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VAPING

THE SOCIAL CRISIS IN THE GUISE OF A HEALTH ISSUE

Ryerson University | Map The System 2020

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE

While vaping products and e-cigarettes were developed to help current adult smokers quit smoking, the inappropriate marketing and youth-oriented social enticement has led to an unanticipated but rapid rise in vaping among a younger population.

WHAT IS VAPING?

An electronic device such as an e-cigarette allows users to inhale heated “vape juice” or “e-juice” a substance that is formulated of vegetable glycerin, propylene glycol, water, food-grade flavoring, and nicotine (Health Canada, 2020). Vaping heats up products instead of burning them, thereby allowing for the effect of the products without releasing the toxic chemicals cigarettes release (Health Canada, 2020). Vaping and e-cigarettes are represented as ways to help with de-addiction, but without provision of adequate information on the contents, disadvantages and potential harms of using e-cigarettes or vaping.

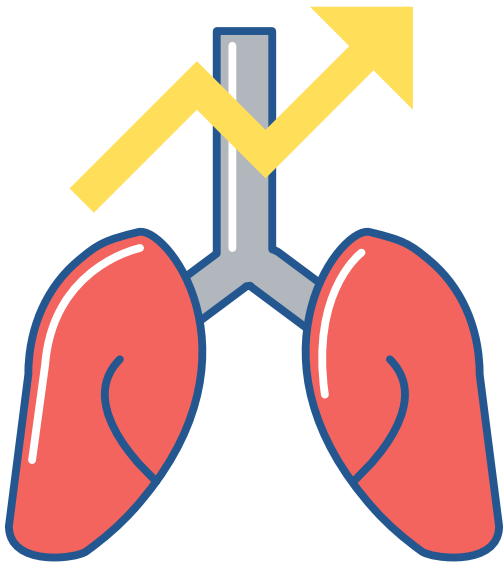
WHERE DOES THE ISSUE LIE?

The usage trend of such products among younger, nicotine addiction-free populations is troubling due to the potential consequences of introducing a highly infatuating practice that is both under-researched and harmful to health. In 2011, vaping among adolescents in the United States was minimal to nonexistent (Miech, Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman & Patrick, 2019). Over the course of six years, the practice became the most prevalent out of any similar tobacco products (Miech et al., 2019). This evolution of vaping into a mainstream trend among young adults not only highlights the issue of introducing minimally researched products into our markets, but also the consequences of lucrative marketing that targets vulnerable populations like adolescents. In their self-acclaimed path to end cigarette-based nicotine dependency, the vaping industry created their own personalized and highly profitable dependency and addiction.

21%

**CANADIANS AGED 16-25 HAVE
VAPED IN 2019**

WHY IS VAPING AN ISSUE?



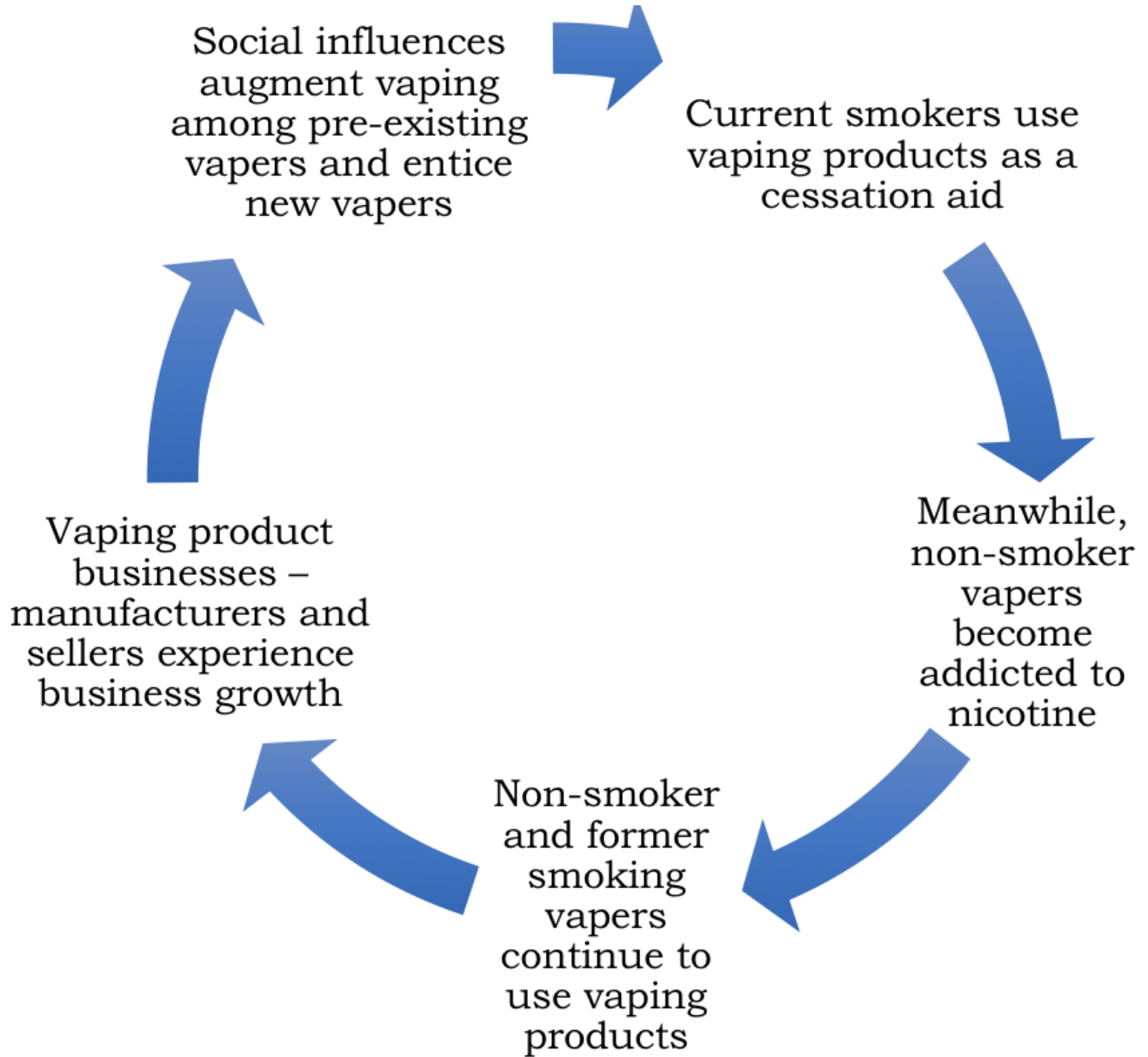
In terms of adolescent and young adult health, vaping is a serious threat to lung health. In August to September of 2019, a rise in e-cigarette and vaping associated lung injuries (EVALI) was recorded across Canada (CDC, 2020).

Furthermore, researchers at Dartmouth College's Norris Cotton Cancer Center found that e-cigarettes only slightly increase successful smoking cessation among adult smokers, while significantly increasing the number of youth vapers who become cigarette smokers (Soneji, Sung, Primack, Pierce, & Sargent, 2018).



In fact, the study found that young adults who engage in vaping are three times as likely to transition to cigarettes than young adults who do not vape (Soneji et al, 2018). In 2015, while only 2,070 cigarette smoking adults actually used e-cigarettes to quit smoking, a shocking 168, 000 young adults began smoking after using vaping products just once (Soneji et al., 2018).

THE CYCLE



ROOT CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

The usage trend of such products among younger, nicotine addiction-free populations is troubling due to the potential consequences of introducing a highly infatuating practice that is both under-researched and harmful to health. In 2011, vaping among adolescents in the United States was minimal to nonexistent (Miech, Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman & Patrick, 2019). Over the course of six years, the practice became the most prevalent out of any similar tobacco products (Miech et al., 2019). This evolution of vaping into a mainstream trend among young adults not only highlights the issue of introducing minimally researched products into our markets, but also the consequences of lucrative marketing that targets vulnerable populations like adolescents. In their self-acclaimed path to end cigarette-based nicotine dependency, the vaping industry created their own personalized and highly profitable dependency and addiction.

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The Solutions Landscape

Several research studies and commentaries have identified the growing need for a multitude of solutions to this issue involving various stakeholders.

Local Level

At the municipal level, schools and universities have, as with smoking, placed bans on e-cigarette or vaping product use within a certain distance of the institution. Additionally, public areas have also enhanced their regulation of smoking, e-cigarette use and vaping hence reducing their use on site.

National Level

The government of Canada had initiated a campaign on vaping awareness in 2019 to educate youth in particular on the risks of vaping and e-cigarette use (Government of Canada, 2019). The government of Canada has enforced strict regulation of e-cigarette marketing and sales to ensure that youth and young adults are not being enticed into purchasing this product, thereby increasing their own risk.

Global Level

The World Health Organization acknowledges that this is an issue that affects the world's future, as the choice for youth to vape and use e-cigarettes does not only lie in the hands of the users, but the onus falls upon the producers and companies selling these products. As a result, general guidelines were developed to help curb vaping among youth.

The government, businesses, health care institutions, the education sector and global manufacturers of this product all need to work together to regulate the sale of vaping products among youth.

Gaps and Levers of Change

Gaps	Levers of Change
Lack of communication with influencers (i.e.; parents, teachers, etc)	Schools, universities must take action to educate families on the health consequences of vaping for individuals who do not smoke regularly
Loose regulation around use of THC and nicotine in vaping products	Monitoring of nicotine and THC levels in the products at all levels of the government
Youth-oriented marketing continues to exist and entice youth in to purchasing vaping products or e-cigarettes (i.e.; Bubble-gum, candy, mango flavours)	Strict regulation of flavour marketing and censorship of marketing by Ministry of Health
Lack of collaboration between healthcare providers and product manufacturers and producers	Implement collaboration strategies such as bi-annual meetings to discuss and disseminate information on the safety and production of these products
No eligibility criteria for current vaping product or e-cigarette users resulting in easy access to these products by all	Vaping product sellers must validate that they are selling their products only to current smokers Those with a healthcare professional's referral should only be eligible to purchase these products

KEY THINGS LEARNED

We realize that as concerning the health consequences are, the social issues causing the rise of vaping products' use is even more concerning. Consequently, the youth and young adults who use these vaping products are not the ones to blame - we must take responsibility for this growing global issue as a society. Businesses, social media, government, educational institutions and families all must take responsibility and work collaboratively to ensure that the social pressures that exist around the use of these products is mitigated or even better, eliminated.