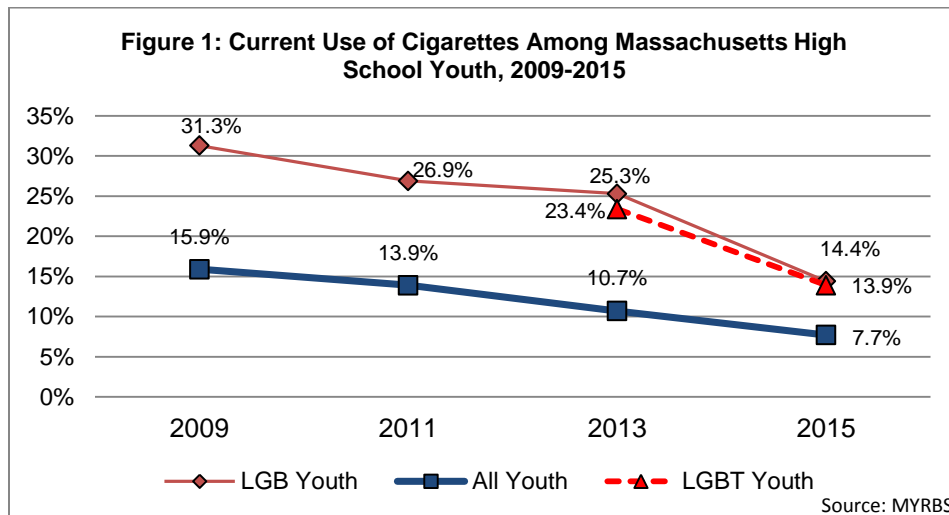


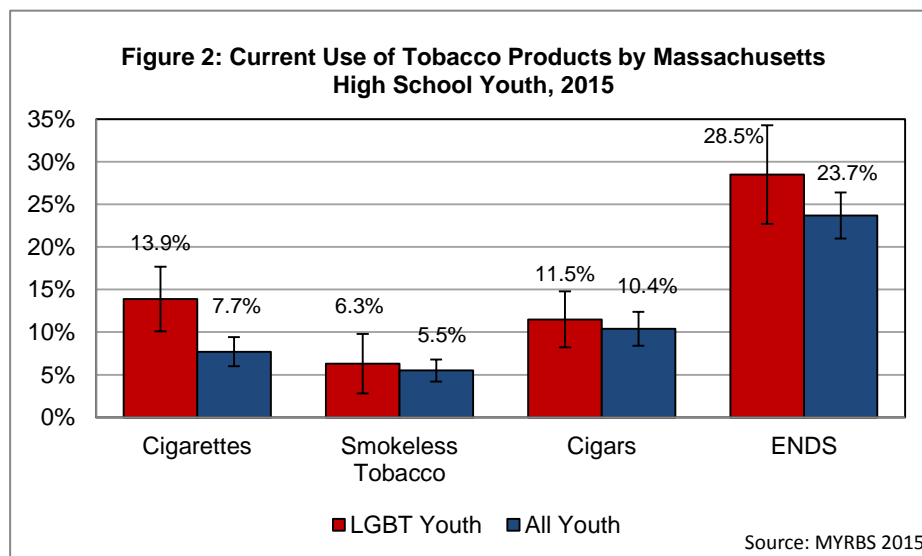


In Massachusetts, the cigarette use rate among high school youth has declined by approximately 50% since 2009 (Figure 1). Despite the drastic decline in the overall youth smoking rate, in 2015 the cigarette use rate for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) youth was 13.9% compared to 7.7% for all youth; the LGBT youth smoking rate was 2.2 times the rate for non-LGBT youth (95% CI: 1.7-2.9, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, LGBT youth are 2.9 times as likely to report smoking their first cigarette before the age of 13 than non-LGBT youth (95%CI: 2.0-4.1, $p < 0.001$). Individuals who begin to smoke at an early age are more likely to develop high levels of nicotine addiction than those who start at a later age.²

The Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) gathers information about risk behaviors from high school youth every odd year. While information about sexual orientation has been collected since 2001, data on transgender youth was not collected until 2013. The six-year trend below reflects cigarette use by lesbian, gay and bisexual youth only, while the two-year trend (dashed line) includes transgender youth.



It should be noted that the disparity in use rates between LGBT youth and the general population is only seen for cigarettes. LGBT youth use of other tobacco products, including Electronic Nicotine Delivery Products (E-NDPs)³, is similar to the general youth population, and any differences are not statistically significant (Figure 2).

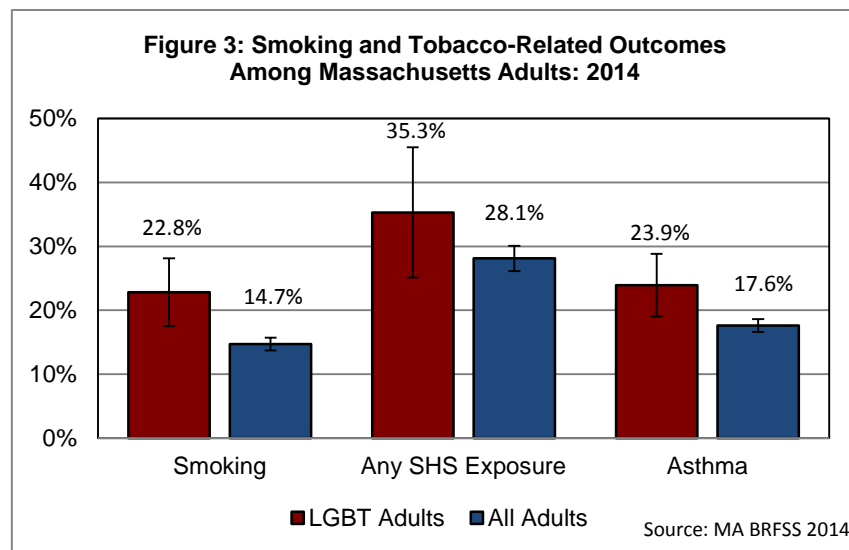




LGBT Smoking Disparity Also Occurs Among Adults

The disparity of cigarette use between LGBT and non-LGBT individuals is also seen among adults. The smoking rate among LGBT adults is 1.6 times the rate among non-LGBT adults (95% CI: 1.2-2.0, $p < 0.001$). In 2014, the smoking rate among LGBT adults was 22.8% compared to 14.7% of all Massachusetts adults (Figure 3). The cigarette use disparity between LGBT and non-LGBT individuals exists in all age groups, but is most pronounced in those 18-34 where smoking among the Massachusetts LGBT population is 29% compared to 16% of the general Massachusetts population (MA BRFSS, 2014)(Data not shown).

LGBT adults reported higher rates of exposure to any secondhand smoke in their homes, work and social spaces than the general population (35.3% vs. 28.1%). LGBT adults also reported higher rates of asthma compared to the general population (23.9% vs. 17.6%) which can be further exacerbated by their higher rates of smoking and secondhand smoke exposure.



Industry Targeting and Other Risk Factors

High rates of cigarette use within the LGBT community are due in part to the aggressive marketing by tobacco companies that sponsor events and advertise in LGBT spaces such as gay bars, pride parades, and gay magazines.⁴ Furthermore, risk factors for tobacco use such as stress, social stigma, discrimination or victimization often disproportionately affect the LGBT community.⁵

Sources:

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