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Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida's Statement Regarding Youth Electronic Cigarette Use



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TALLAHASSEE, FLA. – This week significant announcements have come out regarding youth electronic cigarette use. On Dec. 17, the annual Monitoring the Future survey revealed the largest increase recorded in the past 43 years for any adolescent substance use outcome in the United States: e-cigarette use. On Dec. 18, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams officially declared youth e-cigarette use an epidemic in an advisory that emphasized the importance of protecting youth from a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

This epidemic is especially concerning considering the current usage rates among Florida high school students compared to Florida adults: 24.8 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively.^{1,2} The high school current prevalence rate increased an alarming 58 percent in just one year, and reversed a decline observed from 2016 to 2017. Additional Florida specific data can be found [here from the Florida Youth Tobacco Survey](#) which includes 2018 County-level data, which can be found [here](#).

Nicotine is a highly addictive, toxic chemical and harms brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s. Nicotine exposure during this time can disrupt the growth of brain circuits that control attention, learning, and susceptibility to addiction.³ Further, there is evidence that adolescents who use e-cigarettes are more likely to start smoking cigarettes.^{4,5,6,7,8,9,10}

Tobacco Free Florida has identified this troubling issue and has begun to address it. Campaigns designed to educate parents and youth about e-cigarettes – particularly the popular brand JUUL – are currently running statewide via digital channels. Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT), Florida's statewide youth advocacy organization, launched a statewide initiative called "Not A Lab Rat" to educate its peers about e-cigarettes. Tobacco Free Florida also promoted an educational blog post to provide Floridians further information about JUUL, which can be found at the following link: tobaccofreeflorida.com/youthandecigarettes. More general information about e-cigarettes is also featured on the Tobacco Free Florida website and can be found at the following link: tobaccofreeflorida.com/current-issues/electronic-cigarettes.

Parents, teachers and others who influence youth are encouraged to advise and inform them of the dangers of nicotine; discourage youth tobacco use in any form, including e-cigarettes; and set a positive example by being tobacco free themselves.¹¹

Tobacco Free Florida's new Quit Your Way program makes it easier than ever for tobacco users to access free tools and services to help them quit. For more information to quit tobacco or help a loved one quit, visit tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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About Tobacco Free Florida

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 212,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs.¹² To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

¹ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2018.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018.

³ US Department of Health and Human Services. E-cigarette use among youth and young adults: a report of the Surgeon General [PDF–8.47 MB]. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2016.

⁴ Watkins SL, Glantz SA, Chaffee BW. Association of Noncigarette Tobacco Product Use With Future Cigarette Smoking Among Youth in the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study, 2013-2015. *JAMA Pediatr*. Published online January 02, 2018. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2017.4173. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2666219>.

⁵ Coleman BN, Apelberg BJ, Ambrose BK, et al. Association between electronic cigarette use and openness to cigarette smoking among US young adults. *Nicotine Tob Res*. 2015; 17(2):212-218.

⁶ Thomas A Wills, Rebecca Knight, James D Sargent, Frederick X Gibbons, Ian Pagano, Rebecca J Williams Longitudinal study of e-cigarette use and onset of cigarette smoking among high school students in Hawaii. *Tob Control* doi:10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2015-052705.

⁷ Dutra Lauren M, ScD and Glantz Stanton A, PhD. E-cigarettes and National Adolescent Cigarette Use: 2004–2014. *Pediatrics*. American Society of Pediatrics. doi: 10.1542/peds.2016-2450. January 2017.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/139/2/e20162450>.

⁸ Miech R, Patrick ME, O'Malley PM, et al E-cigarette use as a predictor of cigarette smoking: results from a 1-year follow-up of a national sample of 12th grade students *Tobacco Control* Published Online First: 06 February 2017. doi: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2016-053291.

⁹ Soneji S, Barrington-Trimis JL, Wills TA, et al. Association between initial use of e-cigarettes and subsequent cigarette smoking among adolescents and young adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2017;171(8):788-797.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2634377?redirect=true>.

¹⁰ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Public health consequences of e-cigarettes. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/24952>.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

¹² Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.