

Key Facts

On Flavored Tobacco, Nicotine and Vapes

**COUNTER
BALANCE**

Flavored tobacco and nicotine products attract and harm youth – and keep harming them into adulthood

- Teens who start smoking with menthol products are **twice as likely to become daily lifetime smokers.** (Tobacco Free Kids)
- Menthol-flavored tobacco products make them **easy to start**—whether flavored chew, vape, cigar or cigarette—and **harder to quit.**
- Cooling agents are added to products to make them smoother to use and likely **reduces perception of harm.** In addition to mint and menthol, flavored e-cigarettes with other cooling agents—often marketed as “ice” or “iced”—have also become popular with teens. Of teens who vape, **54.6% reported using a flavor** that included the word “ice” or “iced.” (Tobacco Free Kids)
- Flavored tobacco products typically have **bright, colorful packages** and are often sold individually and cheaply, making them even **more appealing to youth and young adults.**
- In 2022 and 2023, flavored tobacco and nicotine products, including menthol flavor, made up **a third of all units sold in Vermont.**

Nicotine is a real threat to youth

- Vaping nicotine **damages the lungs** and harms the immune system.
- Nicotine can **worsen anxiety** symptoms and increase feelings of depression.
- Nicotine exposure at a young age increases the risk of more **severe dependence on nicotine.**
- **Nicotine is highly addictive** and can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the mid-20s.

Vermont teens are at risk for addiction

- During the last 30 days, **16% of Vermont high schoolers** have used an e-cigarette product. Of those who vaped, **37% used it every day.**
- During the last 30 days, **6% of Vermont middle schoolers** have used an e-cigarette product, **increasing from 3% in 2015 and 5% in 2021.**
- Teens who first try tobacco using a vape are **four times more likely to try cigarettes** and are **three times more likely to become cigarette smokers** within two years.
- Rates of ever trying cigarettes or vaping in a Vermont high school youth’s lifetime are **highest among youth with an IEP, LGBTQ+, older youth and female youth.**
- **One-quarter of Vermont high school youth** report primarily vaping because they were curious about them (25%), with one in five primarily reporting using them **to get a high or buzz** (22%), one in five because they were **feeling anxious or stressed** (21%) or because a friend or family member used them (19%).



Key Facts

On Flavored Tobacco, Nicotine and Vapes

**COUNTER
BALANCE**

Popularity of disposables, nicotine pouches and synthetic nicotine and why it's alarming

- **Nicotine pouch use is rapidly rising among youth** and can contain alarmingly high amounts of nicotine. Sales of these products, which are primarily flavored, have tripled in Vermont.
- **JUUL is the top-selling e-cigarette brand** in Vermont. One JUUL pod contains **41.3 mg of nicotine**, which is equivalent to 37 cigarettes.
- Vermont has the **highest sales of disposable vapes among U.S. states**, with disposables accounting for 90% of all vape sales in the state.

Tobacco industry falsely markets that products are safe

- Advertisements for oral nicotine pouches often highlight themes that may appeal to young people. **Zyn gained popularity on social media via “Zynfluencers,”** and is also **enticing users with a rewards program.**
- E-cigarettes are often falsely promoted as **“reduced risk,” “smoke-free,” “socially acceptable”** consumer products.
- Tobacco companies are **advertising cigarettes and vape devices on social media** platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok by paying social media influencers.
- Many e-cigarette brands **now are marketed with “tobacco-free nicotine” or “synthetic nicotine,”** a claim that can make youth and parents think they are lower risk and increase purchase intentions.
- **All cigarettes**—including those marketed as “natural,” “organic” or “additive-free”—**have harmful substances** such as heavy metals, tar and carbon monoxide. This means that inhaling burnt tobacco of any kind is harmful.

Vermont’s tobacco laws

- Tobacco substitutes containing nicotine, including **e-cigarettes**, can only be **sold by a retailer who is licensed** or has purchased their products from a licensed wholesaler. The law effectively bans retail sales and delivery by mail, phone or internet. Substantial fines can be charged.
- Tobacco substitutes containing nicotine, **including e-cigarettes**, are subject to a **92% tax** on the wholesale cost.
- Vermont raised **the age to purchase tobacco products to 21.** This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes, all cigars, smokeless and any other tobacco substitute that contains nicotine or synthetic nicotine.

