

# Adolescents’ Exposure to Tobacco Marketing in Indonesia: Data Brief

## Background

Indonesia faces a tobacco epidemic among youth where 19% of young people age 13-15 years are smokers and the smoking prevalence among young people age 10-18 years old rose significantly from 7% to 9% from 2013 to 2018.<sup>1,2</sup> The tobacco industry spends billions of dollars on marketing, which contributes to the rapid rise in smoking among youth.<sup>3</sup> In recent years with the emergence of the Internet, tobacco marketing online is rampant and targeted at young people, and represents a risk factor for adolescent tobacco use.<sup>4</sup> During the COVID-19 pandemic, youth are spending more time on Internet, including using social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook) and online gaming platforms.<sup>5</sup> However, adolescents’ exposure to tobacco marketing on the Internet is not fully understood or documented. This brief summarizes a study that fills the gap. Vital Strategies with Indonesian Guidance and Counselling Teachers’ Association (ABKIN) and other partners in Indonesia conducted a household survey of 2,281 adolescents between age 13-15 years to determine the extent of exposure to tobacco marketing. This data brief presents key findings from the study. Additional findings are reported in the accompanying Appendix.

## Key Findings

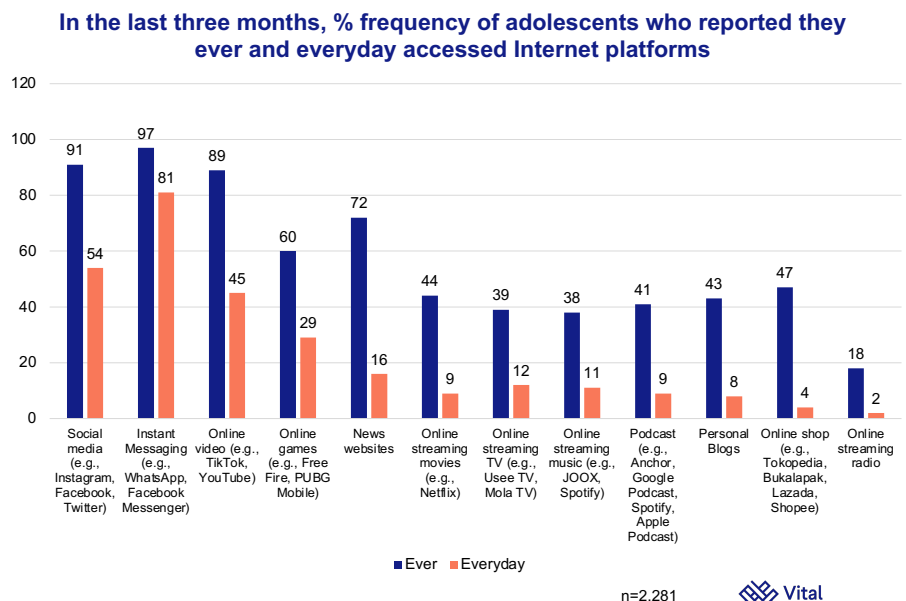
### 1. Indonesian Adolescents’ Tobacco and Internet Usage

*Most Indonesian adolescents use online media, and, among those who use the Internet every day, the most accessed platforms are instant messaging, social media, and online video.*

Among adolescents who said they use the Internet every day, the most accessed platforms include: instant messaging (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger) (97%), social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) (91%), and online video (e.g., TikTok, YouTube) (89%). The majority of adolescents said they use a personal cell phone to access online media (68%).

**Figure 1.**

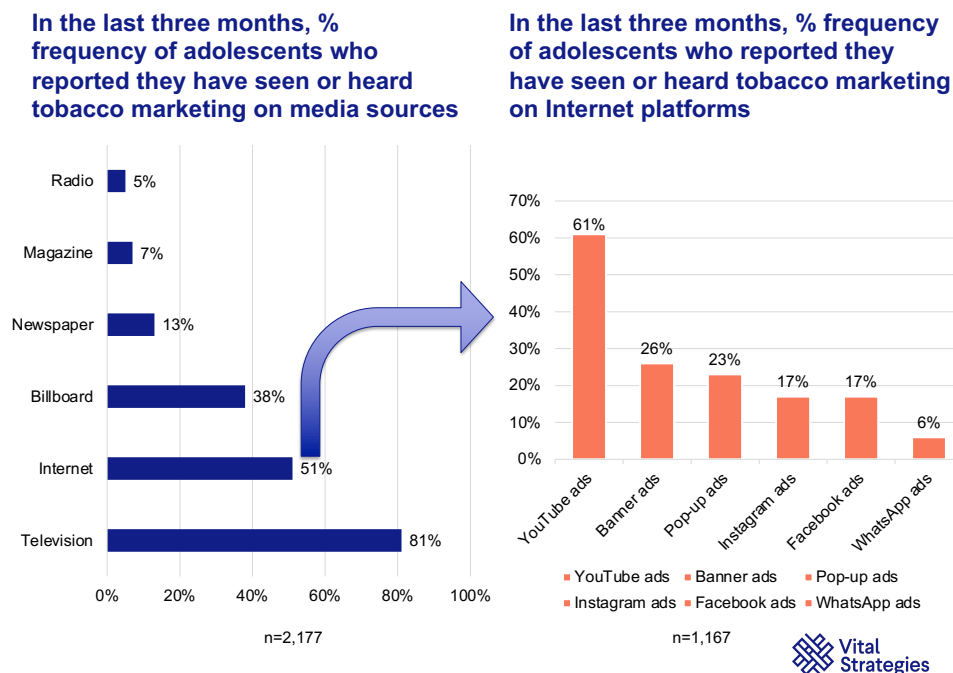
Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 1.



**Television, Internet, and Billboard are the three leading media sources where Indonesian adolescents see or hear tobacco marketing, and YouTube is the top Internet platform.**

95% of adolescents reported they have seen or heard tobacco marketing. 81% of these adolescents said they have seen or heard tobacco marketing on television, followed by 51% on the Internet and 38% on a billboard (Figure 2). Most adolescents said they saw tobacco marketing on the Internet via YouTube (61%), followed by banners (26%), pop-ups (23%), Instagram (17%), Facebook (17%), and WhatsApp (6%).

**Figure 2.**



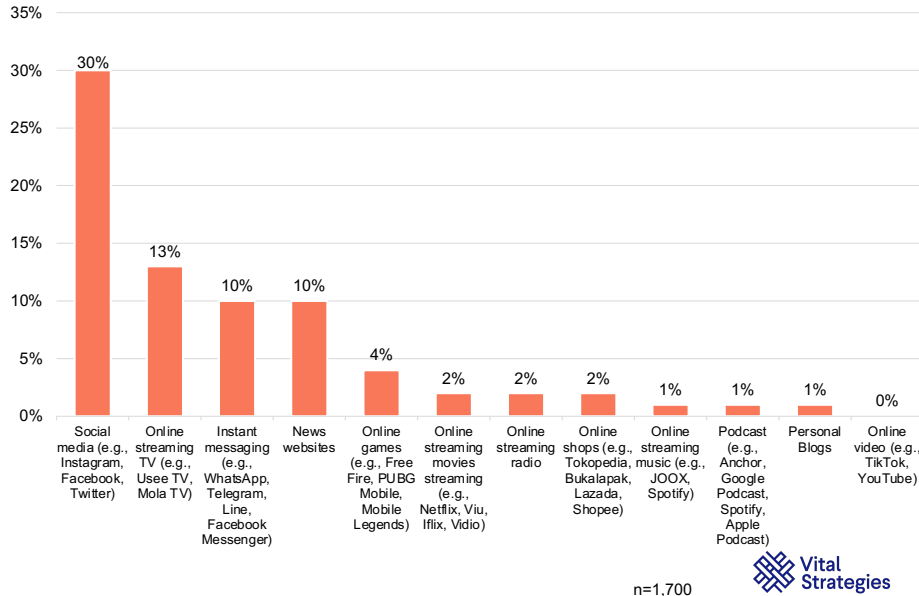
Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey questions for Figure 2.

**About four in ten Indonesian adolescents have ever seen or heard online tobacco marketing by influencers/celebrities, and tobacco marketing by influencers and celebrities is mostly done via social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.**

41% of adolescents reported they have seen or heard online tobacco marketing by influencers or celebrities, and social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) was the leading Internet platform (30%) (Figure 3). In the past three months, most adolescents reported seeing or hearing online tobacco marketing in the last three months on Facebook (25%), followed by YouTube (21%), Instagram (20%), and TikTok (14%). When asked about whether online tobacco marketing affects their desire to smoke, 4% and 3% of adolescents who are nonsmokers felt tobacco ads had an effect or possibly had an effect on their desire to try smoking, respectively.

**Figure 3.**

**In the last three months, % frequency of adolescents who reported they have ever seen or heard tobacco marketing on the Internet by influencers or celebrities on Internet platforms**



Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 3.

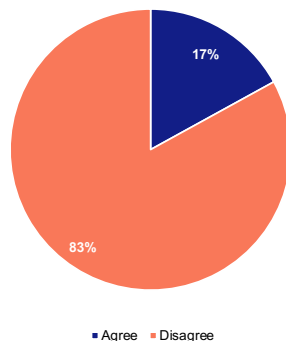
## 2. Extent of Exposure to Tobacco Marketing Among Indonesian Adolescents

*Most Indonesian adolescents do not believe that tobacco advertising encourages smoking initiation or misleads people about smoking being addictive.*

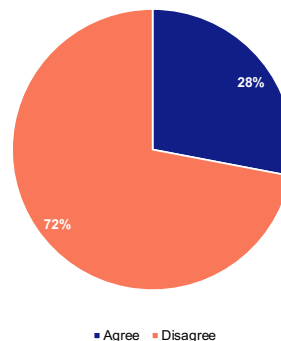
83% of adolescents reported they do not believe tobacco advertising encourages people to start smoking. Similarly, 72% of adolescents said they do not think tobacco advertising misleads people when they say tobacco is not addictive (Figure 4).

**Figure 4.**

**Frequency % of adolescents who said they agree and disagree that tobacco advertising encourages smoking initiation**



**Frequency % of adolescents who said they agree and disagree that tobacco advertising misleads people about smoking being addictive**



n=2,281

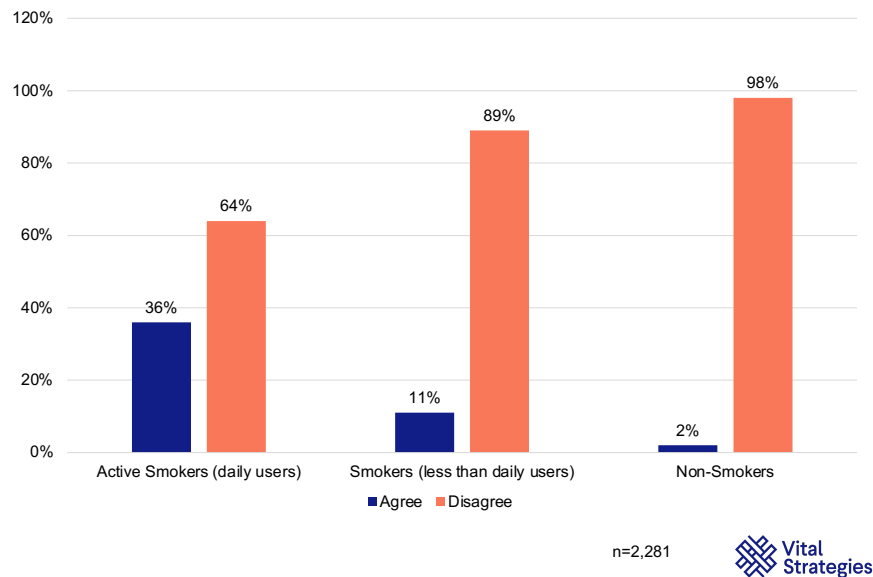
Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey questions for Figure 4.

*While few Indonesian adolescents agree that smoking helps them feel more accepted in groups or friends, smokers are most likely to agree with this statement, compared with nonsmokers.*

Few adolescents reported they agree that smoking: helps them to feel more comfortable and confident in groups or friends (3%), helps them to feel accepted in groups or friends (3%), and makes a smoker look cool (3%). However, adolescents who were smokers were more likely to agree with these statements. For instance, smokers were more likely to report that they agree that smoking helps them to feel more comfortable and confident in groups or friends—active smokers (every day) more so than smokers (not every day) (36% versus 11%), compared with nonsmokers (2%) (Figure 5).

**Figure 5.**

**Frequency % of adolescents who reported they agree and disagree that smoking helps them feel more accepted in groups or friends, by smoking status**



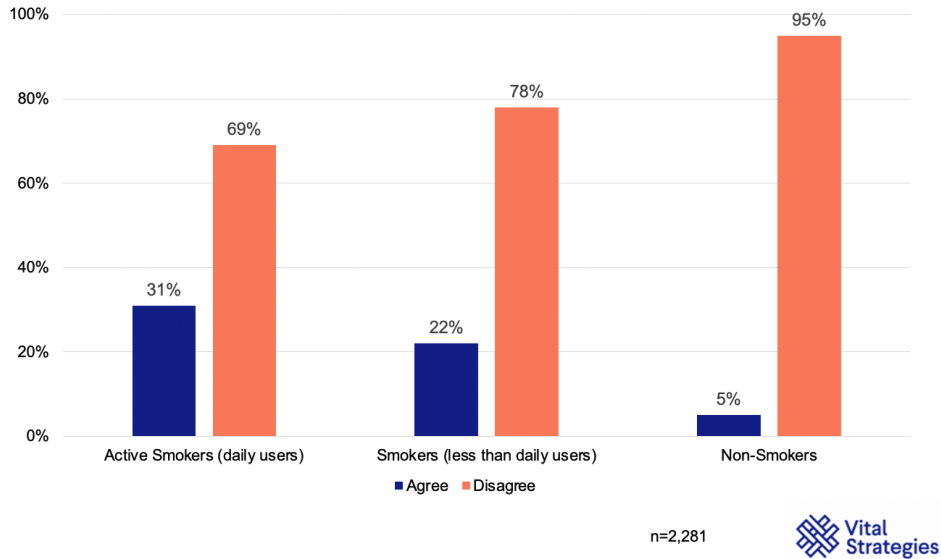
Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 5.

*Indonesian adolescents who are smokers are more likely to pay attention to tobacco ads on the Internet since it expresses the taste of youth, compared with smokers.*

While overall 6% of adolescents said they agree that they pay attention to cigarette advertisements on the Internet because they express young tastes, adolescents who were smokers were more likely to agree—active smokers (every day) more so than smokers (not every day) (31% versus 22%), compared with nonsmokers (5%) (Figure 6).

**Figure 6.**

**Frequency % of adolescents who reported they agree and disagree that they pay attention to tobacco ads on the internet since it expresses the taste of youth, by smoking status**



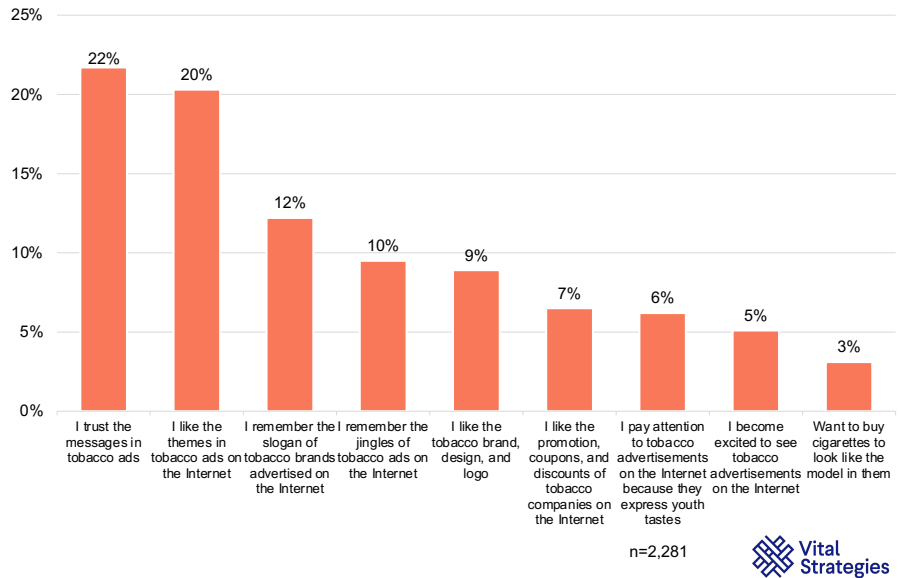
Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 6.

### 3. Reactions to Tobacco Marketing

*Indonesian adolescents say they trust messages in tobacco ads and like the themes in tobacco ads on the Internet.*

22% of adolescents agreed that they trust the messages in tobacco advertisements, while 20% agreed they like the adventure, sports, stories, comedy and other themes in tobacco advertisements on the Internet and 12% agreed they remember the slogan of tobacco brands advertised on the Internet (Figure 7).

**Frequency % of adolescents who reported they agree with phrases about smoking and tobacco smoke**



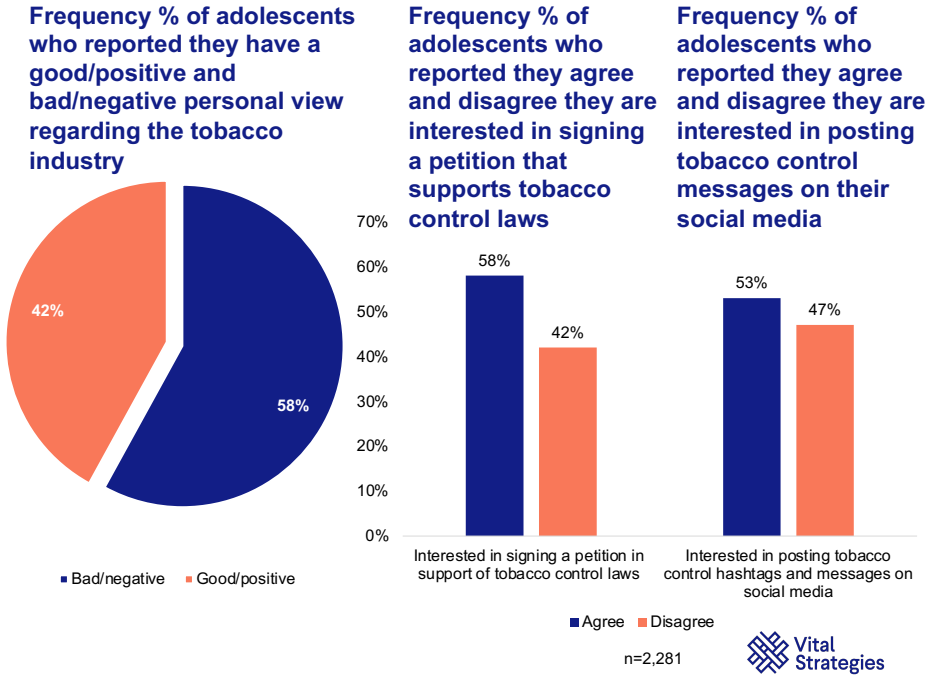
**Figure 7.**

Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 7.

#### 4. Support for Tobacco Control

*Nearly six in ten Indonesian adolescents have a bad or negative personal view of tobacco companies, and over half of Indonesian adolescents are interested in signing a petition in support of tobacco control laws and posting tobacco control hashtags and messages on social media.*

The majority of adolescents (58%) reported they have a bad or negative personal view of tobacco companies, while 42% said they have a good or positive personal view. 58% of adolescents reported they have interest in signing a petition in support of tobacco control laws. Over half of adolescents (53%) agreed they have an interest in posting tobacco control hashtags and other messages on social media (Figure 8).

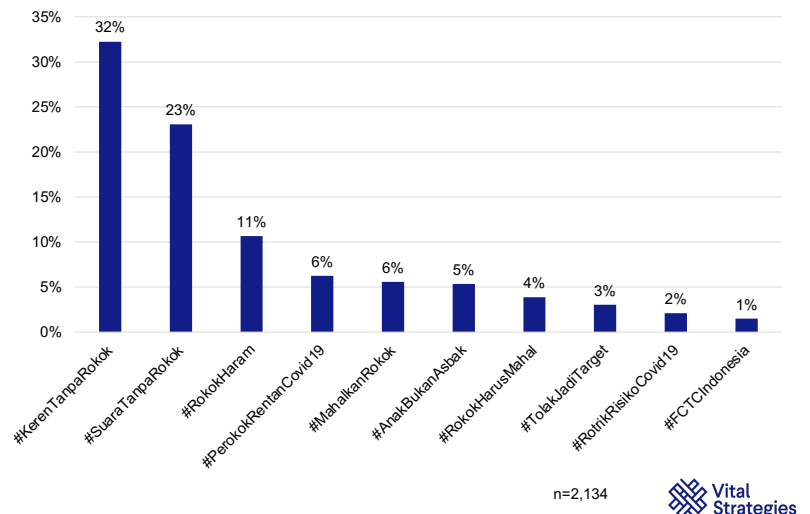


**Figure 8.** Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey questions for Figure 8.

*Indonesian adolescents are most likely to have seen or heard the hashtag #KerenTanpaRokok, followed by #SuaraTanpaRokok.*

Most adolescents reported they have rarely seen or heard about anti-smoking messages when accessing the Internet (38.4%), followed by occasionally (35.4%), often (11.6%), and always (2.1%). Among those who reported having seen or heard about anti-smoking messages when accessing the internet (n=1,997), adolescents most often said they have seen or heard the hashtag #KerenTanpaRokok (32%), followed by #SuaraTanpaRokok (23%) and #RokokHaram (11%) (Figure 9). The second most seen or heard hashtag #SuaraTanpaRokok (#VoicesWithoutCigarettes) comes from the campaign that Vital Strategies and the Ministry of Health collaborated on for the design and implementation of in Indonesia in 2015.

**In the last three months, frequency % of adolescents who reported they have ever read or heard of tobacco control hashtags**



**Figure 9.** Note: see Appendix Table A2 for survey question for Figure 9.

## Conclusions

This data brief describes a comprehensive study to understand adolescents' exposure to tobacco marketing on the Internet in Indonesia, where tobacco control is a major public health challenge for youth.

Consistent with the emergence of the Internet, our study shows most adolescents used online media, and, among those who used the Internet every day, they reported the most accessed platforms are instant messaging, social media, and online video. When asked about their exposure to tobacco marketing on the Internet, the majority of adolescents said they have seen or heard it in the past three months on the Internet via Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok.

The study finds that youth age 13-15 years in Indonesia are not aware of the role of the tobacco industry in promoting initiation of smoking and creating an illusion that tobacco is an ordinary product, rather than an addictive and harmful product.

While most Indonesian adolescents did not report sharing attitudes and beliefs that smoking helps them to feel more accepted among friends and peers, smokers were more likely to report that they agree that smoking helps them to feel more comfortable and confident in groups of friends—active smokers (every day) more so than smokers (not every day) (36% versus 11%), compared with nonsmokers (2%). Similarly, every day smokers most often reported they pay attention to cigarette ads on the Internet because they express youth tastes.

Finally, our study identified Indonesian youth's perceptions of the tobacco industry and levels of support for tobacco control laws. Over half of adolescents said they do not support tobacco companies, and, similarly, over half of adolescents said they would be interested in signing a petition in support of tobacco control laws. These findings suggest that an opportunity to engage with youth and mobilize communities towards policy change in Indonesia.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Global Youth Tobacco Survey, 2019. Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) 2019, Indonesia. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health, Republic of Indonesia. Hasil Utama Riskesdas 2018. Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesehatan; 2018

<sup>3</sup> Singh T, Arrazola RA, Corey CG, Husten CG, Neff LJ, Homa DM, King BA. Tobacco Use Among Middle and High School Students--United States, 2011-2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2016 Apr 15;65(14):361-7.

<sup>4</sup> Soneji S, Yang J, Knutzen K, et al. Online Tobacco Marketing and Subsequent Tobacco Use. *Pediatrics.* Feb 2018, 141(2): e20172927.

<sup>5</sup> Fernandes B, Biswas UN, Tan-Mansukhani R, Vallejo A, Essau CA. COVID-19 lockdown on internet use and escapism in adolescents. *Revista de Psicología Clínica con Niños y Adolescentes.* Sep 2020;7(3):59-65.

## Appendix

Smoking prevalence and initiation, and exposure to second hand smoke:

- 94% of adolescents said they are currently not smokers, while 4% and 2% reported they are currently an occasional and active every day smoker, respectively.
- The majority of adolescents reported they have never tried smoking (86%), while 5% initiated smoking at 10-12 years, 3% at 13 years, 2% at 8-9 years, and 2% less than 7 years (Table A1).

**Table A1. Age when first time trying tobacco product**

Age	Frequency (n=2,175)	Percentage
I never try smoking	1,955	86%
10-12 years	107	5%
13 years	59	3%
8-9 years	50	2%
Less than 7 years	35	2%
14 years	0	0%
15 years	0	0%

- Adolescents said they live with the following family members who smoke: father (52%), uncle (18%), brother (9%), grandfather (9%), cousin (6%), mother (2%), grandmother (2%), sister (1%), and aunt (1%).
- Over two-thirds of adolescents reported they have a close friend who is a smoker (34%).
- Among smokers, about 7% said they do not intend to quit smoking; notably, active smokers reported higher levels of intentions to quit (13%) compared with occasional smokers (10%).

For information on the survey questions for Figures 1 – 9, see Table A2:

**Table A2. Survey questions for Figures 1 - 9.**

Figure 1							
<i>Ask all respondents</i>							
2A. In the last three months, how often do you do the following?	Never	Less than once a week	Once a week	2-3 times a week	4-6 times a week	Every day	Don't remember
2A_1. Social media, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_2. Instant Messaging, i.e., WhatsApp, Telegram, Line, Facebook messenger, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_3. Online video, i.e., Tiktok, Youtube, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_4. Online streaming music, i.e., JOOX, Spotify, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_5. Online streaming movies, i.e., Netflix, Viu, Iflix, Vimeo, Video, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_6. Online games, i.e., Free Fire, PUBG Mobile, Mobile Legends, Lords Mobile: Battle of the Empires, Clash of King, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_7. Online streaming TV, i.e., Usee TV, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_8. Online streaming radio	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_9. Podcast, i.e., Anchor, Google Podcast, Spotify, Apple Podcast, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_10. News websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_11. Personal Blogs	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
2A_12. Online shops, i.e., Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Lazada, Shopee, etc	1	2	3	4	5	6	99



Figure 2.						
<p><u>Ask all respondents who said yes in 5A (In the last 3 months, have you ever seen or heard cigarette advertisement and promotions?)</u> <b>5A. In which media did you see or hear it?</b></p> <p>[MULTIPLE RESPONSE POSSIBLE]</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TV</li> <li>2. Radio</li> <li>3. Internet</li> <li>4. Billboard</li> <li>5. Newspapers</li> <li>6. Magazines</li> <li>88. Others (please specify)</li> </ol>				
Figure 3.						
<p><u>Ask all respondents who said YES in 5D (In the last 3 months, have you ever experienced/ seen/heard of cigarette promotions on the internet by influencers?)</u> <b>5B. If so, on what platform/website? (You can select more than one)</b></p> <p>[MULTIPLE RESPONSE POSSIBLE]</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social media, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter</li> <li>2. Instant Messaging, i.e., WhatsApp, Telegram, Line, Facebook Messenger</li> <li>3. Online video, i.e., TikTok, YouTube</li> <li>4. Online streaming music, i.e., JOOX, Spotify</li> <li>5. Online streaming movies, i.e., Netflix, Viu, Iflix, Vimeo, Vidio</li> <li>6. Online games, i.e., Free Fire, PUBG Mobile, Mobile Legends, Lords Mobile: Battle of the Empires, Clash of King</li> <li>7. Online streaming TV, i.e., Usee TV</li> <li>8. Online streaming radio</li> <li>9. Podcast, i.e., Anchor, Google Podcast, Spotify, Apple Podcast</li> <li>10. News websites</li> <li>11. Personal blogs</li> <li>12. Online shops, i.e., Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Lazada, Shopee</li> <li>88. Others (please specify)_____</li> </ol>				
Figure 4.						
<p><u>Ask all RESPONDENTS</u> <b>6B. Now I am going to read to you some phrases about smoking and tobacco smoke. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one of them.</b></p>		Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>6B_4. Tobacco advertising encourages young people to start smoking.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
<b>6B_5. Tobacco advertising misleads young people when it says tobacco is not addictive.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
Figure 5.						
<p><u>Ask all RESPONDENTS</u> <b>Now I am going to read to you some phrases about smoking and tobacco smoke. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one of them.</b></p>		Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>6B_2. Smoking helps one feel more accepted in groups or friends.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
Figure 6.						
<p><u>Ask all RESPONDENTS</u> <b>Now I am going to read to you some phrases about smoking and tobacco smoke. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one of them.</b></p>		Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>6B_18. I pay attention to tobacco advertisements on the internet because they express youth tastes.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
Figure 7.						
<p><u>Ask all RESPONDENTS</u> <b>Now I am going to read to you some phrases about smoking and tobacco smoke. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one of them.</b></p>		Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>6B_6. I trust the messages in tobacco advertisements.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
<b>6B_7. I like free promotion, coupons, and discounts of tobacco companies on the internet.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
<b>6B_8. I become excited to see tobacco advertisements on the internet.</b>		1	2	3	4	5
<b>6B_9. I like the tobacco brand, design, and logo.</b>		1	2	3	4	5

6B_10. I like the adventure, sports, stories, comedy and other themes in tobacco advertisements on the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
6B_11. I remember the jingles (songs) of tobacco advertisements on the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
6B_12. I remember the slogan of tobacco brands advertised on the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
6B_18. I pay attention to tobacco advertisements on the internet because they express youth tastes.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Ask all SMOKERS</i> 6B_16. I want to buy tobacco to look like the male guy in the tobacco advertisements.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Figure 8.</b>					
<i>Ask all RESPONDENTS</i> What is your personal view regarding the tobacco company?	1. Good/Positive 2. Bad/Negative 3. I don't know				
<i>Ask respondents who are interested in Q7C</i> (To what extent are you interested in participating in tobacco control activities? That is, activities that are intended to stop people from using tobacco and/or prevent people from taking up tobacco.)  <b>7D. How <u>interested</u> are you participating in the following tobacco control activities in the future?</b>	Not at all interested	Somewhat interested	Very interested	Extremely interested	
7D_1. Sign a petition that supports tobacco control laws (e.g., a law banning smoking in public places).	1	2	3	4	
7D_3. Post calls to quit / not smoke or share anti-smoking / tobacco control hashtags on your social media.	1	2	3	4	
<b>Figure 9.</b>					
<i>Ask all RESPONDENTS</i> 8B. In the last 3 months, which of the following tobacco control hashtags have you ever read or heard of? (You can select more than one.)?  [MULTIPLE RESPONSE POSSIBLE]	1. #suaratanparokok 2. #rokokharam 3. #kerentanparokok 4. #tolakjaditarget 5. #rokokharusmahal 6. #anakbukanasbak 7. #FCTCIndonesia 8. #mahalkanrokok 9. #perokokrentancovid19 10. #rotrikrisikocovid19				