

VAPING FACTORS FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH

BACKGROUND

The use of e-cigarettes (vaping) is higher among Indigenous youth compared to non-Indigenous youth, so understanding vaping among Indigenous youth is of utmost importance. In this study we collaborated with Indigenous youth from a Syilx First Nation community to understand why some Indigenous youth choose to vape and why others choose to not vape. This research was guided by the Unified Theory of Behavior (UTB) framework to understand factors that influence youth decision-making around vaping. These factors included beliefs, social influences, self-efficacy, emotions, perceptions of self, spit-second decision-making, knowledge, environment, behavioral cues, and habits,

METHODS

We gained insights from 16 Syilx youth through interviews, sharing circles, and demographic questionnaires. Indigenous peer researchers led these activities and then analyzed the data to find common themes. These themes were applied to the UTB framework.

RESULTS

Syilx youth explained that their decision to vape must be considered in the context of their cultural values, and in the historical context of colonialism and targeting by the tobacco industry. They mentioned personal reasons for wanting to vape, and many identified that vaping helps them cope with emotions and various stressors. They also provided reasons for avoiding vaping, like feeling connected to family and community. They believe prevention efforts for Indigenous youth should be relatable to Indigenous youth experiences.



- Use social media popular among youth
- Effective messages should prompt self-reflection, suggest alternatives, offer panic management skills, share peer experiences, and involve celebrity or influencer endorsements.
- Harness cultural strengths and resiliency
- Harnessing support from family, friends, and support circle.
- Don't approach youth with policies or interventions that makes youth feel like "their things are getting taken".

KEY POINT MESSAGES

- Indigenous youth see vaping as conflicting with their traditional practices and cultural values.

Cultural values and traditional practices are protective of Indigenous youth:

- Indigenous youth aspire to be positive role models within their communities.
- Indigenous youth value community and family connection.

- Cultural appropriation is seen in vaping advertising.
- Indigenous youth have higher vaping rates compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts

to vape?

WHAT INFLUENCES YOUTH

to not vape?

- Belief that it helps you cope with stress and anxiety
- Belief that it makes you cool
- Seeing how normalized it is
- Environmental factors that making vaping easy: vague, poorly enforced school policy; vapes are easy to get and easy to hide

- Belief that it harms your lungs
- Belief that it is addictive
- Feeling connected to family and community
- Grounding oneself in family values and beliefs
- Engaging in cultural activities (e.g., drum making, beading, hiking, gathering herbs and berries)
- Engaging in self-reflection (e.g., asking yourself why you would vape and what you would gain from it)
- Engaging avoidance/resistance strategies (e.g., not going outside during school breaks)
- Being able to access supportive adults in the community



Infographic created by Madi Wark, Saige Werstuik and Timothy Dela Cruz
Read the full scientific paper here: [Decision to Vape Among Indigenous Youth](#)