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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Nouvelle-Écosse | 58e  | 2e  | Discours sur la santé | 19 Novembre 2002 | James Muir | Minister of Health |  |

Mr. Speaker, this is Addiction Services Week in Nova Scotia, thus this is an appropriate time to inform the members of the House about the results of the Nova Scotia Drug Use 2002 Survey. I'm very pleased to report that fewer students are smoking cigarettes and those who are smoking less. The smoking rate among our province's students has dropped by 13 per cent since 1998. This is a significant drop. The decrease in smoking is great news for Nova Scotia and for the many groups, over the past four years, who have worked tirelessly to reduce the smoking rates among our young people.

All of this would not have been possible without the good work of these people, who are working to help Nova Scotians be healthier through the prevention and treatment of addictions. The study shows that the hard work of our prevention workers and the actions taken by the government as part of the tobacco strategy are having an effect on youth smoking rates. More specifically, the increase in taxes on cigarettes and greater emphasis on smoke-free environments account for much of the decrease. The decrease in tobacco use has also resulted in an increase in the percentage of students in this province who are not using drugs.

Mr. Speaker, 40 per cent of our students are now drug-free, 40 per cent of students from Grades 7 to 12 are not smoking, drinking alcohol, smoking cannabis, or using illicit substances. These are kids we don't hear enough about. We need to do more to support these young people as they continue to make healthy choices. At the same time, we also need to provide support for those who are experimenting with or having problems with drugs. We believe the recently-announced funding of $1.8 million for enhanced addiction services for women and youth throughout our province is a major advance in these supports.

Mr. Speaker, we are encouraged by these positive results as we move forward with the tobacco strategy, smoke-free legislation, and enhanced addiction services for youth. We're working toward a healthier Nova Scotia, where our young people receive every opportunity to live long, healthy, and happy lives free of addictions. There are many staff, volunteers, and community groups who deserve credit and thanks for the positive results of this survey. Their knowledge, dedication, and commitment are truly an asset to the province.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would like to introduce a number of people who have been responsible for these contributions, before taking my seat. I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Legislature to the east gallery where we have Mr. Brian Wilbur, who is the director of Addiction Services; Nancy Hoddinott, the Tobacco Strategy Coordinator; and, Carolyn Davidson, Coordinator of Treatment Services, Addiction Services. These are all employees of the Department of Health. I would ask the House to recognize these people by giving them a warm round of applause.