

# Electronic Cigarette Use in Indiana



Tobacco Prevention  
and Cessation

## What are E-Cigarettes?

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Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are battery-operated devices that heat a liquid to produce an aerosol that is inhaled. The aerosol from an e-cigarette, sometimes mistakenly called vapor, can contain tiny chemical particles from both the liquid solution and the device including nicotine, flavorings, and other additives. The term e-cigarette is often used to refer to a broad class of products, which include disposable e-cigarettes, “smart” e-cigarettes, electronic cigars (e-cigars), electronic hookahs (e-hookahs), vapor (vape) pens, and other products.

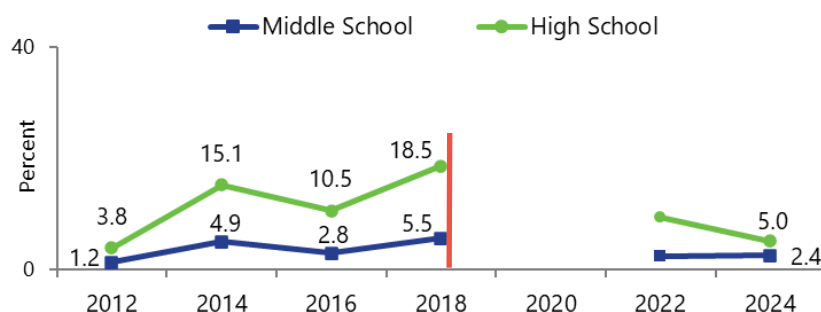
E-cigarettes that have a high-tech, sleek design have become increasingly popular in the past decade.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Use of E-Cigarettes Among Youth

More needs to be done to protect youth and prevent tobacco companies from marketing their dangerous products to kids. Commercial tobacco companies know that getting youth to try tobacco can lead to long-term addiction and they use a variety of tactics to target youth. Because of these tactics, use of e-cigarettes has increased among youth in Indiana and the U.S. in the past 10 years.<sup>1-5</sup>

- **1 in 20** or 5.0% of **Indiana high school students** and nearly **1 in 40** or 2.4% of **middle school students** reported current use (past 30 days) of e-cigarettes in 2024<sup>3</sup>
- Current (past 30-day) use of e-cigarettes significantly declined among Indiana high school students, from 9.2% in 2022 to 5.0% in 2024<sup>3</sup>
- Use of e-cigarettes nationally is somewhat higher as approximately **7.8%** of U.S. high school students and **3.5%** of U.S. middle school student reported current use of e-cigarettes in 2024<sup>3</sup>
- E-cigarettes continue to be the most commonly used tobacco product among youth in Indiana and the U.S.<sup>3,4</sup>

Current E-cigarette Use among Indiana High School and Middle School Youth, IYTS 2012-2024\*



- While e-cigarette use declined significantly among high school students, there are approximately 1 in 5 middle and high school students that have never used an e-cigarette that are susceptible to using an e-cigarette in the future<sup>3</sup>

## Tactics to Attract Youth:



- E-cigarette marketing is prevalent on social media and often includes tactics to increase the appeal of tobacco products to youth, including images that resonate with youth such as rebellion and glamor<sup>1</sup>



- In 2024, more than 1 in 4 (28%) of Indiana retailers\*\* had outdoor advertising for e-cigarettes, additionally, more than 97% of retailers selling e-cigarettes sold them in flavored varieties. 66.2% of high school students and 72.7% of middle school students who use e-cigarettes reported exposure to ads in stores<sup>6</sup>



- Companies manufacture and sell e-cigarettes and e-liquids in thousands of unique flavors, including candy and fruit flavors that appeal to youth<sup>1,8</sup>



- Nearly 3 in 4 or 72.1% of high school students in Indiana that used e-cigarettes reported using flavored products<sup>3</sup>



- E-cigarettes and vapes have evolved over time and are now being made to resemble and include features of smart phones and handheld gaming devices<sup>7</sup>

\*Due to unexpected challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, IYTS data for 2020 are unavailable. Additionally, in 2020, the IYTS became electronic, and because of this change in methodology, data collected in 2022 and 2024 should not be directly compared to data from 2018 and prior years.

\*\*Among retailers surveyed across 43 counties in Indiana

## E-Cigarette Use Among Adults in Indiana

Current e-cigarette use among Indiana adults significantly increased from **5.7%** in 2020 to **8.1%** in 2021. In 2023, e-cigarette use slightly increased to **8.5%**. Younger adults (ages 18-24) are using e-cigarettes at much higher rates compared to older adults, ages 45 and up. (20% vs 7%).<sup>11</sup>

About **20% of 18-24 year olds** and **15% of 25-34 year olds** reported **currently using e-cigarettes** while fewer than 7% of adults 45 and older reported current use of e-cigarettes.<sup>11</sup> Similar to youth, young adults are targeted by tobacco industry marketing including the appeal of flavors, celebrity endorsements, and sports/music sponsorships.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, e-cigarettes are often promoted as safer alternatives to cigarettes or tools to help in quitting smoking; however, e-cigarettes are *not* FDA-approved quit aids.<sup>10,12</sup>

- Rather than quitting cigarettes completely, many who use e-cigarettes continue to smoke cigarettes.
- Those who smoke cigarettes and use e-cigarettes to cut back on cigarettes but do not quit completely remain at increased risk for disease and death.<sup>11</sup>
- More than 15% of Indiana adults who smoked cigarettes also used e-cigarettes, nearly twice the rate of e-cigarette use overall.<sup>9</sup>

### Public Health Response to E-Cigarettes

Evidence suggests that e-cigarette use may potentially have harmful impacts on health.



- E-cigarette aerosol may have the potential to harm the body's cells and tissues



- Exposure to nicotine from e-cigarettes may lead to increased heart rate and diastolic blood pressure



- E-cigarette devices may explode and cause burns or other injuries, particularly when the batteries are of poor quality, when the devices are stored improperly, or when the devices are modified

In spring of 2019, cases of what came to be known as **E-cigarette or Vaping Associated Lung Injury (EVALI)** began to show up across the U.S. Use of e-cigarettes was common among all cases of EVALI. Youth and young adults were largely impacted, as more than half of the patients were younger than 25. This epidemic highlighted not only the need to continue to protect youth from the commercial tobacco industry's targeting and influence but also that e-cigarettes are not harmless alternatives to other tobacco products.<sup>13</sup>

The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that precautionary strategies to protect youth and young adults from adverse effects of e-cigarettes are necessary. These include strategies:



- Incorporating e-cigarettes into smoke-free policies, such as tobacco-free school grounds policies



- Preventing youth access to e-cigarettes



- Regulation of e-cigarette marketing that is likely to attract youth and young adults



- Educational initiatives aimed at youth and young adults<sup>2</sup>

## Resources for Tobacco and Nicotine Addiction

There are many free resources available to those who want to end their dependence on tobacco and nicotine addiction.

**Live Vape Free** is a youth-focused program which offers texting and a mobile application (text INDIANA to 873373). **Quit Now Indiana** (1-800-QUIT-NOW; QuitNowIndiana.com) offers a variety of free quit tools to Hoosiers 13 and older. Lastly, **EX Program** a Truth Initiative texting service (text EXPROGRAM to 88709), is designed for young people (ages 13-19) who want to quit e-cigarettes.