

The Appeal of E-cigarettes to Youth

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the epidemiology of youth e-cigarette use
- Describe the reasons that youth use e-cigarettes
- Understand the link between flavored tobacco products and youth nicotine addiction
- Describe the tobacco industry's targeted marketing of tobacco products to youth
- Discuss youth's exposure to e-cigarette marketing



How Many Teens use E-Cigarettes?

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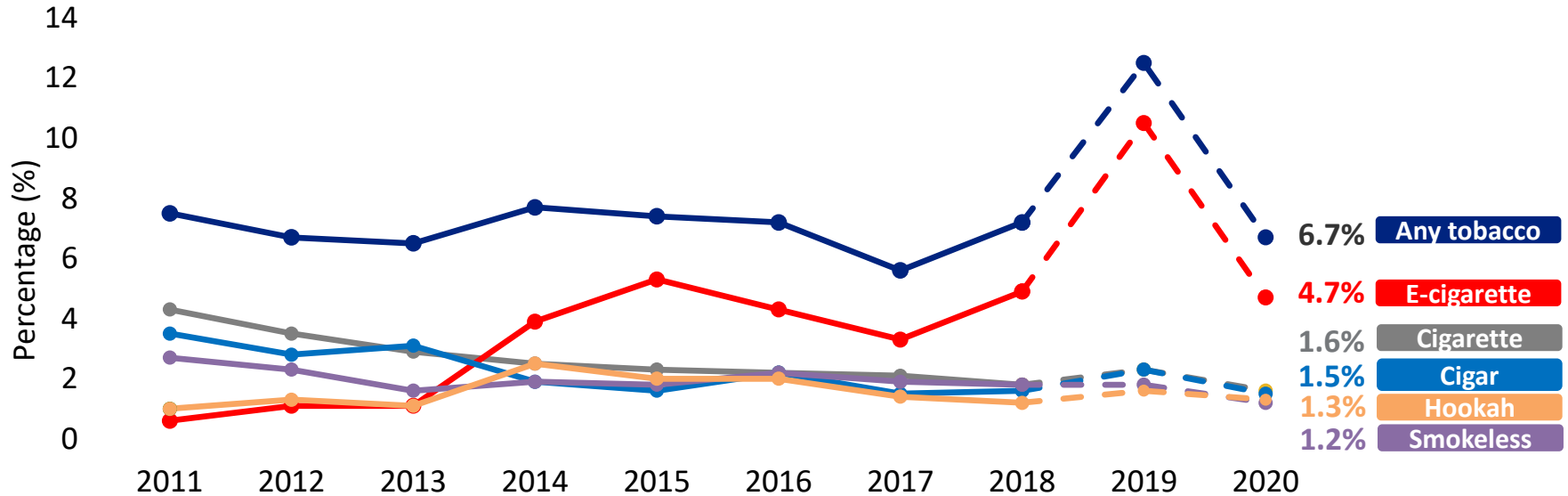


E-CIGARETTE USE AMONG YOUTH¹

- E-cigarettes are the most commonly-used tobacco product among youth, and use has increased significantly in recent years
- The US Surgeon General has declared that youth use of any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe
- High school and college students use e-cigarettes at higher rates than middle school students or adults
- E-cigarette use is strongly associated with use of other tobacco products



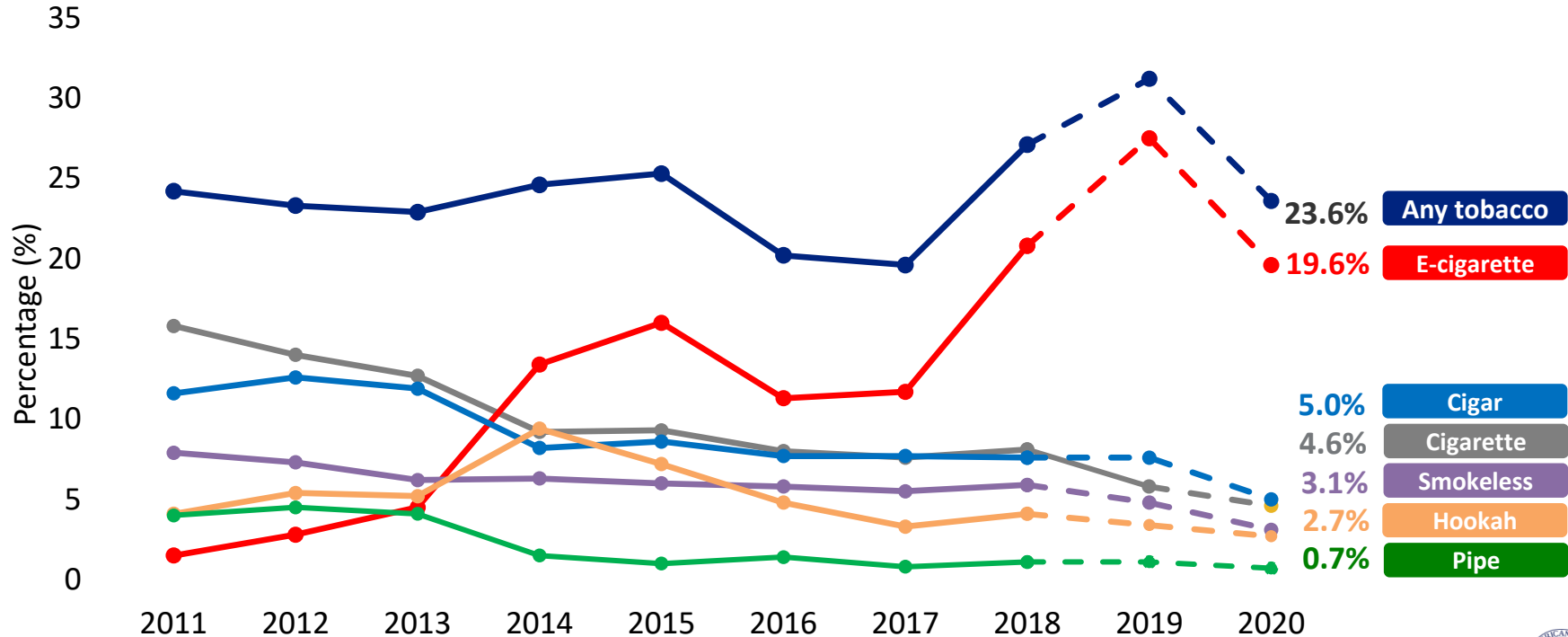
CURRENT TOBACCO USE AMONG U.S. MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS^{2,4,5,6}



Note: Dashed lines represent change in survey administration

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CURRENT TOBACCO USE AMONG U.S. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS^{2,4,5,6}



Note: Dashed lines represent change in survey administration

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2020 E-CIGARETTE USE TRENDS

CDC 2020 National Youth Tobacco Survey:⁴

	High School Students n=10,097	Middle School Students n=8,837
Current e-cigarette users	19.6%	4.7%
Among the current e-cigarette users:		
Frequent e-cigarette users	38.9%	20%
Used pod-based e-cigarettes	48.5%	41.9%
Used disposables	26.5%	15.2%
Used flavored e-cigarettes*	84.7%	73.9%

*most common flavors were fruit, mint/menthol, and candy/dessert/sweet



Why Do Youth Use E-Cigarettes?

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YOUTH BELIEFS ABOUT E-CIGARETTE USE

- Many youth believe that e-cigarettes are less harmful than traditional cigarettes¹
- Youth who believe that e-cigarettes cause no harm are more likely to use e-cigarettes than their peers who believe e-cigarettes are harmful⁷



YOUTH BELIEFS ABOUT E-CIGARETTE USE

- Youth are not always aware of what ingredients are in their e-cigarette⁸

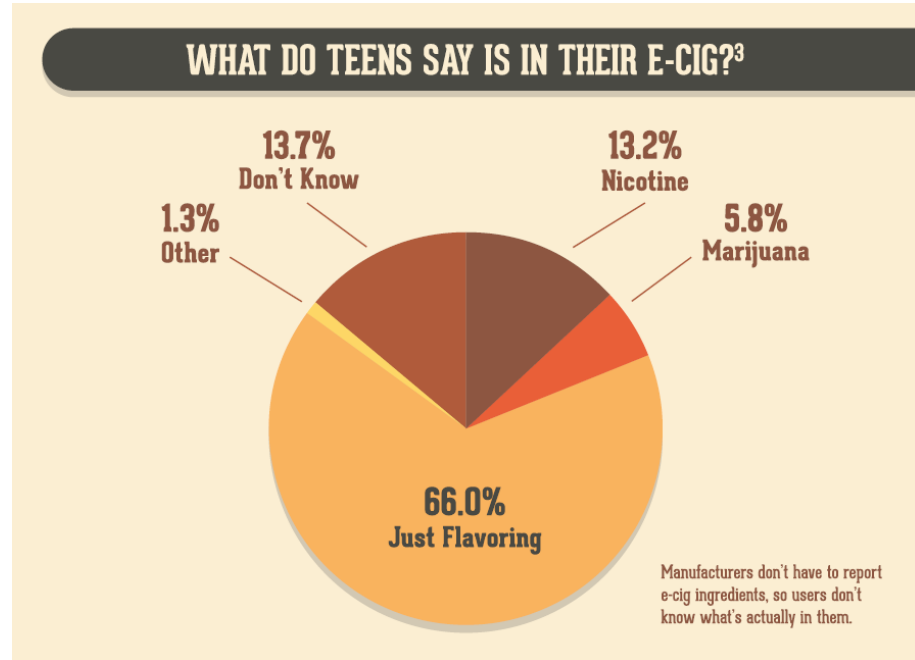


Image source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, [Teens and E-cigarettes](#), February 2016



REASONS THAT YOUTH USE E-CIGARETTES

- **Targeted marketing** that depict e-cigarettes as appealing and less harmful than cigarettes⁹
- **Flavors** like menthol/mint, fruit, or candy¹⁰
- **High nicotine content** and nicotine salts, that are designed to deliver more nicotine and with less throat irritation to a population that is already susceptible to addiction
- **Self-medication** for an underlying concern, like anxiety¹¹
- **Head rush**¹²
- **Curiosity**⁴
- **Ability to do tricks**⁴



Marketing of E-Cigarettes to Youth

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E-CIGARETTES ARE SOLD EVERYWHERE

- Vape shops
- Convenience stores
- stores
- Gas stations
- Retail outlets
- Mall kiosks
- Grocery stores
- Internet vendors



Image source: S. Walley (personal photo). Used with permission.



E-CIGARETTES ARE MARKETED DIRECTLY TO YOUTH

- E-cigarette companies market directly to youth by:
 - Focusing on flavors^{1,13}
 - Using social media¹⁴
 - Offering scholarships¹⁵
- E-cigarette advertisements use the same strategies that Big Tobacco used to sell cigarettes to youth:
 - Celebrity spokespeople¹
 - Sponsorship of sporting events and music festivals^{1,16}
 - Targeted television ads¹⁷



YOUTH ARE EXPOSED TO E-CIGARETTE MARKETING

- Most youth in the United States are exposed to e-cigarette marketing⁴
- Exposure to e-cigarette ads is associated with youth use of e-cigarettes⁸

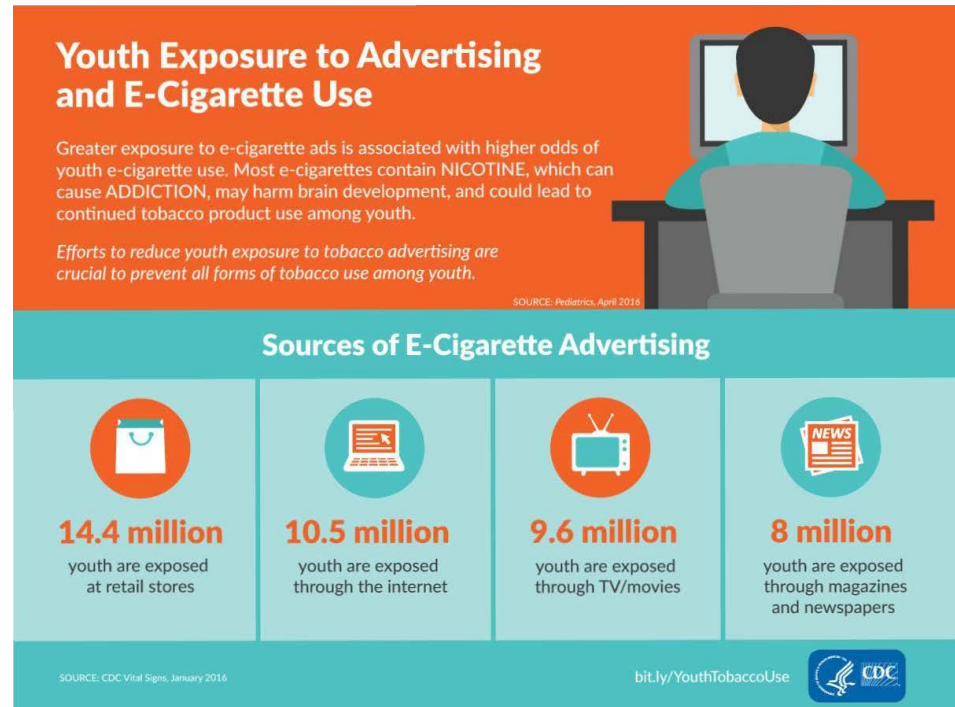


Image source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Youth Exposure to Advertising and E-cigarette Use](#), CDC Vital Signs, January 2016

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Flavors and Youth Use of E-Cigarettes

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E-CIGARETTES COME IN MANY FLAVORS

Flavor categories

- Fruit, Dessert/Sweet
- Tobacco
- Menthol/mint
- Alcohol
- Nuts/spices
- Coffee/tea
- Beverage
- Unflavored



Image source: S. Tanski (personal photo). Used with permission.

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FLAVORS AND E-CIGARETTE USE

- The 2009 *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act* banned flavors (excluding menthol) in cigarettes¹⁸
- Flavors are still allowed in other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes¹⁸
- The Tobacco Industry has a history of using flavors to purposely attract teens to using tobacco products^{13,19,20}



FLAVORS AND E-CIGARETTE USE

- 31% of teens report that flavors are the primary reason that they use e-cigarettes²¹
- Most youth initiate tobacco/e-cigarette use with a flavored product²²
- Most youth who use e-cigarettes report using a flavored product⁶
- The most common flavors of e-cigarettes among middle school and high school students are fruit, mint/menthol, and candy/dessert flavors⁶



HOW DO FLAVORS ATTRACT YOUTH?

- Flavors improve the taste of tobacco products¹³
- Flavors reduce the “harshness” or irritation that people feel when they begin using tobacco products¹³
- E-cigarettes are marketed in flavors that are designed to appeal to youth, including strawberry shortcake, cool cucumber, and unicorn milk
- E-cigarette flavors are marketed directly to teens, with colorful packaging and marketing displays^{1,13}



FLAVORS AND AAP POLICY

- Current proposed legislation bans all flavors except menthol/mint
 - Disposable or one-time use e-cigarette products, like Puff Bars, are exempted from this flavor ban
- Because of the strong appeal of flavored e-cigarettes to youth, AAP Policy Recommends that the FDA should ban all characterizing flavors, including menthol, in all e-cigarettes and other tobacco products²³



Nicotine Content

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HIGHLY ADDICTIVE¹

- E-cigarettes contain high concentrations of nicotine
 - JUUL and other 4th generation “pod” products utilizing nicotine salts contain nicotine concentrations that are more than double the concentration found in other e-cigarettes
- This high concentration is a serious concern for youth, who are already uniquely susceptible to nicotine addiction
- The addictive potential is so high that the US Surgeon General has declared that youth use of nicotine in any form is unsafe



NICOTINE SALTS

- Designed to deliver more nicotine and with less throat irritation, compared to closed system devices⁹
- Contribute to more frequent use, increasing potential for addiction
- All salt-based e-juice and liquid contains nicotine (ie, JUUL and Puff Bars)

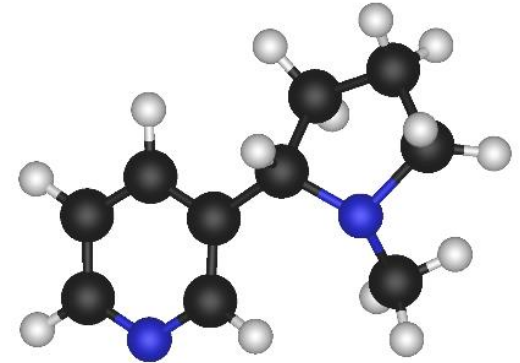


Image source: "[Nicotine 3D Model](#)" by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).



KEY POINTS

- E-cigarettes are the most common tobacco product among youth
- Youth use e-cigarettes for many reasons, including family/friend use, appeal of flavors, and beliefs about safety
- Flavored e-cigarettes are designed to appeal to youth
- Most youth who use e-cigarettes prefer flavored products, such as fruit, mint/menthol, and sweet/dessert flavors
- E-cigarettes are marketed directly to youth
- Most US youth are exposed to e-cigarette marketing



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