
CDC Report Shows Rise in E-Cigarette Use Does Not Result in Decreases in Adult Smoking

***Increases Driven by Young People - 56% of 18-24 e-cig users are never
smokers***

Statement of Robin Koval, CEO and President of Truth Initiative

For the third year in a row, the [CDC's National Health Interview Survey](#) shows that adult smoking remains constant at 14%. At the same time, 4.5% of adults use e-cigarettes (3.2% in 2018). If e-cigarette use was leading smokers to quit, one would expect to see a decrease in adult combustible use. That is not the case. Instead, adult e-cigarette use appears to be driven primarily by young people most of whom were never smokers making them net new recruits for the tobacco industry. Among adults 18-24, 9.3% used e-cigarettes (7.6% in 2018), with over half (56%) of these young adults reporting that they had never smoked cigarettes. It is also important to note that for those 18-20 the use of e-cigarettes is illegal now that the legal age for all tobacco sales in the U.S. is 21.

The data tell an obvious and troubling story. E-cigarettes as currently marketed in the United States serve primarily to grow the overall tobacco category by introducing young tobacco naïve users, putting them at risk for addiction to nicotine, and thereby creating lifelong income streams for the companies that make and sell tobacco products. When combined with the continuing epidemic of e-cigarette use among high school and middle school students and continuing [reports](#) that show e-cigarettes are not nearly as benign to health as advocates have claimed in the past, these new data are very troubling and make it abundantly clear that it is beyond time to take serious steps to appropriately regulate the e-cigarette industry.

Policy makers at all levels of government should act to immediately remove flavored e-cigarettes, including menthol, that are being used to attract kids, from the market. Products that have not been appropriately reviewed by the FDA should no longer be allowed to be sold under “enforcement discretion” of the agency. And, if the industry desires to sell these devices as cessation aids, it should be required to prove the safety and effectiveness of such products just as makers of therapeutic nicotine replacement therapies have been required to do for decades.