

Trends in e-cigarette and tobacco cigarette purchasing behaviors by youth in the United States, Canada, and England, 2017-2022

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Abstract

Objectives: This paper describes trends in youth e-cigarette (EC) and tobacco cigarette (TC) purchasing behaviors in Canada, England, and the United States (US) in relationship to changing minimum legal age (MLA) laws.

Methods: Data are from eight cross-sectional online surveys among national samples of 16- to 19-year-olds in Canada, England, and the US conducted from 2017 to 2022 (N = 104,467). Average wave percentage change in EC and TC purchasing prevalence and purchase locations were estimated using Joinpoint regressions.

Results: EC purchasing increased between 2017 and 2022, although the pattern of change differed by country. EC purchasing plateaued in 2019 for the US and in 2020 for Canada, while increasing through 2022 for England. TC purchasing declined sharply in the US, with purchasing from traditional retail locations declining, while purchasing from social sources increased. Vape shops were the most common location for EC purchasing, although declining in England and the US.

Conclusion: Trends in EC and TC purchasing trends in the US are consistent with the expected impact of the federal MLA law increasing the legal age to 21 years in December 2019.

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