SMOKE-FREE NOVA SCOTIA

LUNGNSPEI

2024 Youth & Young Adult Vaping Survey Summary Report

2025

Background

For at least a decade, e-cigarette use (vaping) among youth and young adults (YYAs) has been a significant public health concern. In 2019, the 2019 Youth and Young Adult Vaping Survey was conducted to better understand vaping behaviour among youth (ages 16- 18) and young adult (ages 19-24) regular e-cigarette users in Nova Scotia. Several policy recommendations were generated from this survey, eventually leading the Government of Nova Scotia to introduce a flavour ban, a nicotine concentration cap of 20mg/mL, a vaping product taxation increase, strict licensing requirements for vaping retailers, and an advertisement ban. With five years having passed since the introduction of these pieces of legislation, it is necessary to re-examine vaping among Nova Scotia YYAs to determine how the legislation may have impacted vaping trends.

Aim & Objectives

The aim of the *2024 Youth and Young Adult Vaping Survey* was fourfold. 1) It serves as a direct follow up to the *2019 Youth and Young Adult Vaping Survey* by collecting updated data on the questions asked during the initial survey. 2) It serves as an expansion of this initial survey by collecting data on previously unassessed elements of YYA vaping and other tobacco product use in Nova Scotia (e.g. nicotine pouches). 3) It sought to make inferences about the effectiveness of Nova Scotia's vaping legislation by examining changes in vaping trends among YYAs in Nova Scotia over a five-year period. 4) It aimed to summarize the vaping landscape in Nova Scotia and identify key areas in need of further attention.

Methods

A single, comprehensive, cross-sectional survey written in English was created to gain insight into vaping trends among YYA vapers in Nova Scotia. To be eligible to take the survey, prospective participants had to be between the ages of 16 and 24, have been residing in Nova Scotia at the time the survey was administered, and either (1) to have currently been using an e-cigarette at least once a week for the past three-months consecutively (classified as current vapers), or (2) have formerly used an e-cigarette at least once a week for at least three consecutive months (classified as former vapers). In total, n = 68 youth and n = 312 young adults (N = 380 participants total) completed the survey in its entirety. Of these, n = 279 were current vapers and n = 101 were former vapers.

Key Findings & Recommendations

Vaping Behaviour – Age 21 Remains Key

Overall, vaping behaviour in 2024 remains similar to behaviour in 2019, with some notable differences.

1) YYAs vaped **more** days per week, **more** times per day and took **more** puffs per vaping episode. The average number of vaping episodes a day more than **doubled** since 2019.
2) The average amount spent on vaping products **nearly doubled** per week compared to 2019.
3) Despite comprehensive regulations implemented since 2019, YYAs primarily **access** vaping products, **including flavoured products** from specialty vaping shops **operating in Nova Scotia**.
    a. Current vapers who access products vaping products from others were more likely to have products sources from outside of Nova Scotia.
4) In this sample, the age of initiation is trending younger compared to the 2019 survey for current vapers and **youth who vape** was found to **initiate vaping significantly younger** than former vapers and young adults.
    a. The CSTADS shows the prevalence of those **younger than 16** who vape is increasing [3].

5) While young adults are accessing products themselves, youth were primarily accessing products through legal age peers. Highlighting the need to consider **Age 21** legislation in Nova Scotia.
6) When former vapers were asked what would help others to quit vaping**, free nicotine replacement therapy** (patch, gum) and **text-based message** support were the most endorsed methods.

Despite the plethora of regulations that have been introduced since 2019, YYAs are vaping at an alarming rate that has returned to pre-pandemic levels, perhaps even more severely and continue to access vape products including flavoured products from retail locations operating in Nova Scotia. There is a need to implement additional regulations such as raising the legal age of purchase to 21 to curb peers purchasing vape products for those under the legal age. Additionally, there is a need to increase support for YYAs who are looking to quit vaping.

Table 3B. Former Vaper-Specific Questions

Variable	*M* (*SD*)
Number of quit attempts	3.63 (3.62)
Variable	***N* (%)**
Maintenance period length	
Less than a week	4 (4.0)
Less than a month	19 (18.8)
Less than a year	42 (41.6)
One year or longer	36 (35.6)
Quit method used	
Quit cold turkey	45 (45.0)
Self-restriction	10 (10.0)
Eliminating social influences	4 (4.0)
Replacing the behaviour	18 (18.0)
Thinking about health improvements	6 (6.0)
Other	17 (17.0)
Reason for quitting	
Negative side effects	23 (22.8)
Addiction	15 (14.9)
Possible long-term health effects	36 (35.5)
Cost	13 (12.9)
Stigma	2 (2.0)
Other	8 (7.9)
Unsure	4 (4.0)
Who was helpful when you were trying to quit[a]	
Parent/guardian	10 (9.9)
Other family member	5 (5.0)
Friends	34 (33.7)
Other adult in your life	1 (1.0)
Health care provider	3 (3.0)
Other	19 (18.8)
No one	39 (38.6)
What things make you want to vape again[a]	
Negative social influences	39 (38.6)
Stress/anxiety	59 (58.4)
Using other substances	44 (43.6)
Sensory experiences	61 (60.4)
Other	5 (5.0)
Nothing	12 (11.9)

What support services would help others quit vaping[a]	
Online counselling	33 (32.7)
Online support groups	31 (30.7)
In-person counselling	23 (22.8)
In-person support groups	22 (21.8)
Text-message support	45 (44.6)
Nicotine replacement therapy	69 (68.3)
Other	7 (6.9)

Note. [a]Participants could select more than one option. As such, percentages do not sum to 100. *N* = 101.

Table 3D. Vaping Behaviour by Age

Variable	Youth, *M* (*SD*)	Young Adults, *M* (*SD*)
Age at first use	13.32 (1.64)	15.88 (1.99)
Days vaped per week	6.59 (1.03)	6.72 (0.94)
Vaping episodes per day	61.28 (73.37)	54.56 (63.59)
Puffs per vaping episode	5.60 (5.82)	4.68 (6.80)
Number of quit attempts	3.14 (2.38)	3.50 (3.43)
Spending per week on vaping	32.36 (75.32)	27.32 (19.72)
Variable	**Youth, *N* (%)**	**Young Adults, *N* (%)**
Strongest influence to start vaping		
Family	1 (1.5)	10 (3.2)
Friends	39 (57.4)	182 (58.7)
Advertisements for vaping products	0 (0.0)	3 (1.0)
Social media vaping content	6 (8.8)	13 (4.2)
Wanting to quit smoking	2 (2.9)	40 (12.9)
Other	12 (17.6)	38 (12.3)
Unsure	8 (11.8)	24 (7.7)
Method of accessing vaping products		
Purchase(d) myself	29 (42.6)	276 (89.0)
Purchase(d) by someone else	36 (53.0)	22 (7.1)
Use(d) someone else's products	3 (4.4)	12 (3.9)
Source of money for vaping products		
From a job	43 (66.1)	270 (90.6)
From an allowance	12 (18.5)	12 (4.0)
Other	10 (15.4)	16 (5.4)
Source where you purchase(d) devices[a]		
Specialty vape shop in NS	7 (24.1)	136 (49.2)
Specialty vape shop outside NS	1 (3.4)	16 (5.8)
Online specialty vape shop in NS	2 (6.9)	14 (5.1)
Online specialty vape shop outside NS	6 (20.8)	30 (10.9)
Other retail location in NS	3 (10.4)	50 (18.1)
Other retail location outside NS	1 (3.4)	3 (1.1)
From someone else	7 (24.1)	11 (4.0)
Other	2 (6.9)	16 (5.8)
Source where you purchase(d) e-juice[a]		
Specialty vape shop in NS	6 (20.7)	107 (39.0)
Specialty vape shop outside NS	1 (3.4)	13 (4.7)
Online specialty vape shop in NS	2 (6.9)	20 (7.3)
Online specialty vape shop outside NS	0 (0.0)	42 (15.3)

Other retail location in NS	2 (6.9)	27 (9.9)
Other retail location outside NS	1 (3.4)	7 (2.6)
From someone else	10 (34.5)	15 (5.5)
Other	7 (24.2)	43 (15.7)
Person who buys/bought your products[b]		
Parent/legal guardian	1 (2.8)	0 (0.0)
Sibling	2 (5.5)	2 (9.2)
Friend who is of legal age	27 (75.0)	14 (63.6)
Friend who is not of legal age	6 (16.7)	3 (13.6)
Other	0 (0.0)	3 (13.6)
Source where other person buys/bought your devices[b]		
Specialty vape shop in NS	11 (30.6)	13 (59.1)
Specialty vape shop outside NS	3 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Online specialty vape shop in NS	3 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Online specialty vape shop outside NS	5 (13.9)	4 (18.2)
Other retail location in NS	6 (16.7)	3 (13.6)
Other retail location outside NS	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
From someone else	5 (13.9)	2 (9.1)
Other	3 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Source where other person buys/bought your e-juice[b]		
Specialty vape shop in NS	9 (25.0)	10 (45.5)
Specialty vape shop outside NS	2 (5.6)	0 (0.0)
Online specialty vape shop in NS	2 (5.6)	0 (0.0)
Online specialty vape shop outside NS	5 (13.8)	4 (18.2)
Other retail location in NS	3 (8.3)	3 (13.6)
Other retail location outside NS	2 (5.6)	0 (0.0)
From someone else	10 (27.8)	4 (18.2)
Other	3 (8.3)	1 (4.5)

Note. [a]Question only asked to those who purchased their own products. [b]Question only asked to those who had others purchase their products for them. *N* = 380.

Product Preferences – Changes in Market Trends, but Flavours Still King

Since 2019 and despite the flavour ban, the use of flavoured vaping products remains just as prevalent today, suggesting the flavour ban has had minimal impact.

1) Majority of participants (89.5%) indicated they are using flavoured vape products currently or at the time of cessation.
2) In 2019 pod style devices were most popular. This has shifted to disposable vape devices. **Over half** of participants said the most recent device they used was a **disposable vape**.
    a. With the popularity of disposable vape devices and the environmental concern they pose as a single use plastic, addressing access to disposable vapes should be a focus moving forward.
3) Since 2019, the average **nicotine concentration** that YYAs are using has **decreased** from 50 – 60 mg/ml to 20 – 30 mg/ml.

There continues to be significant work to do to combat the accessibility of flavoured vaping products.

Table 4. Product Preferences

Variable	*M* (*SD*)
Pods per week[a]	2.64 (2.57)

Disposables per week[b]	0.97 (0.66)
Variable	***N* (%)**
First device used	
Pod-based device	178 (47.0)
Disposable vape	102 (26.9)
Modifiable device	86 (22.7)
Vape pen	9 (2.4)
Traditional e-cigarette	4 (1.0)
Most recent device used	
Pod-based device	139 (36.7)
Disposable vape	214 (56.5)
Modifiable device	13 (3.4)
Vape pen	11 (2.9)
Traditional e-cigarette	2 (0.5)
Content of vaping products at uptake	
Vape juice with nicotine	329 (86.6)
Vape juice without nicotine	25 (6.6)
Dry cannabis	3 (0.8)
Liquid cannabis concentrate	19 (5.0)
Other	2 (0.5)
Unsure	2 (0.5)
Most recent content of vaping products	
Vape juice with nicotine	346 (91.3)
Vape juice without nicotine	7 (1.8)
Dry cannabis	3 (0.8)
Liquid cannabis concentrate	14 (3.7)
Other	8 (2.1)
Unsure	1 (0.3)
Nicotine concentration at uptake[c]	
1-19 mg/mL	63 (19.2)
20-35 mg/mL	113 (34.3)
36-50 mg/mL	57 (17.3)
50+ mg/mL	79 (24.0)
Unsure	17 (5.2)
Most recent nicotine concentration[d]	
1-19 mg/mL	35 (10.2)
20-35 mg/mL	187 (54.0)
36-50 mg/mL	55 (15.9)
50+ mg/mL	62 (17.9)
Unsure	7 (2.0)
Use of flavours at uptake	
Yes	363 (95.5)
No	17 (4.5)
Use of flavours at present/at cessation	
Yes	340 (89.5)
No	40 (10.5)
Source of flavoured vape juice[e]	
Specialty vape shop in NS	124 (36.6)
Specialty vape shop outside NS	20 (5.9)
Online specialty vape shop in NS	22 (6.5)
Online specialty vape shop outside NS	52 (15.3)
Other retail location in NS	54 (15.9)
Other retail location outside NS	4 (1.2)

From someone else	45 (13.3)
Other	18 (5.3)

[a]Question asked only to those who reported most recently using pod-based devices. [b]Question asked only to those who reported most recently using disposable devices. [c]Question asked only to those who reported using nicotine at uptake. [d]Question asked only to those who reported most recently using nicotine. [e]Question asked only to those who reported most recently using flavoured vape juice. *N* = 380.

Expectancies – Perceptions of Vaping have Shifted

In the five years since the initial survey, there have been some notable changes to how vaping is perceived by YYAs, particularly the shift away from vaping as a smoking alternative. Though overall, the shift in product preferences and vaping patterns did not change the prevalence of vaping-related-side effects.

1) In 2019 the best aspects of vaping included (1) nicotine rush, (2) positive social aspects, (3) vaping as a smoking alternative.
    a. In 2024, it was notable that YYAs do not perceive vaping as a smoking alternative as they did in 2019.
2) In 2024 participants indicated the best aspects of vaping are mood enhancement, the nicotine rush and the flavours.
    a. Only a minimal number of participants indicated they vaped as a smoking alternative or used as a cessation aid.
3) Participants indicated the worst aspects of vaping were the long-term health effects and the negative side effects. **Over half** of participants indicated **experiencing negative side effects**.

In the five years since the initial survey, there have been some notable changes to how vaping is perceived by YYAs, particularly the shift away from vaping as a smoking alternative. Though overall, the shift in product preferences and vaping patterns did not change the prevalence of vaping-related-side effects.

Table 5. Expectancies

Variable	*N* (%)
Best aspects of vaping	
Flavours	36 (9.4)
Nicotine rush	105 (27.9)
Tricks	7 (1.9)
Smoking alternative	19 (5.0)
Smoking cessation aid	7 (1.9)
Cost	3 (0.8)
Social aspects	18 (4.8)
Discreetness	20 (5.3)
Mood enhancement	147 (39.0)
Other	11 (2.9)
Unsure	4 (1.1)
Worst aspects of vaping	
Negative side-effects	76 (20.0)
Addiction	71 (18.7)
Long-term health effects	125 (32.9)
Product malfunction	31 (8.2)
Cost	51 (13.4)
Stigma	11 (2.9)
Other	10 (2.6)

Unsure	5 (1.3)
Experienced side-effects	
Yes	204 (53.7)
No	94 (24.7)
Unsure	82 (21.6)
Side-effect experienced[a,b]	
Respiratory	142 (69.6)
Nicotine-related	148 (72.5)
Other	101 (49.5)

Note. [a]Participants could select more than one option. As such, percentages do not sum to 100. [b]Question only asked to those who reported experiencing side effects. *N* = 380.

Advertising and Social Media – Exposure Continues to be Common

Since 2019, exposure to vaping advertisements has **decreased**. Despite the decrease, close to half of participants (41.1%) reported exposure to vaping ads, primarily on social media platforms (58.2%). This could suggest that the advertising ban has had some effect particularly in alternative form (such as point of sale) but there continues to be a significant amount of exposure on social media that should be a focus moving forward.

1) In general, vaping content is not the central content consumed on social media. However, vaping influencers seem to have an extensive reach with 67.9% of respondents indicating their social media exposure included influencers.
2) An encouraging finding is that a sizable number of participants reported encountering health promotion (30.3%) and government (21.3%) content related to vaping awareness. It is positive to see this increase as this type of messaging was rarely viewed in 2019.
3) It was found that youth (54.4%) were more likely than young adults (37.7%) to encounter vaping ads and content on social media. There is need to continue efforts to support youth to make informed choices as it related to vaping.

Table 6C. Advertising and Social Media by Age

Variable	Youth, *N* (%)	Young Adults, *N* (%)
Exposure to vaping ads		
Yes	37 (54.4)	117 (37.7)
No	31 (45.6)	193 (62.3)
Platform of vaping ad exposure[a,b]		
Facebook	12 (32.4)	46 (39.3)
Instagram	23 (62.2)	61 (52.1)
Snapchat	14 (37.8)	40 (34.2)
TikTok	19 (51.4)	51 (43.6)
Reddit	2 (5.4)	2 (1.7)
Twitter/X	5 (13.5)	15 (12.8)
YouTube	10 (27.0)	24 (20.5)
Other social media platform	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Non-social media website	5 (13.5)	25 (21.4)
Radio	2 (5.4)	9 (7.7)
Television	4 (10.8)	15 (12.8)
Billboards	5 (13.5)	14 (12.0)
Print media	8 (21.6)	14 (12.0)

Other	0 (0.0)	4 (3.4)
Source of advertisements[a,b]		
Vaping brands	25 (67.6)	81 (69.2)
Vaping retailers	10 (27.0)	59 (50.4)
Influencers	20 (54.1)	43 (36.8)
Non-influencer selling products	17 (45.9)	23 (19.7)
Other	1 (2.7)	1 (0.9)
Unsure	1 (2.7)	13 (11.1)
Exposure to vaping content on social media		
Yes	52 (76.5)	167 (53.9)
No	16 (23.5)	143 (46.1)
Platform of vaping content exposure[a,c]		
Facebook	11 (21.2)	53 (31.7)
Instagram	34 (65.4)	113 (67.7)
Snapchat	30 (57.7)	109 (65.3)
TikTok	44 (84.6)	140 (83.8)
Reddit	5 (9.6)	23 (13.8)
Twitter/X	8 (15.4)	15 (9.0)
YouTube	19 (36.5)	65 (38.9)
Other	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Source of social media content[a,c]		
Vaping brands	12 (23.1)	46 (27.5)
Vaping retailers	6 (11.5)	35 (21.0)
Pro-vaping organizations	5 (9.6)	8 (4.8)
Health promotion organizations	14 (26.9)	53 (31.7)
The government	11 (21.2)	36 (21.6)
Influencers	32 (61.5)	117 (70.1)
Friends	26 (50.0)	97 (58.1)
Family members	1 (1.9)	22 (13.2)
Strangers	23 (44.2)	1 (0.6)
Other	2 (3.8)	11 (6.6)
Unsure	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Note. [a]Participants could select more than one option. As such, percentages do not sum to 100. [b]Question only asked to participants who reported vaping ad exposure. [c]Question only asked to participants who reported exposure to vaping on social media. *N* = 380.

Tobacco Use – Evidence for the Gateway Hypothesis

The questions related to tobacco use had some of the **most notable findings in the entire survey**. Overall, the number of ever smokers far exceeds the number of participants in the 2019 survey. This conflicts with CSTADS data showing a decrease over time [3]. The findings in this survey suggest that **more YYAs are trying cigarettes today than the YYAs were in 2019**. It remains unknown whether the most recent CSTADS data will reflect this finding.

1) The **most important tobacco use finding** relates to the temporal relationship between vaping and smoking. In 2019 the largest proportion of participants reported smoking before vaping. With less than half reporting knowing someone who vaped before smoking.
    a. In 2024, **more than half** (56.5%) of participants knew someone who **vaped before** initiating **smoking**.
2) In 2024, more current vapers started **smoking <u>after</u> vaping** compared to former vapers.
    a. More young adults started vaping **after** smoking (35.1%) compared to youth (19.4%).

b. More **youth started smoking after vaping** (48.4%) or **smoking and vaping concurrently** (32.2%). When youth were asked why they started smoking after vaping, a key reason was the **accessibility of cigarettes** relative to vaping products (39.4%).

The findings in this survey showed an alarming increase in YYAs who reported smoking after vaping compared to YYAs in 2019 particularly among youth and current vapers. The number of **participants who reported smoking after vaping tripled** between 2019 and 2024. This combined with the increase of participants who knew someone who smoked after first vaping from 2019 to 2024 shows some degree of support for the vaping-to-smoking gateway hypothesis [18]. There continues to be a need for advocacy efforts to reinforce that vaping among never-smokers can lead to smoking uptake and the importance of early intervention to prevent vaping uptake among YYAs.

Table 7A. Tobacco Use by Vaping Status

Variable	Current Vapers, *M* (*SD*)	Former Vapers, *M* (*SD*)
Cigarettes smoked per week[a]	15.98 (22.54)	35.93 (44.30)
Variable	**Current Vapers, *N* (%)**	**Former Vapers, *N* (%)**
Tobacco use history		
Currently use	50 (18.1)	15 (14.9)
Formerly used	194 (70.0)	69 (68.3)
Never used	33 (11.9)	17 (16.8)
Tobacco types tried[a,b]		
Cigarettes	240 (98.4)	79 (94.0)
Cigarillos	90 (36.9)	35 (41.7)
Chewing tobacco	31 (12.7)	18 (21.4)
Snuff	14 (5.7)	3 (3.6)
Snus	30 (12.3)	6 (7.1)
Other	16 (6.6)	6 (7.1)
Temporal relationship between smoking and vaping[a]		
Started smoking before vaping	79 (32.4)	26 (31.0)
Started smoking and vaping concurrently	51 (20.9)	33 (39.3)
Started smoking after vaping	114 (46.7)	25 (29.7)
Tried vaping to quit smoking[c]		
Yes	9 (56.2)	2 (33.3)
No	7 (43.8)	4 (66.7)
Used vaping to quit smoking[d]		
Yes	40 (63.5)	10 (50.0)
No	23 (36.5)	10 (50.0)
Reason for starting to smoke after vaping[b,e]		
Curiosity	61 (53.5)	12 (48.0)
Peer pressure	25 (21.9)	8 (32.0)
Lower cost	15 (13.2)	3 (12.0)
Accessibility	19 (16.7)	9 (36.0)
Reduce vaping	11 (9.6)	4 (16.0)
Other	18 (15.8)	5 (20.0)
Unsure	3 (2.6)	0 (0.0)
Reason for starting to smoke and vape concurrently[b,f]		
Curiosity	33 (64.7)	18 (54.5)
Peer pressure	13 (25.5)	16 (48.5)
Lower cost	4 (7.8)	4 (12.1)

Accessibility	16 (31.4)	8 (24.2)
Reduce vaping	3 (5.9)	5 (15.2)
Other	6 (11.8)	4 (12.1)
Unsure	5 (9.8)	3 (9.1)
Knowledge of someone who started smoking after vaping		
Yes	149 (53.6)	65 (64.4)
No	129 (46.4)	36 (35.6)
Reason this person started smoking after vaping[b,g]		
Curiosity	41 (27.5)	15 (23.1)
Peer pressure	29 (19.5)	16 (24.6)
Lower cost	35 (23.5)	22 (33.8)
Accessibility	51 (34.2)	26 (40.0)
Reduce vaping	26 (17.4)	17 (26.2)
Other	6 (4.0)	7 (10.8)
Unsure	30 (20.1)	10 (15.4)

Note. [a]Question only asked to those with a tobacco use history. [b]Participants could select more than one option. As such, percentages do not sum to 100. [c]Question only asked to those who started smoking before vaping and who were current tobacco users. [d]Question only asked to those who started smoking before vaping and who were former tobacco users. [e]Question only asked to those who started smoking after vaping. [f]Question only asked to those who started smoking and vaping concurrently. [g]Question only asked to those who knew someone that started smoking after vaping. *N* = 380.

Nicotine Pouches – An Emerging Concern that Requires Attention

In 2019, vaping products were the most commonly used nicotine-based product by YYAs in Canada [1]. It was not until the 2020s that nicotine pouches began to explode in popularity, with brands such as ZYN leading the charge. To date, no comprehensive surveys have collected data on nicotine pouches usage among YYAs. This survey sought to address this gap.

1) Almost half of YYA participants (47.1%) in this sample tried a nicotine pouch.
2) The main reasons for trying a nicotine pouch are as follows: 1) curiosity (78.2%), 2) to reduce the amount that they vape (31.8%), 3) they are more accessible than vape products (19.6%).

Table 8. Nicotine Pouches

Variable	*N* (%)
Tried nicotine pouch	
Yes	179 (47.1)
No	201 (52.9)
Reason for trying nicotine pouch[a,b]	
Curiosity	140 (78.2)
Peer pressure	24 (13.4)
Lower cost	31 (17.3)
Accessibility	35 (19.6)
Reduce vaping	57 (31.8)
Reduce smoking	22 (12.3)
Other	14 (7.8)
Unsure	1 (0.6)
Nicotine pouch ad exposure	
Yes	209 (55.1)
No	156 (41.2)
Unsure	14 (3.7)

Source of nicotine pouch ads[a,c]	
Social media	171 (81.8)
Television	19 (9.1)
Radio	1 (0.5)
Print media	13 (6.2)
Billboard	23 (11.0)
Inside a store	110 (52.6)
Other	0 (0.0)

Note. [a]Participants could select more than one option. As such, percentages do not sum to 100. [b]Question only asked to those who reported trying nicotine pouches. [c]Question only asked to participants who reported nicotine pouch ad exposure. *N* = 380.

Impact of Legislation – Mixed Results Through Five Years

The final portion of the survey asked participants to self-report the degree to which they felt each piece of vaping legislation in Nova Scotia has impacted their vaping behaviour since being introduced.

Flavour Ban: As of April 2020, Nova Scotia implemented a flavour ban for e-cigarettes and e-juices. Over **three-quarters (76%) of participants** said the **flavour ban had no impact on their vaping behaviour**. This is supported by participants reported frequently using flavours as was observed in 2019 as well as through anecdotal evidence of the high rates that flavours continue to be sold throughout the province [7].

Nicotine Concentration Cap: While most respondents (71.2%) said the nicotine concentration cap had no impact on their vaping behaviour, the data collected tells a different story, with the average nicotine concentration used being lower than in 2019. In 2019, the largest portion of participants used 50-60 mg/mL, whereas in this sample the larger portion used 20-35 mg/mL suggesting the nicotine concentration cap has been doing its job.

Vaping Product Advertisement Ban: The ban on vape product advertising seems to have the most impact overall. The prevalence of vaping advertisement exposure had **significantly decreased** since 2019. This study found that (89.2) study participants said that advertisement ban did not affect their vaping, 11 (2.9) said that it made them vape less, 8 (2.1) said that it made them vape more, and 22 (5.8) said they were unsure. That said, advertising exposure remains fairly common, especially among youth. As such, further work is needed to limit the reach of vaping advertising.

Vape Product Taxation: The **taxation increas**e seems to have **a minimal impact** on YYA vaping despite YYAs indicating they are paying close to double on the cost on vaping products per week compared to 2019. More than half of respondents said it did not affect their vaping (69.7%). However, it was reported that more former vapers (33.7%) than current vapers (16.5%) reported it made them vape less. While a larger portion of respondents said taxation legislation impacted their vaping behaviour compared to other pieces of legislation, the largest portion said it did not impact their vaping behaviour.

Table 9. Impact of Vaping Legislation on Vaping Behaviour

Variable	*N* (%)
Banning flavours	
Did not affect my vaping	288 (76.0)
Made me vape less	40 (10.5)
Made me vape more	34 (9.0)
Unsure	17 (4.5)
Nicotine concentration cap	

Did not affect my vaping	270 (71.2)
Made me vape less	27 (7.1)
Made me vape more	67 (17.7)
Unsure	15 (4.0)
Price increases	
Did not affect my vaping	264 (69.7)
Made me vape less	80 (21.1)
Made me vape more	14 (3.7)
Unsure	21 (5.5)
Advertisement bans	
Did not affect my vaping	338 (89.2)
Made me vape less	11 (2.9)
Made me vape more	8 (2.1)
Unsure	22 (5.8)

Note. *N* = 380.

Conclusion

The 2024 Youth and Young Adult Vaping Project sought to follow up and expand on the 2019 Youth and Young Adult Vaping Survey and make inferences about the effectiveness of Nova Scotia's vaping legislation by examining changes in vaping trends among YYAs in Nova Scotia over a five-year period. While it remains unknown how the prevalence of vaping among YYAs in Nova Scotia has changed until the next iteration of the CSTADS is released, this survey's findings suggest most of the legislation introduced in Nova Scotia since 2020 has had little impact on the vaping behaviour of YYAs. Some of the more notable findings from this survey, such as the increase in the number of smokers who first vapes, the emergence of nicotine pouches, and changing perceptions around the accessibility of cigarettes relative to vaping products, highlight the need for comprehensive advocacy efforts aimed at closing legislative gaps and bringing awareness to novel issues. Overall, there remains much work to be done before significant changes in YYA vaping in Nova Scotia will be observed.

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