



Gracias Por No Fumar: Latinos Exposure Risks to Secondhand Smoke in Texas



La Fe Policy Research and Education Center

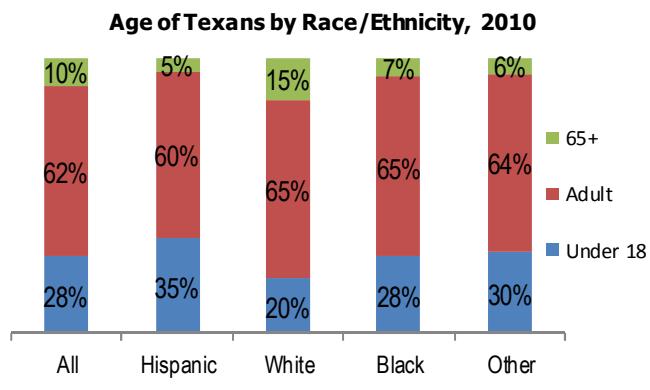
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With a fast growing population, purchasing power and a national declining trend in tobacco use, it's no wonder millions are being spent on advertising to Latinos from the Tobacco industry.^{1} In the most recent 2010 Annual Population Estimates, Texas was among a few states that experienced a growth in population. With a growth of 2 million since 2000, Latinos are almost the largest population in Texas, (Latino:37.6%, White:45.3%, Black:11.8%, Other: 5.3%). It is projected that the Latino growth will continue increasing as much as 85% by 2040 to become the largest racial/ethnic population. Unfortunately, some of the following Latino characteristics are marketing opportunities for the tobacco industry.^{2}

- **Age-** A young and growing population, Texas's median age is 33.6 whereas the Latinos median age is 27. Of all children under 18, 49% are Latino children; along the border it is over 82%.
- **Education-** Educational attainment in Texas still remains the lowest among Latinos from high school to college completion rates.
- **Household Income-** Sixty percent of Latino households (\$37,087) make less than the state's household median income (\$49,646). Texas ranks 27th in median household income compared to other states. According to the Federal Reserve in Dallas, Latino wages in Texas have remained the lowest among all groups for over a decade.
- **Labor-** Latino labor force participation is 67% compared to Whites (65 %) and Blacks (64%). Latinos are represented more in occupations like *Service* (23%) and *Sales and Office* (23%) where income and wages are lower than Whites and Blacks.
- **Poverty-** One-quarter of the Texas population that lives in poverty is Latino compared to the State average of 18%. Latinas who are head of household with children under 18 in Texas have a two in five chance of living in poverty.
- **Uninsured-** Latinos represented 59% of the State's total uninsured population in 2009. Latino adult and children uninsured were 39% and 18% respectively compared to 18% and 11% for Whites and 29% and 14% for Blacks. Employer Sponsored Insurance (ESI) is still the lowest in the country (49%) with Latinos least likely to have ESI (39%) compared to Whites (62%) and Blacks (47%). Latinos with equivalent education levels as Whites are still twice more times less likely to be insured than their White counterparts.
- **Immigration-Citizenship** among Latinos is 69% native, and 7% and 24% identified as naturalized and not-a-citizen respectively. The economic recession did contribute to a decline in immigration but still accounted for 16% of the State's population in 2007.

Latinos are a complex and diverse community whose *bienestar* (well-being) and health is important both to them and the future of Texas. However, their disproportionate experience with health and health insurance disparities, financial insecurity, and low educational attainment results in a large number of Latinos at risk for smoking and related illnesses. Their likelihood of being exposed to secondhand smoke in their workplaces is very high, and the lack of smoke-free regulations and enforcement in their community also make this a worker rights and safety issue. With tobacco use and exposure a contributing cause of most premature deaths, finding policy and programmatic measures to reduce or prevent tobacco use and protect families from the dangers will have positive impacts on health and financial outcomes for Latinos for generations to come.



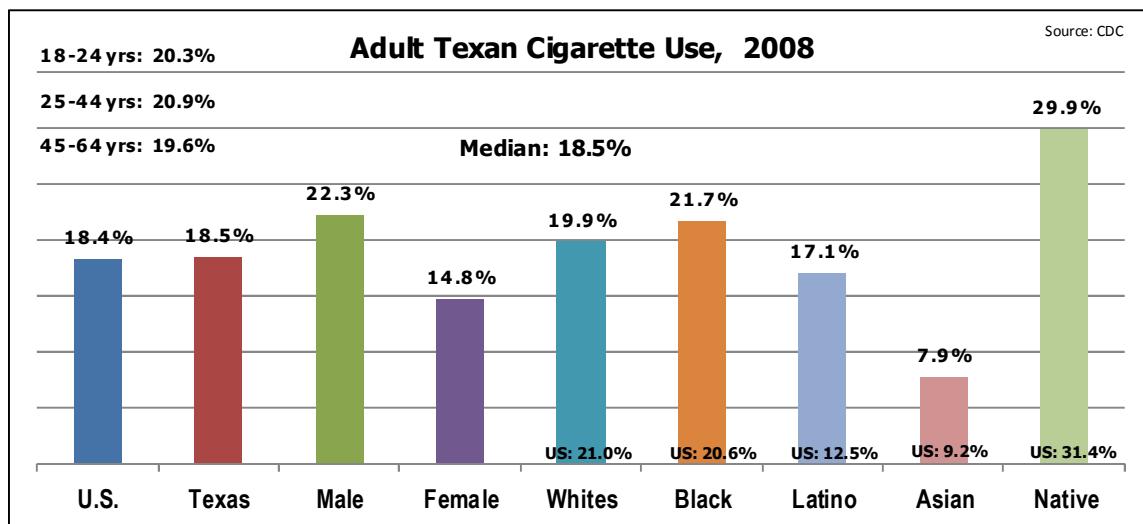
Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

Let's make Texas a Smoke Free State! Gracias por no fumar, en el hogar, en el auto y en el trabajo!

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Smoking Demographics

Latinos have a lower smoking rate than the national average, 12.5% of Latino Adults smoke cigarettes.^{3} Similar to the national trends, Latino males (25%) are still more likely than Latinas (12.1%) to be current smokers. However, Latinos are significantly more likely not to allow smoking inside their homes than Whites and Blacks. Among Latinos, they have a higher smoking rate in Texas than nationally (17.1% versus 12.5%)



In Texas, 29,100 kids (under 18) become new daily smokers each year and an additional 995,000 kids are exposed to secondhand smoke at home.^{4} More recent data indicates that Latinos have the highest rates of exposure (23%) to SHS at work, compared to the 9% for African Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites.^{5} These exposures may indicate stricter workplace smoking regulations for occupations dominated by Whites and African Americans relative to those workplaces.

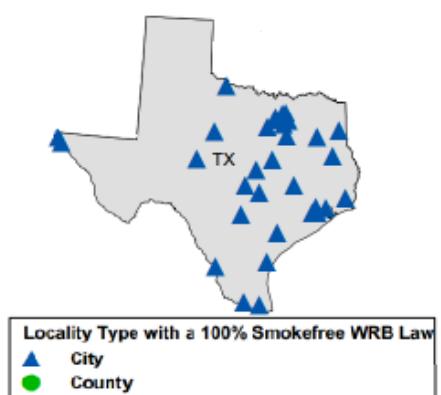
Among Texas students in grades 7-12, 42% reported initiating tobacco use before age of 13 in 2008. In that same year, Latino youth reported a higher lifetime rate (tried it and have chance of using in their lifetime) of tobacco use.^{6} **Students from along the Texas- Mexico border reported having higher lifetime and past-month use of tobacco.**

In 2009, rates of cigarette smoking among high school students were highest among Non-Hispanic Whites (23.9%) and Hispanics (22.5%), compared to African-Americans (11.9%). In 2010, smoking rates for middle school students in grades 7-8, were highest for Hispanics (6.7%) and lowest for Whites (4.1 percent) and African-Americans (4.7 percent). The risks that Latino children will become smokers are high given the combination of them comprising nearly 50% of all public school students, disproportionately live in low income households, and heavily targeted marketing from the tobacco industry. Finally, the true depth of the smoking problem in young Latinos is not truly understood as current data does not reflect all teens such as the large number of school drop-outs.

Texas Smoke-Free Environments

At this time, Texas does not have a statewide smoke-free law that provides protection against exposure to secondhand smoke in public places. Lack of smoke-free policy at the state level does not reflect recent polling in which 70% of Texans favor making all the state's workplaces, restaurants and bars smoke-free. In 2010: ^{7}

- 45% of Texas municipal population are covered by smoke-free
- 64% of Texans are covered by smoke-free municipal worksite
- 59% of Texans are covered by smoke-free restaurants
- 55% of Texans are covered by smoke-free bars in restaurants
- 46% of Texans are covered by smoke-free bars



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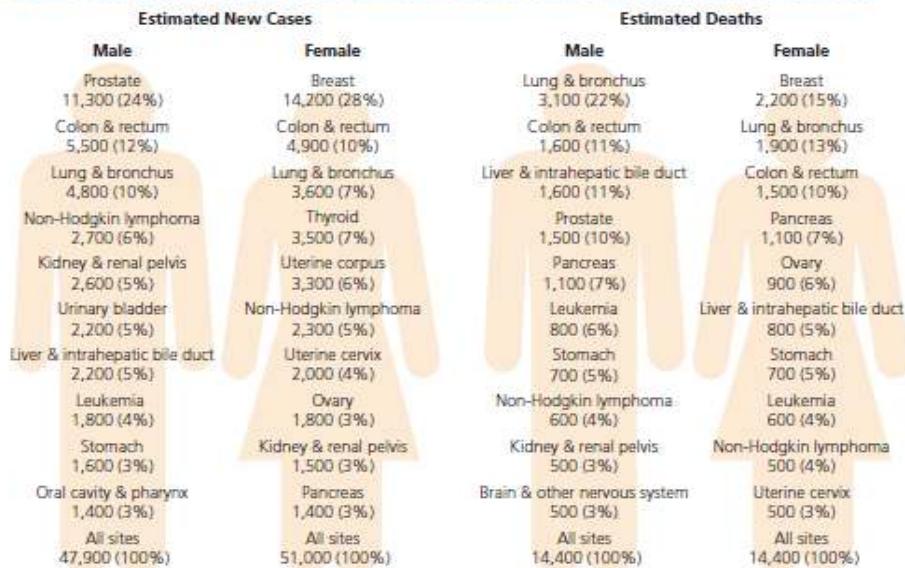
An estimated 24,000 adults die from smoking-attributable illness annually in Texas. That is more than those from AIDS, heroin, cocaine, alcohol, car accidents, fire, and murder - **combined**. For every one person who dies from a tobacco-related cause, there are 20 more people who are suffering with at least one serious illness from smoking.^{8} **What does this mean for Latinos given their health and socio-economic circumstances?**

Top 5 Leading Causes of Death for Texas Latinos: 2008				
RANK	CAUSE	#	RATE	%
	All causes	29,600	324.7	100.0
1	Malignant neoplasms (cancerous tumors)	5,995	65.8	20.3
2	Heart Diseases	5,977	65.6	20.2
3	Accidents	2,050	22.5	6.9
4	Cerebrovascular diseases (hypertension, high blood pressure)	1,760	19.3	5.9
5	Diabetes mellitus	1,595	17.5	5.4

Source: Texas DSHS- Table 16 (Rates per 100,000 Estimated Population)

The truth about smoking for Latinos is that it's a health justice issue. Given that Latinos have less access to health insurance and primary care, the chances of having problems from smoking or secondhand smoke exposure at an early stage puts them at greater risk of death from lung disease, heart disease and other chronic and fatal health effects. The leading cause of death in 2006 for Texas Latinos was Cancer (20.3%) and heart disease (20.2%). Nationally, lung cancers are the leading cause of cancer deaths among Latinos. Lung cancer rates are highest among Cuban-American followed by Puerto Rican and then Mexican-American.

Figure 3. Leading Sites of New Cancer Cases and Deaths among Hispanics, 2009 Estimates*



* Excludes basal and squamous cell skin cancers and in situ carcinoma except urinary bladder.

©2009, American Cancer Society, Surveillance Research

The third leading cause of preventable death in U.S. is attributed to secondhand smoke. The impact of secondhand smoke is associated with an increased risk for lung cancer and coronary heart disease in non-smoking adults.^{9}

“Secondhand smoke kills and kills across the board. It is a threat to all of us, though especially to those of us who are obligated to breathe it in at work.” - National Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco Prevention

Texas spends:
\$5.83 billion in costs to smoking
\$1.5 billion in costs to smoking
from Texas Medicaid program

Texas Cigarette Tax (2010) :
\$1.41 tax per pack

Secondhand smoke and access to clean air is a worker rights and safety issue. “Every day in this country, more than 14 workers lose their lives in preventable workplace incidents-close to 100 every week. The Latino community is also touched, losing 14 workers every week” reports U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. The susceptibility of Latino workers to a hazardous and unsafe working environment is more burdensome compared to others in Texas. Workplace fatalities in Texas are the highest nationally and Latino fatalities in construction from 1992-2005 increase by 125%. **Smokers have higher preventable workplace accidents, and have slower health recovery.**

Despite lower smoking rates, disproportionately Latinos are less likely to be covered by workplace smoking policies and exposed to secondhand smoke. Workers in the food serve industries (36.6%) are least likely to be protected by smoke-free workplace ordinances.^{10} Latinos comprise 10.5% of workers in the food service (includes arts, entertainment, accommodation) industry. Latinos are twice more likely to work in the service occupations than Whites.^{11}

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In summary, Latinos in Texas have high risk vulnerabilities to smoke related illness and premature deaths. The risks result from a combination of demographics, economic conditions, work environments, health care access and education disparities, and marketing strategies of the tobacco industry. While targeted smoking prevention programs are important and needed in our community, building organized involvement, leadership, and advocacy capacity to address smoke-free and workplace protection policies at the local and state level is critical. Organizing for tobacco control policies in the Latino community in Texas must increase. Policies that contribute to smoking behaviors and secondhand smoke is a detriment to improving our bienestar and quality of life and this must change.

Endnotes:

- (1) Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, U.S. Surgeon General, 2012
- (2) U.S Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2008-2010 and American Community Survey 2007-2009
- (3) Hispanics and Tobacco, Center for Disease Control, 2008
- (4) The Toll of Tobacco in Texas, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, www.tobaccofreetexas.org
- (5) Center for Health Statistics. *Texas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data*. Austin, TX: Texas Department of State Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, 2000-2009.
- (6) Texas Department of State Health Service, Adolescent Substance Use In Texas, 2008
- (7) Office of Smoking and Health (OSH), 3rd quarter (July-Sept) of 2008
- (8) FACT: Tobacco Use is a Tremendous Burden to All Texans, Texas Department of State Health Services, www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=the_defacto_segregation_of_health_care
- (9) Ibid
- (10) Latino/Hispanic Community and Secondhand Smoke, ANR, June 2003
- (11) American Community Survey, 2008-2010, www.census.gov/acs