

Latest Findings from The Generation Vape Study



Vaping & Smoking Uptake among Australian Youth

This month I'd like to share the latest findings from the [Generation Vape](#) study. This research looks at changes in vaping and smoking behaviours over time among different groups, including youth and their parents. The [latest findings](#) from this study were published in June this year with a focus on the link between vaping and smoking uptake among Australian youth. While the study did include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, the numbers were small, and we need more evidence to really understand what this means for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. However, it is important to know about the study, as the findings about the link between vaping and smoking among youth in Australia are significant.

The study analysed data from 5,114 youth aged 14 to 17 years from across Australia. The data was collected using an online survey in early and late 2023. Participants included 184 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (just 4% of the total sample). The study survey included questions about four common influences on vaping and smoking:

- Smoking and vaping behaviours of friends and family
- Friend and family attitudes towards smoking and vaping
- Awareness of the harms of nicotine
- Whether or not they were still at school or engaged in other vocational activities.

Participants were also asked about their age and when they started smoking or vaping. This was to allow the researchers to create a timeline of smoking and vaping events for each participant, starting from age 12. They chose age 12 as the starting point because only a few participants started smoking before then. In the survey, starting smoking was defined as having taken at least a few puffs of tobacco products including commercial cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars, or shisha. Starting vaping was defined as having taken at least a few puffs of a vape.

The researchers tracked each participant's timeline from age 12 until they either started smoking or (for 'never-smokers') completed the survey. Each participant's timeline included whether or not they started vaping, and when this was. The researchers used a statistical model called 'regression' to test whether vaping affects the chances of starting smoking later. They also looked at how vaping status ('ever-vaper' or 'never-vaper') interacted with the four common influences on smoking and vaping to see if these common influences affected the results.



The study analysed data from

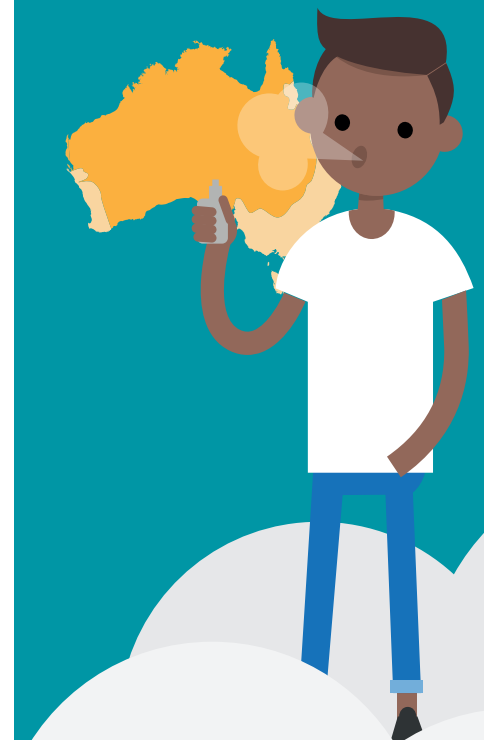
5,114

youth aged 14 to 17 years
from across Australia.

Participants included

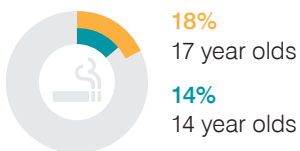
184

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
youth (just 4% of the total sample)

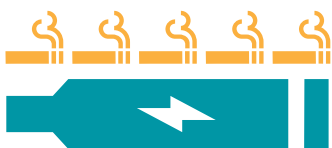
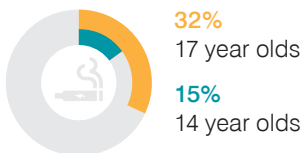


Key Findings

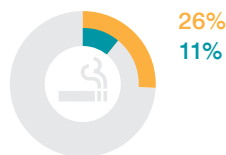
Smoking rates were higher among older youth



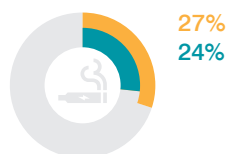
Vaping rates were also higher among older youth



Smoking rates were higher among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth compared to non-Indigenous youth (26% vs 11%).



Vaping rates were similar among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth compared to non-Indigenous youth (27% vs 24%).



The rate of tobacco smoking was nearly five times higher for those who had used a vape, than those who had never vaped.

Youth aged 12-14 who use vapes are much more likely to start smoking than older youth (17 years). The younger someone is when they start vaping, the higher the risk of tobacco use.

Study Limitations

- The study does not specifically focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, and participant numbers are small (n=184, or 4%). This means that:
 - the findings may not reflect the behaviours and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth;
 - some factors related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth vaping and smoking may not be represented.
- There may be other important reasons for vaping and smoking that the researchers did not consider in their study.
- Most participants were from metro areas (80%) and living either NSW, Victoria, or Queensland (74%). Findings might not apply to non-metro areas, or to jurisdictions with a small number of participants (NT/Tas and ACT).

Take Home Message for TIS Teams

Youth who vape are five times more likely to start smoking than those who don't vape. It's important to create clear public health messages that discourage both vaping and smoking. Educating youth about the risks of both is essential, as they may not fully understand the dangers of nicotine addiction. By raising awareness, TIS teams can help youth make healthier choices and informed decisions about vaping and smoking.

