

Background

A rapidly emerging new trend that is turning into a nationwide epidemic for youth in the United States is the use of electronic vapor products also known as “e-cigs”, “e-hookahs”, “vapes”, “mods”, and “JUULS”. There is little known about the long-term health effects of prolonged use of vapes. The rise in vape products sales and use, poses a public health threat to adolescents.

Aims

- Assess the opinions and attitudes of school principals and nurses about youth vaping.
- Identify gaps and current concerns of schools.
- Inform public health recommendations.

Methods

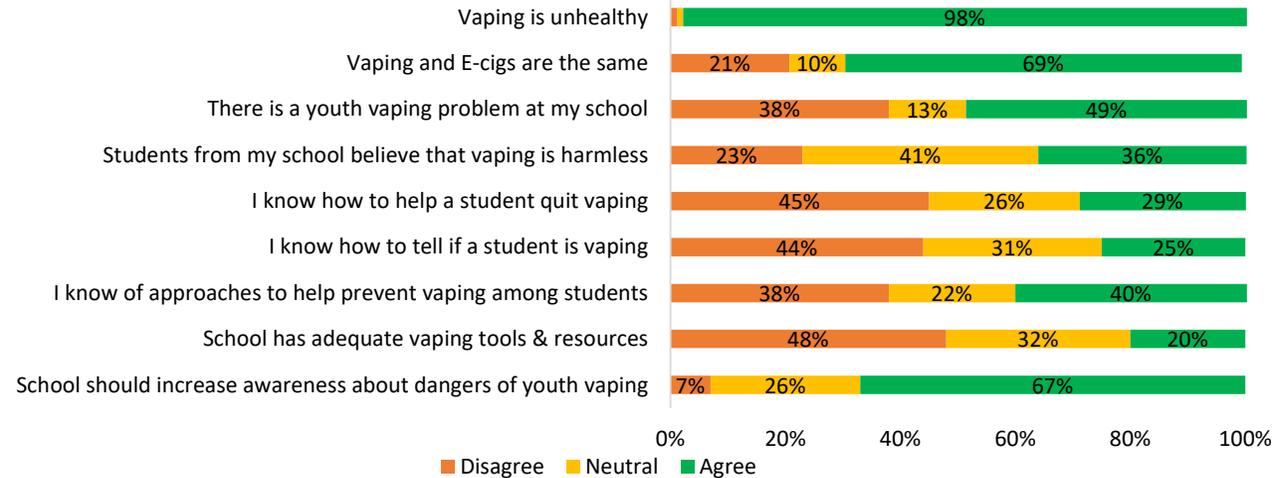
- An electronic survey with 24 quantitative, qualitative, and open-ended questions was developed and disseminated to VT school principals and nurses using UVM REDCap.
- Survey was emailed to 309 VT K-12 schools, public and private, which consisted of 413 principals and assistant principals and 319 school nurses.
- Quantitative analysis: REDCap & Excel.

Respondents

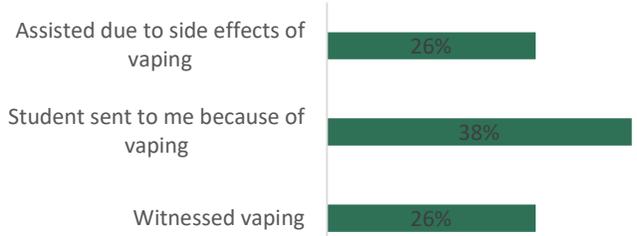
- Total responses: 268
 - 107 Principals & Assistant Principals
 - 161 School Nurses
- All 14 VT counties were represented

Results

Opinions of School Principals and Nurses Towards Youth Vaping



Vaping Interactions



*encountered ≥ 1 vaping incident that school year

Rankings of Health Concerns for Schools



Survey Comments About Youth Vaping:

- “more resources and speakers needed”
- “high tax is a good starting point, treat it like tobacco”
- “more elementary education on youth vaping”
- “involve parents”
- “more information on this topic needs to be readily available”
- “more aggressive in advertisements”

Other Concerns for Schools:

- Updated training on trauma informed school
- How to help children living in poverty
- Building resiliency in youth
- Stress management and burnout prevention in employees
- Preparing students for college
- Increase cultural competence

Discussion

- Vape products are one of the most common forms of tobacco products and is an introductory product to later use of other tobacco products.
- Use of vape products is on the rise with higher prevalence in high schoolers and vulnerable populations.
- Survey results show school prevention for youth vaping could be improved.
- A majority of school principals and nurses feel that their schools need to do more to address dangers of youth vaping. Many schools do not have adequate resources for this work.
- There is a gap in knowledge, tools, and resources at schools.
- This implies a need for an effective prevention strategy in schools especially one that targets youth who are at high risk for vape use.
- Recently, Vermont’s General Assembly passed the Tobacco 21 law which: will increase sales taxes of EVP products to 92%, raise the smoking age from 18 to 21, and limit sales of EVPs online and in stores by requiring a VT seller license.

Future Directions

- Development and dissemination of a toolkit for schools, parents and students providing up-to-date information, guidance, and action steps are recommended.
- High risk schools should have prevention programs implemented in schools as young as elementary.
- Health officials should continue to monitor the youth EVP use to track the efficacy of the new legislation.