

Youth self-reported exposure to and perceptions of vaping advertisements: Findings from the 2017 International Tobacco Control Youth Tobacco and Vaping Survey

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Abstract

Countries have adopted various regulations to limit youth exposure to vaping product advertising. This study aims to examine youth exposure to and perceptions of vaping ads in Canada, England, and the US, three countries with varying vaping product advertising regulations. Data were analyzed from the 2017 ITC Youth Tobacco and Vaping Survey, an online survey of youth aged 16 to 19 years from a consumer panel (n = 12,064). The survey assessed vaping product ad exposure in the prior month, including channels, perceived appeal, and perceived target audience. Most young people reported some vaping product ad exposure in the past 30 days (Canada = 74%, England = 83%, US = 81%). Among those exposed to vaping product ads, more than one-third found them appealing (Canada = 36%, England = 38%, US = 43%). Stores that sell cigarettes were the most common venue for vaping ad exposure, although it was less common in Canada (46%) than in England (60%) or the US (60%), both of which had less restrictive regulatory environments. Ad exposure through websites or social media did not differ by country (Canada = 38%, England = 40%, US = 41%). Compared to those who never smoked or used vaping products, youth who reported smoking and/or vaping were more likely to report ad exposure through most channels. More than one-third of youth perceived that vaping product ads target non-smokers (Canada = 47%, England = 36%, US = 48%). Our study suggests most youth are exposed to vaping product ads, which may promote product use. Except for online channels, cross-country differences in the channels of ad exposure may reflect contrasting regulatory environments.

Recommended Citation

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