Youth Tobacco Use and Vaping in Illinois
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Nicotine, the psychoactive chemical component found in tobacco products, can be consumed in a variety of ways. It can be chewed or smoked in a cigarette, cigar, hookah, or pipe. Electronic vaping devices or e-cigarettes are a more recent innovation in tobacco use. These devices extract nicotine oil for ‘vaping’ in an electronic device. This report provides information on tobacco products and e-cigarette use patterns, including where youth get their tobacco and vaping products, young persons’ perceptions about cigarette and e-cigarette use and perceived use among their peers, and parent messaging about tobacco and e-cigarettes. Use this paper to learn the facts about tobacco and e-cigarette use among youth in Illinois.
OVERVIEW

What is the Illinois Youth Survey?

The Illinois Youth Survey is a biennial survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. The IYS is a self-report survey administered in school settings and is designed to gather information about a variety of health and social indicators including substance use patterns and attitudes of Illinois youth.

In 2018, the Illinois Youth survey included over 230,000 youth across more than 914 Illinois schools who were surveyed between January and June of 2018. The data in this paper is based on a statewide randomly drawn, scientifically weighted sample of 11,259 students, selected to represent the state population of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Illinois' public schools, distributed across the grades as shown below. The sampling design assures that youth in the state sample are representative of the state’s diverse community types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Weighted Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>3,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>3,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11,259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 Year Trend

Self-reported cigarette smoking among high school seniors has declined steadily every year from about 1 in 5 (21%) high-school seniors reporting past 30 day cigarette use in 2008 to slightly more than 1 in 20 (5%) in 2018. This reflects laudable efforts to reduce cigarette smoking by a variety of means over this ten year span.

However, over the last two survey administrations, past 30 day use of e-cigarettes has increased dramatically, from 18.4% in 2016 to 26.7% among seniors in 2018. This is one of most dramatic and alarming annual changes in youth substance use trends the IYS has ever measured.
**Problem**

- Youth tobacco use, in particular use of e-cigarettes, increases as a young person progresses through their high school years.

- 7.4% of 8th grade youth reported past 30 day use of e-cigarettes, while among high school seniors, an alarming 26.7% reported past 30 day use.

- Among past 30 day 12th grade users, 7.4% reported using e-cigarettes more than once per day.

**Method of Use**

- The most commonly used tobacco product among teens is e-cigarettes.

- However, other means were also reported including cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, cigars, and hookah.

- All forms of tobacco use are below 10% except for e-cigarettes.

**Breakdown of Use**

- Among all teens, e-cigarette use is nearly 3 times more prevalent than any other form of tobacco use.

- White teens are far more likely to use e-cigarettes than African Americans or Latino/Latinas.

- Rural youth reported higher use of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and cigars. Chicago youth reported higher use of hookahs.

**Past 30 Day Use by All Grades**

![Graph showing past 30 day use by all grades of cigarettes and e-cigarettes.]

**Use by Race**

![Bar chart showing percentage of users by race.]

**Method of Use Among Tobacco Users**

![Bar chart showing method of use among tobacco users.]

A single vape cartridge in a device such as a JUUL can contain as much nicotine as a pack of 20 cigarettes. Reportedly, JUUL users can consume a single cartridge in 1-2 days.
# Contributing Factors to Tobacco Use Among Teens in Illinois

## Access

**How easy is it for youth to get tobacco products?**
- A key contributing factor to tobacco use or vaping products is ease of access. Use declines if these products are not as easy to get.
- 62% of seniors reported that cigarettes are “sort of easy” or “very easy” to get. This has been declining steadily since 2008, from 86%.

## Source

**Where are youth getting tobacco products?**
- Across the grades, the most common source of tobacco or vaping products for teens is that they are given to them by a friend.
- 8th graders are more likely to get tobacco or vaping products from siblings or from their parents without permission than are 10th or 12th graders.
- Seniors are far more likely to purchase tobacco or vaping products at a store than 8th or 10th graders. But, 63% of 12th grade IYS respondents were 18 and older could legally purchase tobacco or vaping products.

## Perceived Risk

**What is the perceived risk of cigarettes compared to e-cigarettes among youth?**
- Perceived risk also directly affects youth tobacco use.
- 87.6% of teens perceive a moderate or great risk of smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day while only 58% perceive moderate or great risk from e-cigarette use. 12.1% of seniors perceive no risk from e-cigarette use.
- This reflects the success of targeted youth messaging about the risks of cigarette use. It also reflects a lack of similar effective messaging about e-cigarette use.

### Supply Source of Tobacco or Vaping Products*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>8th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>12th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend gave it to me</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bought it at store</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling gave it to me</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took from parents</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bought online</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*those who reported using tobacco or vaping products at least once in the past year.

In 2019, Illinois passed a law raising the tobacco purchase age to 21 for all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices. This will make tobacco products more difficult for youth to get in years to come, including seniors.
In the last 10 years, the number of seniors who say it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to smoke cigarettes has increased steadily. This shift in attitudes may contribute to the decline in cigarette use.

In the last 10 years, the number of seniors who think most adults in their community would say it is wrong or very wrong for kids to smoke cigarettes has also increased. This may also contribute to the decline in cigarette use.

84% of Illinois teens report that there would be no or very little chance, or little chance, that they would be seen as cool if they smoked cigarettes.

Illinois teens tend to dramatically over-estimate smoking among their peers. The actual number of teens who have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days is 3.6%. However, 75.2% of Illinois teens estimate their peers' smoking of cigarettes in the past 30 days as more than 10%.
To Sum Up: What We Know About Youth and Tobacco Use in Illinois

- Major strides have been made in reducing youth use of cigarettes, which may stem from changes in how youth perceive cigarette use, including the risk of harm.
- Large numbers of youth perceive that others disapprove of cigarette use.
- Youth tend to over-estimate cigarette use among their peers.
- Teens are not very likely to use any other source of tobacco product, except e-cigarettes.
- Despite major progress in reducing cigarette use among youth, e-cigarettes have shown a dramatic increase in use. E-cigarette use among youth has reached epidemic portions. The percent of Illinois teens who first used an e-cigarette in the past year increased by 45% among 12th grade students between 2016 and 2018.
- E-cigarette use by 12th grade students in Illinois is higher than cigarette use among 12th grade students was 10 years ago.

Learn the Facts

The are many misconceptions surrounding e-cigarettes and other vaping products including the chemicals found in vaping products and the addictiveness of these products. Some believe the liquid found inside a vaping product cartridge or pod is just flavoring or water vapor. However, research has shown chemical ingredients found inside a pod or cartridge can include formaldehyde, diacetyl used for flavoring, nicotine, as well as metal particles including nickel, tin, and lead.

Now What?

It's a great time to open a dialogue with youth in your life regarding these issues. To learn more about the risks of e-cigarettes for youth and tips for having that discussion, visit the resources below.

Surgeon General
https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/resources.html

If you know a teen who is addicted to any type of tobacco product, SmokeFree Teen offers a variety of tools and tips to help them quit.
SmokeFree Teen
https://teen.smokefree.gov

The Illinois Tobacco Quitline is a free resource offering a variety of cessation tools to become tobacco free.
Illinois Tobacco Quitline 1-866-784-8937
https://quityes.org/index.php

To find out more information about the Illinois Youth Survey, to see if your school participated, or to access your County report, visit iys.cprd.illinois.edu.
Center for Prevention Research and Development

As part of the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, CPRD concentrates its efforts in the areas of school reform and after-school evaluation, health and human service reform, and prevention science.

References