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PRESS RELEASE

Filipino youth are turning away from vices, UPPI study shows

Of every ten young adult Filipinos, only three are currently drinking, one is smoking, and close to none is using illegal drugs. These are among the key findings of the 2021 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS5), revealing that substance use among young people has generally declined in 2021.

For instance, while about a fifth of the youth were smoking between 1994 and 2013, the share declined to 12% in 2021 (Figure 1). Comparing their current smoking behavior with that before the pandemic, 41% of smokers said they are smoking fewer sticks now, averaging five a day, while three in four smokers also indicated that they want to stop smoking.

A similar trend was observed in drinking. From 1994 to 2013, close to four in 10 youth were drinking, but the percentage declined to 29% in 2021 (Figure 2). Some 45% of drinkers said they were drinking less during the pandemic, while 65% said they want to stop drinking.

Meanwhile, the share of youth drug users was almost nil (0.1%) in 2021, significantly down from the 2.4% recorded in 2002.

Since 1994, the YAFS has been monitoring young Filipinos' use of substances, including alcohol, nicotine, and illicit drugs, given their harmful health and social impacts. The government and civil society groups have taken bold action against excessive substance use, most prominently through the Sin Tax Law of 2012, which aims, in part, to curb the consumption of tobacco and alcohol. Reducing tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol is also among the global targets under the Sustainable Development Goal 3, which concerns the promotion of health and wellbeing for all.

In all, the latest data point to a positive change in young people's non-sexual risk behaviors. Some emerging health risks, however, are worth examining. These include vaping, which has been tried by 16% of youth. The pandemic has also confined young people to more sedentary activities, results of the YAFS5 further show.

The national dissemination of the full key findings of the YAFS5 will be on Friday, 14 October 2022, 9AM at Park Inn by Radisson Hotel in Quezon City. We invite members of the press and interested organizations to be there.





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For more info on the study,
scan QR Code

Figure 1. Percentage of youth who are currently smoking cigarettes, by sex, Philippines: 1994-2021

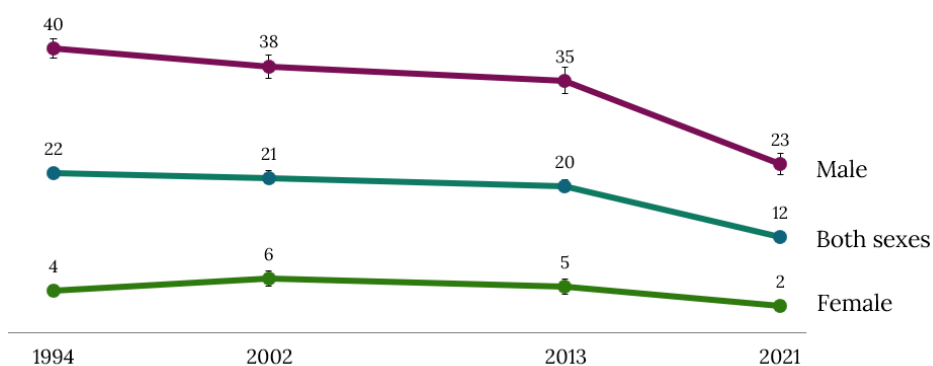


Figure 2. Percent of youth who are currently drinking alcoholic beverages, by sex, Philippines: 1994-2021

