

The Youth Vaping Epidemic

How flavors addict kids

7x Teens are nearly 7x more likely to vape nicotine than adults.^{1,2}

97% of youth who vape use flavors.³

5M Over 5 million U.S. youth are currently using e-cigarettes.⁴

Overview

The rise of e-cigarettes and flavored tobacco products threatens the health of California youth. Only 2% of California high school students smoke cigarettes, while 11% use e-cigarettes.⁵ Among young adults 18-24, only 6% smoke cigarettes, but 15.5% use e-cigarettes.⁶ Overall, youth are far more likely to use flavored tobacco products than adults.^{5,6}

E-cigarettes and youth

- Over 20,000 California stores sell e-cigarettes and vaping products. Nearly all of them (95%) sell flavored vaping products.⁷ In addition to familiar kid-friendly flavors like fruit punch, sour apple and mango, youth are also exposed to a wide variety of made up flavors like Unicorn Poop and Dragon's Blood.
- Over 15,000 flavors of e-cigarette and vaping products are on the market.⁸
- The most popular e-cigarette flavors among U.S. high school students are fruit flavors, followed by mint or menthol, followed by sweet flavors.⁹
- E-cigarettes can cause heart harm and possibly even cancer. Many of the chemicals that cause these harms come from the flavors.¹⁰⁻¹³
- Some chemicals common in flavored e-liquids are toxic to lung cells.^{14, 15}

Mint and menthol flavors

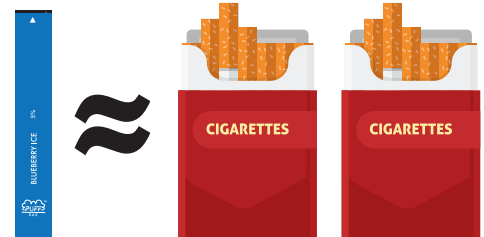
- Popularity of menthol and mint e-cigarette flavors increased among U.S. high school e-cigarette users from 2018 to 2019.⁹ In 2019, the popular e-cigarette maker, Juul, stopped selling all flavors of their pods except for menthol and tobacco.
- Mint/menthol flavors are the most commonly available flavor in stores that sell e-cigarette and vaping products (90%).⁷
- Menthol or mint flavored products may contain a cancer-causing chemical called pulegone. Users of mint and menthol e-cigarette are exposed to high levels of pulegone – more than the FDA allows in food.¹⁶



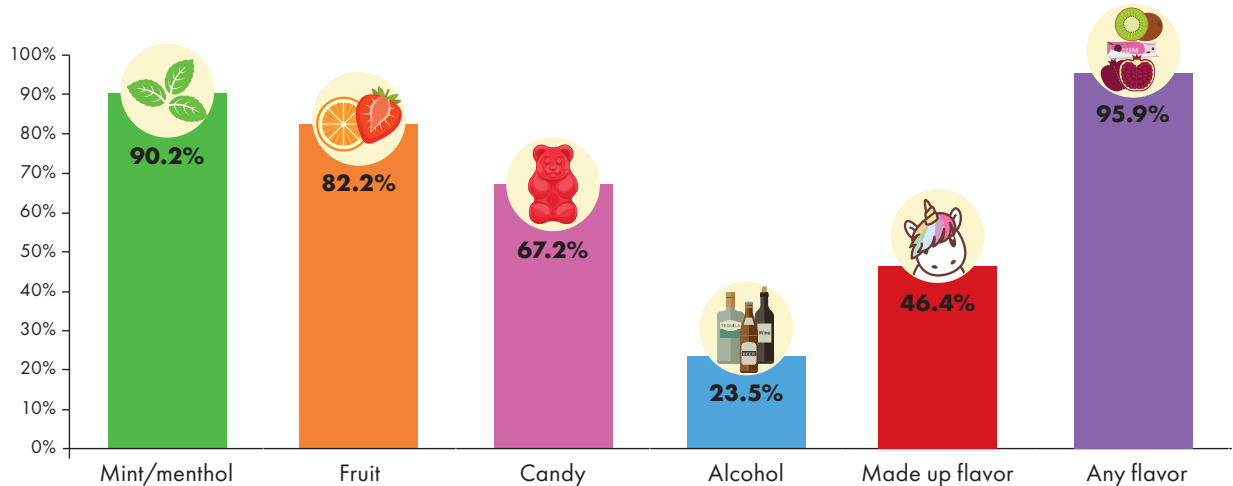
Problem:

Vaping is a youth epidemic

- Flavors entice youth to try vaping. They mask the harsh taste of tobacco and the product names sound fun and innocent.
- Youth nicotine use can lead to addiction and harm the developing brain, impacting learning, memory and attention.¹⁷
- The newest vaping devices contain high levels of nicotine. Some can have as much nicotine as up to two packs of cigarettes.¹⁸⁻²⁰



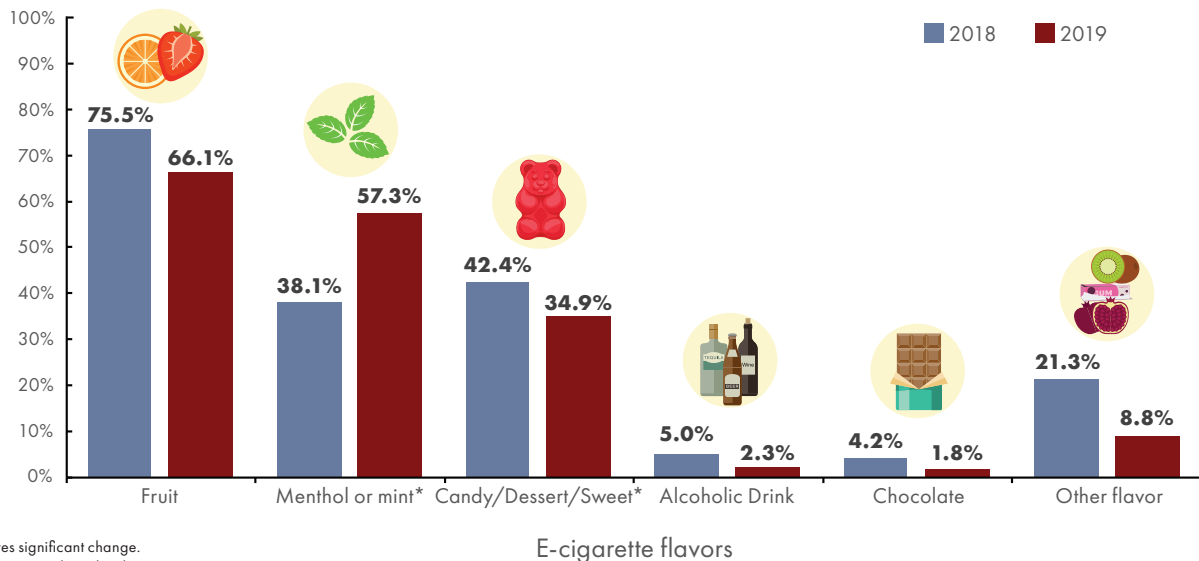
Availability of flavors in California stores that sell vaping products



Source: California Tobacco Retail Surveillance Study, 2018

Note: Restricted to stores that sold vaping products (N=737)

Most popular flavors among high school exclusive e-cigarette users in the U.S.



Be part of the solution

Talk to your children about the risks of tobacco use, including e-cigarettes and vaping products.

Visit FlavorsHookKids.org to download the [parent's guide](#) and learn more about these addictive products.

Educators and schools can use e-cigarette prevention education resources like the [Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit](#) and

California Department of Education's [Comprehensive Tobacco-Free School Policy Toolkit](#) with students.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) has e-cigarette resources for pediatricians including resources to assist with young patients who vape.

To help teens quit vaping, refer them to free phone, online, and text [Quit Vaping services](#) or use the free thisisquitting.com app designed for teens.

California communities are taking action

75 California communities and counting have taken action to restrict flavored tobacco products. Large and small, urban and rural, more communities like Yolo County, Alturas, Hermosa Beach and San Francisco, are making changes to protect their youth against these harmful tobacco products.

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