

INSIGHTS IN YOUR INBOX

Thought-provoking findings from KDHRC's analysis of original data with new reports shared bi-weekly. Today's findings are from the VAYPS (Vaping Attitudes Youth Perspectives Survey) dataset.



THE BOTTOM LINE

Youth who vape more report being more influenced by other students.

QUICK FINDINGS

Using a sample of survey data collected in May 2020 from 1,100 youth, aged 13 to 17, across the United States, peer influence and curiosity about vaping remain the primary reasons youth begin to vape. For example:

- Never-users reported feeling influenced at lower levels by kids at their school, in their grade level, and by their five closest friends than non-users, light-users, and regular-users.
- As vape usage increased, reports of perceived influence also increased. Note that influence was defined broadly – not just influence to vape but general influence across their lives.
- Regular-users report the perceived influence of their five closest friends on their life as 8.3 in a scale from 0 (lowest influence) to 10 (greatest influence), while never-users report a 6.6 rating.
- Most never-users (83%) believe that zero to 25% of their five closest grade-level friends vaped in the last 30 days compared to 71% of non-users, 57% of light-users, and 6% of regular-users.
- On the other hand, few never-users (1%) believe that 75% to 100% of their five closest grade-level friends vaped in the last 30 days compared to 3% of non-users, 9% of light-users, and 31% of regular-users.

ABOUT KDHR RESEARCH & COMMUNICATION

KDH Research & Communication provides timely dissemination of new research in public health and social services fields. Our mission is to produce and disseminate creative, science-based programs that improve the health and well-being of the nation's youth, family, and communities.

To learn more about the methodology behind the VAYPS project, please review the title page found [here](#). For more information about methodology or findings, contact our data analyst Andrew Simkus at asimkus@kdhrc.com. To read other findings, go to <https://www.kdhrc.com/news>.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Never-users in this study report feeling less influence from their classmates, including their five closest friends. Age may play a role in lower perceived susceptibility to outside influences for never-users especially as it relates to vaping, as younger youth may be less likely to be exposed to social media and unsupervised events. For never-users, there is a significantly lower perceived influence than other profiles and lower proportions of close friends who vape. These are both protective factors against the emergence of vaping.

At the same time, regular-users in this study report greater levels of influence from their friends AND 61% believe that 50% to 100% of their five closest friends vaped in the past 30 days. In this case, the composition of friend groups serves as a risk factor for regular-users to sustain or increase vaping.

Peer influence is a double-edged sword –protective for some, risky for others. Prevention messages that emphasize self-determination and/or targets close friend groups to break vaping patterns may be compelling.

YOUTH AVERAGE REPORTED RATING OF PERCEPTION OF PEER INFLUENCE

THE GRAPH BELOW SHOWS THE AVERAGE REPORTED RATINGS FROM AN 11-POINT SUBJECTIVE SCALE (0-10) FOR YOUTH PERCEPTION OF PEER INFLUENCE. GRAPH RESULTS ARE FROM TWO-SAMPLE T-TESTS CONDUCTED BETWEEN EACH PROFILE COMPARISON.

