

Tobacco Control News Summary



Research Roundup October 2022

Vaping in Youth

Vaping by youths is a hot topic right now. Youth vaping is on the increase and research shows a clear link between vaping and smoking. But that relationship is complex – smoking leads to vaping for most youths, but vaping can also lead to smoking. In my first Research Roundup I share key messages from six recent papers from Australia, Canada and America. You can access a full version of the Research Round up here: <https://tacklingsmoking.org.au/tis-team-activities/news/> but for now here are the highlights:

Vaping is more common in:

- Older youths (16-17 years);
- Youths who smoke.



Estimates of the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youths who have ever tried vaping range from one in five youths (survey of all Australian schools) to more than three in five (survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth living in NSW).



Smoking rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth in NSW are also high at 55%.

High smoking and vaping rates are explained by factors related to colonialism and impact of the tobacco industry. Effective smoking and vaping prevention activities should use connection to family, community and culture as a way to counter this.



Activities should also provide information to help youths understand:

- the harms of vaping;
- the role of the tobacco industry in the vape business and links to colonialism;
- the links between vaping and smoking;
- how to develop avoidance and resistance strategies (self-efficacy).

Education and anti-vaping campaigns should be 'where youth are at' and use relatable and relevant communication tools including:

- social media;
- face to face programs in schools;
- Interactive online learning



Schools can also provide a more supportive environment by implementing clear anti-smoking/vaping policies. It is also important to understand and provide support to address the reasons youth vape including:

- stress and anxiety;
- curiosity;
- beliefs that vaping is both harmless and 'cool';
- positive peer group norms around vaping.

It is also important to know that most youths in Australia find it easy to get hold of a vape. The majority don't purchase them (70%). They get them from:

- friends and siblings,
- take them from home.

The 30% who do purchase vapes usually buy them from individuals (often a friend).

