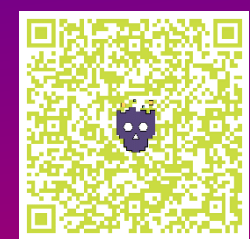
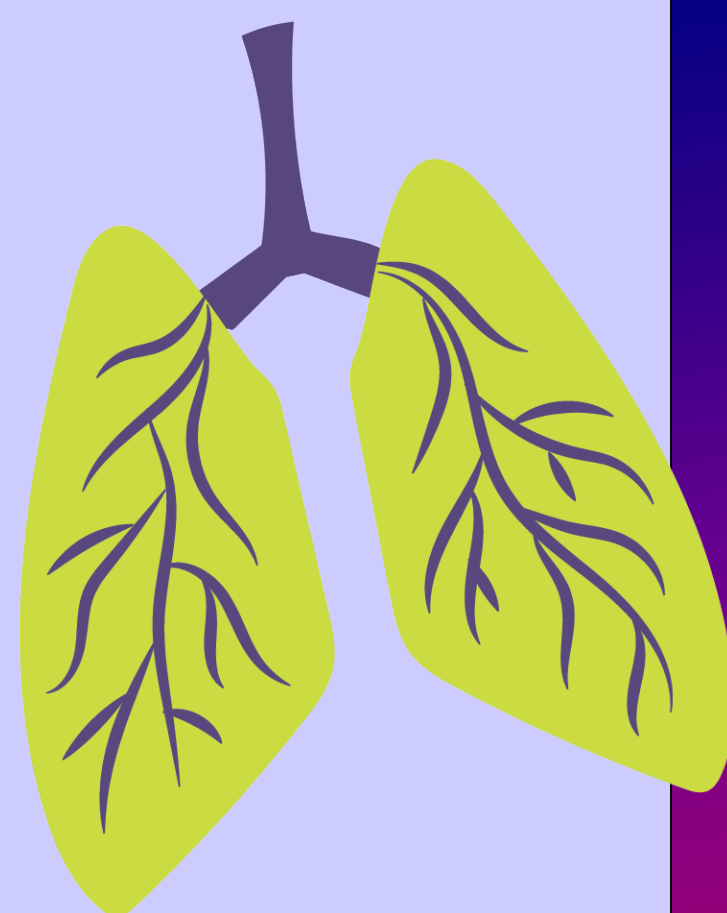



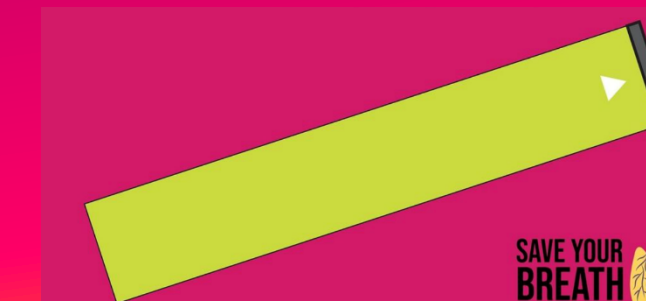


SAVE YOUR BREATH



Save Your Breath: NH's Step in Reducing Adolescent Vaping through Prevention and Interventions

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INTRODUCTION

In 2018 the New Hampshire (NH) Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Program (TPCP) contracted with JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) to conduct formative research to inform the development of a youth-segmented, social marketing campaign to prevent youth vaping. At that time, the 2017 NH Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data showed 41.1% of high school youth had ever used a vaping product. NH rates were higher than the national and regional averages. There was particular interest in finding if peer crowds in NH youth determined the vaping use. Peer crowds share cultural similarities, including values, activities, aspirations, or style¹. Youth and young adults follow social norms because they want to fit in with the people around them. Researchers have characterized and named several peer crowds (mainstream, popular, country, alt, and hip hop) and found risk taking behavior varies by peer crowd^{2,3,4,5}.

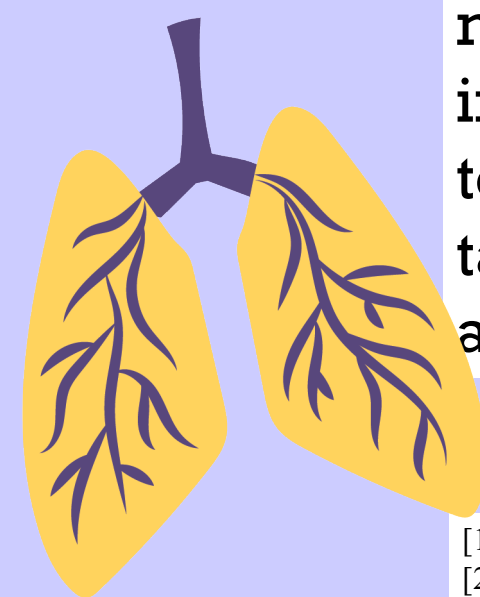
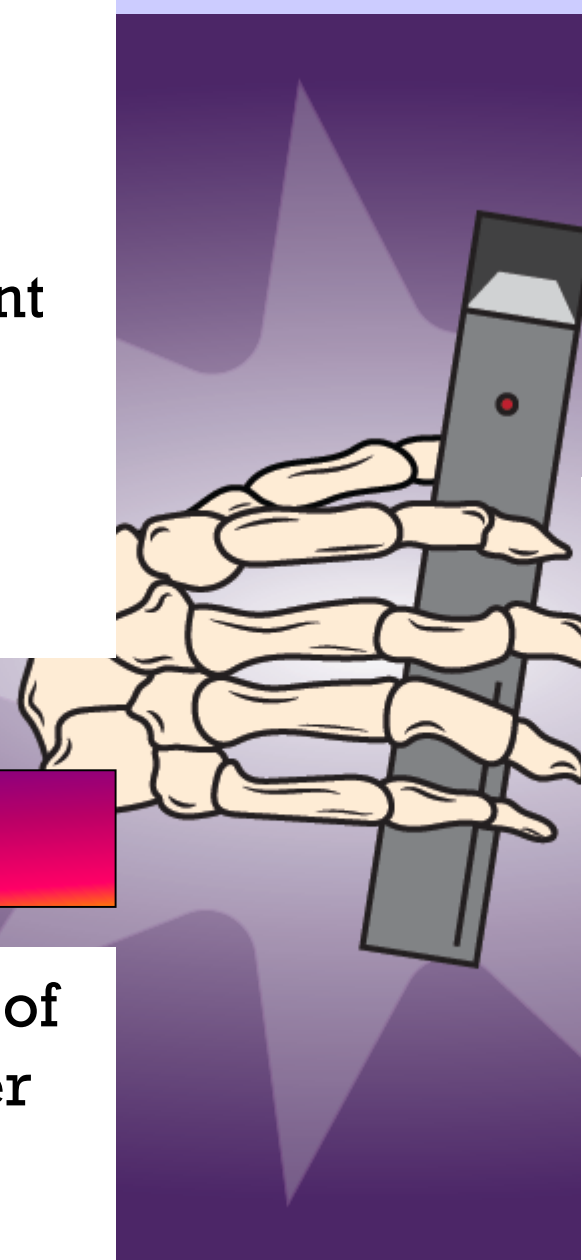
METHODS

PART 1 JSI conducted focus groups with youth 13-18 years of age to confirm the existence and characteristics of youth peer crowds in NH and validate JSI's photo sorting and ranking process for measuring peer crowd affiliation, and obtained preliminary data on electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) use and attitudes.

PART 2 We then conducted a cross-sectional, online survey among a statewide convenience sample of the same cohort of NH youth. Peer crowd affiliation was estimated using a photo selection and ranking exercise. Analysis involved computing estimates of vaping prevalence, overall, and by various strata and logistic regression to examine the effect of multiple risk and protective factors on the odds of current vaping.

OUTCOMES

Vaping was highly prevalent among this sample of youth (2,200). Overall, 60% reported ever having vaped, and 53% reported vaping least once in the past 30 days. Vaping was common in all peer crowds, ranging from 48% to 61% of youth.



METHODS CONT.

MORE OUTCOMES

- Over 70% of teens who reported suffering symptoms of a major depressive episode in the past year, and 76% of teens who perceived they lived with someone who used alcohol or drugs, vaped and the identification of this increased the risk of vaping across peer crowds.
- About 50% were knowledgeable of vaping harms and addiction and knew of specific health effects of vaping.
- Most teens were accepting of vaping.
- The prevalence of current vaping was significantly higher among those with less risk awareness, less knowledge of harm, and more acceptance of vaping.

PART 3 Our survey identified that vaping was common among all identified peer crowds with distinctness in those youth who identified as having depression in the past year or believed they lived with someone with an alcohol or drug problem; these results directed the “Save Your Breath” vaping prevention campaign. Through literature review and online search of existing vaping prevention campaigns, initial campaign concepts were selected (12 campaigns) for an A/B market test. JSI included potential campaign concepts drafted by JSI based on our formative research.

PART 4 Campaign pretesting was conducted by an independent evaluation team prior to exposing the market to concepts.

PART 5 Based off of the results of the market tests, 3 campaign concepts were developed, they were then tailored into a social marketing campaign with the intention of preventing vaping initiation among youth in NH. *Save Your Breath* encouraged youth to stand up to Big Tobacco and vape manufacturers in order to take back control of their physical and mental health, money, and time.

2nd ROUND OUTCOMES

Save Your Breath ran from June – November 2020.

SaveYourBreathNH.org garnered more than 20,466 page views from 18,025 unique viewers. The partner toolkit, designed to support prevention specialists, school personnel, and health care professionals communications with youth, was downloaded more than 100 times. The call to action was to visit the website resources, including: games, interactive content, a free text-to-quit vaping service for NH youth, and other national cessation resources.

The campaign evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluation company, analysis found:

- Awareness of vaping dangers increased significantly amongst teens when it came to knowledge of vaping causing: damage to lungs, respiratory disease, and lowering of impulse control.
- Teens were slightly more likely to have heard about the dangers of vaping, and the source teens received information from about the dangers of vaping shifted, with significantly more (+18%) saying they have heard about the dangers of vaping from social media and television than in the pre-campaign survey.
- Ad recall varied by platform, increasing on TikTok over the campaign.

PART 6 *Save Your Breath* then ran from March – July 2021.

Increasingly, we used video and animation to engage interest and incite brand recognition and engagement. More interactive content was added to the site, and a mask contest and free mask give-a-ways were added to the campaign. We also reached out to schools and youth-serving organizations to gain insight from youth themselves, increase awareness of resources available at saveyourbreathnh.org, and lay the groundwork for implementing screening and brief intervention and referral to treatment (SBIRT) in school settings, utilizing the creative from the campaign.



RESULTS

The average time on the website increased 16.29%. Users interacted more with posts surrounding SYB's mask content, free mask posts or the contest content. Bounce rate decreased 4.35%, pages per session increased 2.33%, and average session duration increased by 64.61%.

OUR NEXT STEPS

Understanding that a media campaign alone could not impact youth vaping, TPCP contracted with JSI to implement an SBIRT project within a pilot school system as a strategy for reinforcing healthy behaviors, identifying tobacco, drug and alcohol use early, reducing use, and referring to treatment for those in need.

- Implementing SBIRT focuses on stopping substance misuse before it starts, and/or catching early use before it escalates into addiction.
- The school setting enables access to students where they spend a large part of their days, and facilitates a population-based approach by targeting a specific segment of students each year.

This is a current pilot. A mass-media cessation campaign has just completed in NH and a third execution of the *Save Your Breath* prevention campaign is about to launch.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a clear need for public health programs to focus youth vaping prevention campaigns broadly to increase awareness of risks and reduce acceptance of vaping (protective factors) while also targeting and tailoring campaigns to youth segments with greater risk factors. While a well-crafted and appealing campaign can engage youth in learning about the campaign and about the health impacts of vaping (including increasing contact to cessation resources), it is unknown if it has an impact on reducing youth use. It remains to be seen if, with school and pediatric supports, as well as parental awareness of harm and disapproval of use, youth vaping prevalence can be impacted.

NOTE: In March 2019 - February 2020, e-cigarette or vaping product use associated lung injury (EVALI) was just beginning to hit the media's radar. Then, in March 2020, the US began to understand that COVID-19 was going to impact daily lives, and shutdowns slowly began. It is unknown how these health concerns and social changes impacted youth knowledge or behavior during the campaigns or after the campaigns at this time. The NH YRBS was delayed due to the pandemic and current data is not yet available.

[1] Moran MB, Walker MW, Alexander TN, Jordan JW, Wagner DE. Why Peer Crowds Matter: Incorporating Youth Subcultures and Values into Health Education Campaigns. *AJPH*. 2017. 107(3):389-395.

[2] La Greca AM, Prinstein MJ, Fetter MD. Adolescent peer crowd affiliation: linkages with health risk behaviors and close friendships. *J. Pediatric Psych.* 2001;26(3):131-143.

[3] Moran MB, Murphy ST, Sussman S. Campaigns and Cliques: effectiveness of an anti-smoking campaign as a function of peer group assignment. *J of Health Communication*. 2012;17(10):1215-31.

[4] Lisha NE, Jordan JW, Ling PM. Peer crowd affiliation as a segmentation tool for young adult tobacco use. *Tob Control*. 2016;25 Suppl 1:i83-i89.

[5] Stalgaitis CA, Djakaria M, Jordan JW. The vaping teenager: understanding the psychographics and interests of adolescent vape users to inform health communication campaigns. *Tob Use Insights*. 2020;13:1-15.