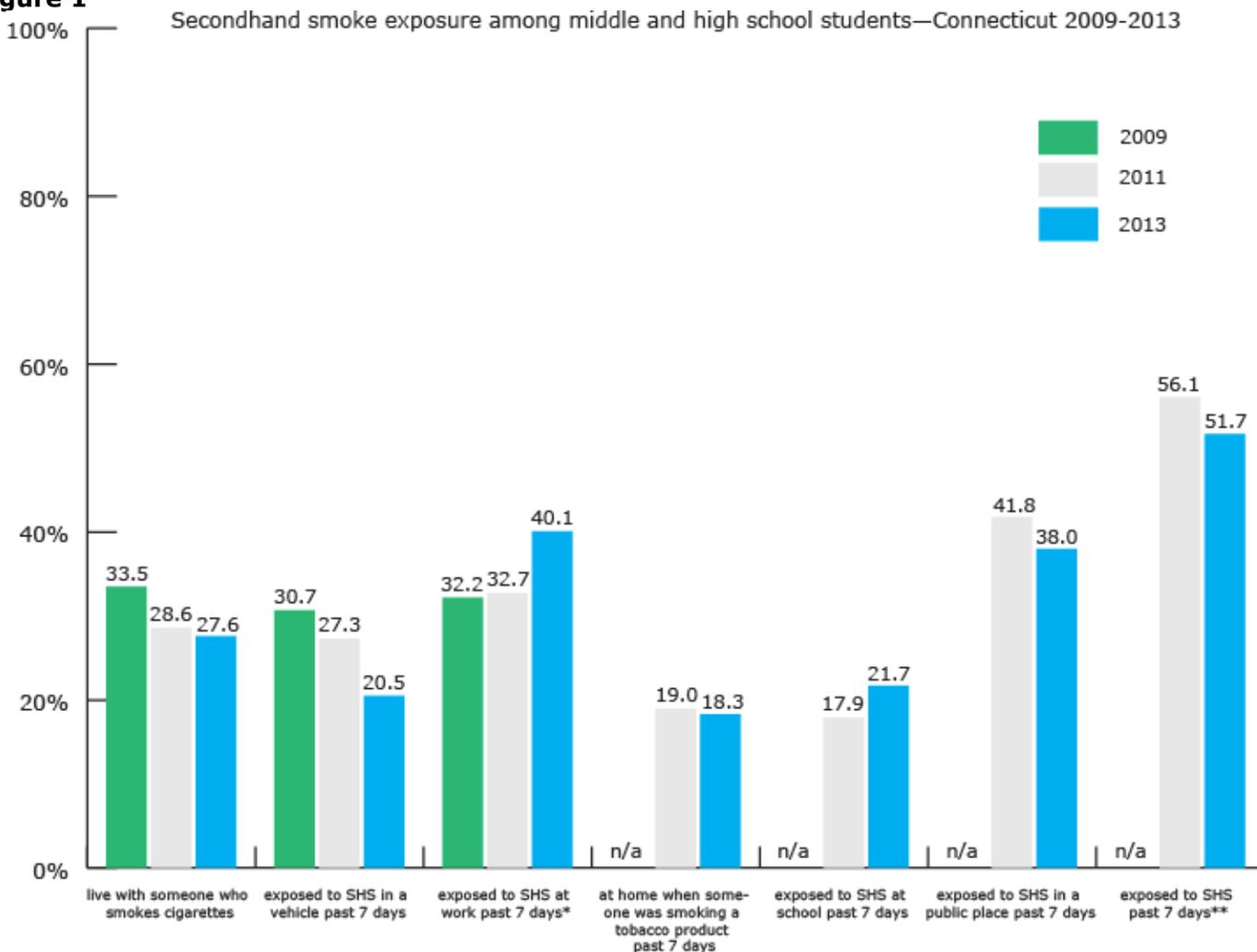
- More than 50% of youth were recently exposed to SHS.
- Almost 30% of students who have never smoked live with a smoker.
- Nearly 50% of students who had an asthma attack in the past year were living with a smoker or were exposed to SHS at home or in a car during the past week.
- About 9 in 10 students believe breathing SHS is harmful to one's health.



- It is estimated that 31.8% of middle and high school students live with someone who smokes cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. And, in the past seven days, 18.3% were at home when someone smoked a tobacco product; 20.5% were in a vehicle with someone who was smoking; 21.7% breathed the smoke from someone who was smoking a tobacco product at their school; and 38.0% were exposed to SHS in an indoor or outdoor public place.

- During 2009-2013, a decrease occurred in the percentage of students who lived with someone who smokes cigarettes (33.5%-27.6%) or had recent exposure to SHS in a vehicle (30.7%-20.5%), while the percentage exposed to SHS at work (32.2%-40.1%) increased. [Figure 1]
- From 2011-2013, the percentage of students who were exposed to SHS at school increased about 21%, while a decrease occurred in the percentage who were at home when someone was smoking (19.0%-18.3%), were exposed to SHS in a public place (41.8%-38.0%), or had any recent SHS exposure (56.1%-51.7%). [Figure 1]

**Figure 1**



Source: CT Youth Tobacco Survey; 2009-2013.

n/a=not available

\*among students who had a job and worked in the past 7 days

\*\*exposed at home, school, work, in a vehicle, or public place

## For Further Information

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## References

<sup>1</sup>Tobacco Control Research Branch of the National Cancer Institute; <http://smokefree.gov>.