



# Welcome to the **Positive Choices Webinar Series**

[positivechoices.org.au](http://positivechoices.org.au)



@pos\_choices



@positivechoices1



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health  
and Aged Care**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**  
—  
Matilda Centre



# Acknowledgement of country

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I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, water and community. I am currently on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and pay my respects to Elders, past and present. I further acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which you are and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

I would also like to acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us for the webinar today.



# Housekeeping

1 Listen only mode.

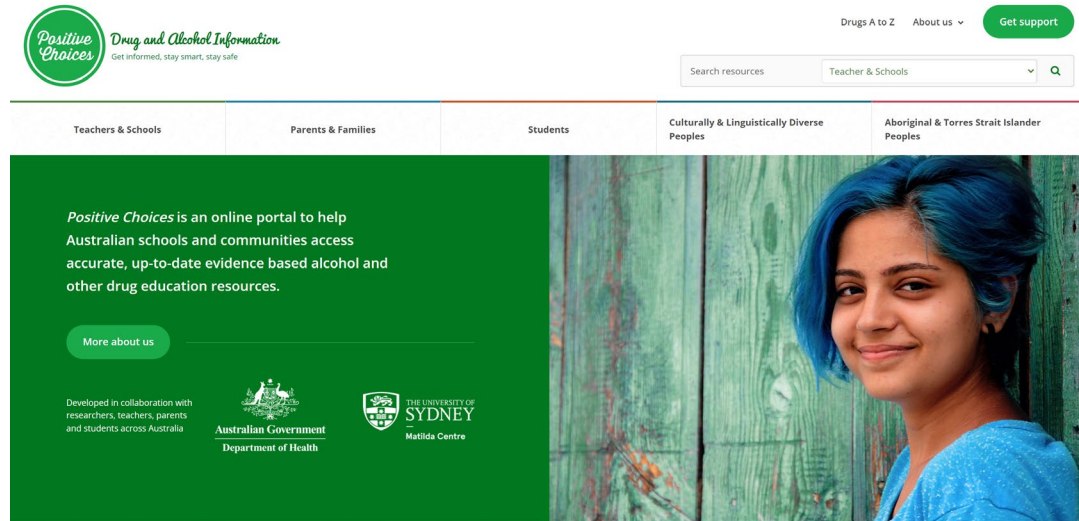
2 This webinar is being recorded and will be made available on the Positive Choices website.

3 We will have a Q&A session at the end of the webinar. Please add questions to the Q&A box available.



# What is Positive Choices?

[positivechoices.org.au](http://positivechoices.org.au)



• Central access point for trustworthy, up-to-date drug and alcohol information and educational resources.

• Developed by the Matilda Centre in consultation with teachers, parents and students. Funded by Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.



Teachers & Schools

Evidence-based teaching programs and activities, webinars for teachers, and resources for your students



Parents & Families

Parenting advice and information to help you talk to your children about drugs and alcohol



Students

Facts, advice and interactive tools to help you find out information about drugs and alcohol and make positive choices



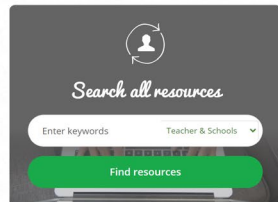
Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Peoples

Evidence based drug education resources for individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples

A collection of culturally appropriate resources based on research and consultation with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities



• Learning resources, factsheets, videos, webinars and games to engage young people with drug education.

• Access to classroom-based drug prevention programs that are proven to reduced drug-related harms.



positivechoices.org.au

# 'It was just a social thing – now I'm addicted': an overview of the Generation Vape project

Dr Bronwyn McGill, Research Fellow, the Prevention Research Collaboration, the University of Sydney

Dr Shiho Rose, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, the Daffodil Centre, Cancer Council NSW & the University of Sydney

9<sup>th</sup> August 2023



**GENERATION  
VAPE**

A research collaboration project



In partnership with

**Cancer  
Council**

*“It was just a social thing – now I’m addicted”*  
an overview of the Generation Vape research project

**Presented by:**

Bronwyn McGill (The University of Sydney)

Shiho Rose (The Daffodil Centre)

9<sup>th</sup> August 2023

# Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which Cancer Council NSW and University of Sydney work is undertaken. We pay our respects to those who have cared for and continue to care for Country.

# Generation Vape funding partners



## Philanthropic partner



## Federal partner



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Aged Care**

## State partner



Proudly funded by the NSW  
Government in association with NSW  
Health and Cancer Institute NSW

## Research partners

**The Daffodil Centre**





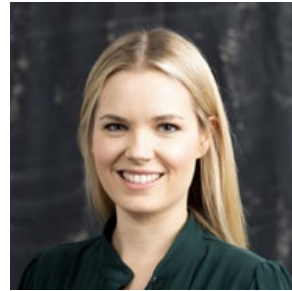
# Generation Vape Research Team



**Anita Dessaix**  
Executive Sponsor  
Co-investigator



**A/Prof Becky Freeman**  
Chief Investigator



**Dr Christina Watts**  
Co-investigator



**Sam Egger**  
Co-investigator  
Statistician



**Alecia Brooks**  
Co-investigator  
Project Manager



**Paul Grogan**  
Co-investigator  
Strategic Advisor



**Emily Jenkinson**  
Co-investigator  
Project Lead



**Ciara Madigan**  
Project Coordinator



**Dr Bronwyn McGill**  
Co-investigator



**Amelia Yazidjoglou**  
PhD Candidate



**Dr Shiho Rose**  
Co-investigator

# Friendly reminder



**No sharing of our  
unpublished research  
data please**

# Outline



- The problem
- The policy landscape
- The Generation Vape research project
  
- Key findings
  - Young people
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  
- Key messages



# Vaping among young people

Disposable  
Flavoured  
Nicotine  
Cheap  
Available



# Vaping access



**Thank you to the students who were generous with their time.**

**We hope to honor their honesty and insights with stronger laws to protect their health and wellbeing.**



# Vaping legislation 2021



Vaping laws  
changed

October 2021

Adults accessing  
nicotine e-  
cigarettes and e-  
liquids need  
medical  
prescription

Designed to  
prevent vaping by  
non-smokers,  
particularly young  
people

# Vaping reforms announced 2023



## Ministers

Department of Health and Aged Care

[Home](#) [Media centre](#) [Mark Butler](#) [Anika Wells](#) [Ged Kearney](#) [Emma McBride](#) [Malarndirri McCarthy](#)

[Home](#) > [The Hon Mark Butler MP](#) > [Minister Butler's media](#)

## Taking action on smoking and vaping

The Albanese Government is taking strong action to reduce smoking and stamp out vaping – particularly among young Australians – through stronger legislation, enforcement, education and support.



**The Hon Mark Butler MP**  
Minister for Health and Aged Care

# Proposed reforms include



## End easy access

- stop import of **ALL** non-prescription vapes
- end vape sales, **including non-nicotine**, in convenience stores/other retail settings

## Strengthen prescription vape regulations

- increase minimum quality standards for vapes (restrict flavours/colours/other ingredients)
- require pharmaceutical-like packaging
- reduce allowed nicotine concentrations and volumes
- ban all single use, disposable vapes



# Overview of Generation Vape



## Aim

Examine awareness, perceptions, attitudes, related knowledge and behaviours of e-cigarette use

## Target groups



Young people  
(14-17 years)



Parents



Teachers  
(secondary)



Young adults  
(18-24 years)

## Data collection and timeline

### Wave 1

July – Dec 2021

- Survey
- Focus groups/ interviews
- NSW only

### Wave 2

Mar – July 2022

- Survey
- Focus groups/ interviews
- National expansion
- 18-24yo

### Wave 3

Sept – Dec 2022

- Survey

### Wave 4

Mar – July 2023

- Survey
- Focus groups/ interviews

### Wave 5

Sept – Dec 2023

- Survey

### Wave 6

Mar – July 2024

- Surveys
- Focus groups/ interviews

# Overview of Generation Vape



## Aim

Examine awareness, perceptions, attitudes, related knowledge and behaviours of e-cigarette use

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**Parents of young people**



**Teachers (secondary)**



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Sept – Dec 2023

- Survey

### Wave 6

Mar – July 2024

- Surveys
- Focus groups/ interviews

# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

**1** 35% have tried vaping (ever-vaped)

**2** 70% were under 16 years old when trying their first vape

**3** 51% used a vape they knew contained nicotine

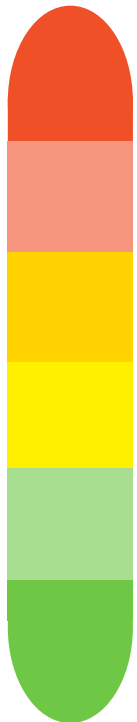
**4** 35% who have never vaped are curious about vaping

# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

How easy or hard is it to get a vape?

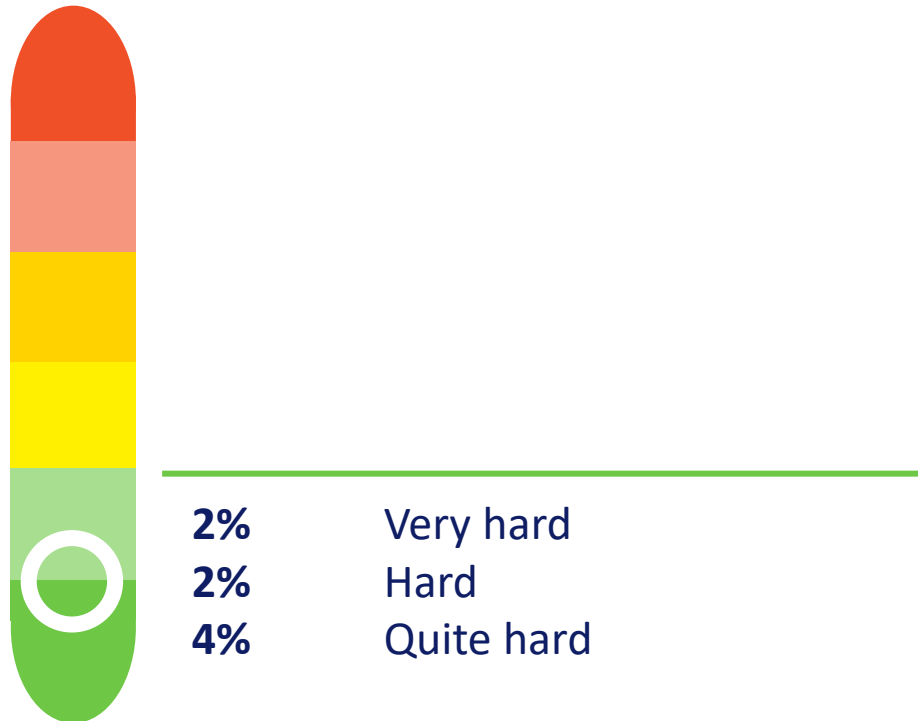


# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

How easy or hard is it to get a vape?

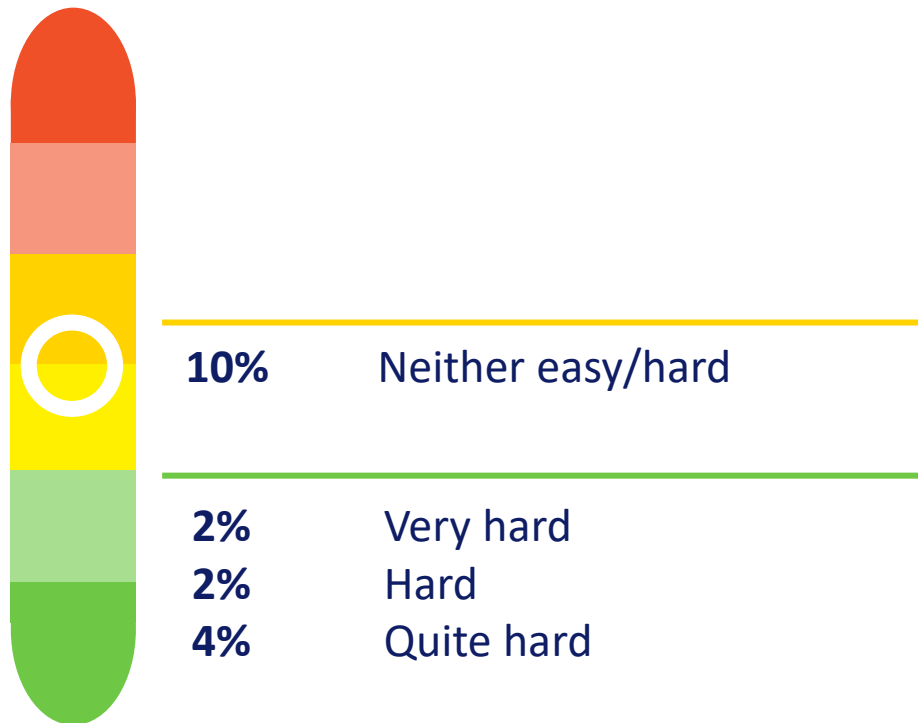


# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

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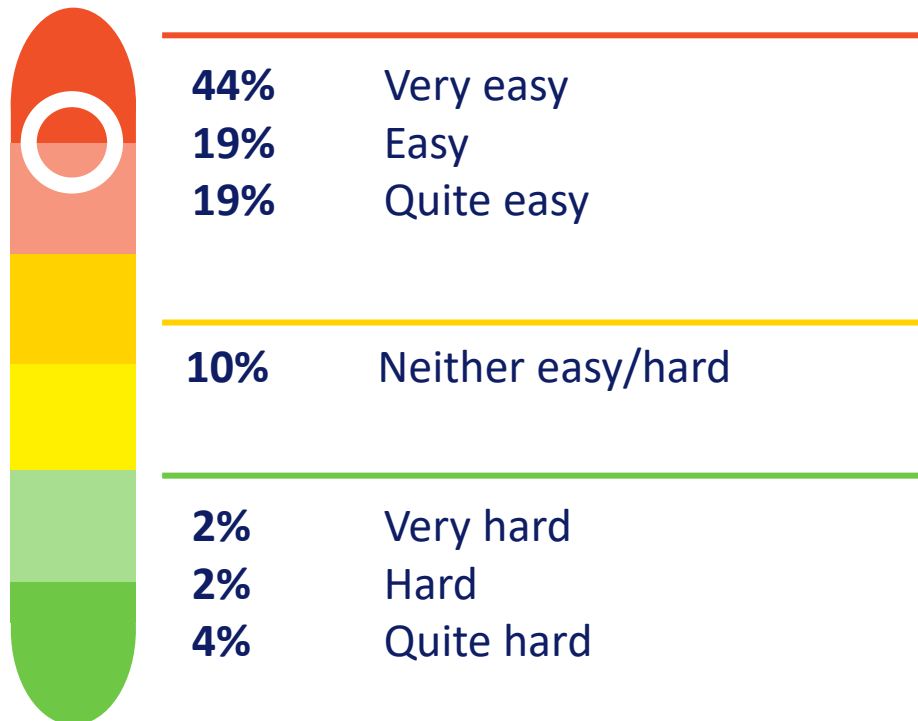


# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

How easy or hard is it to get a vape?



*“You can get them from anywhere now.  
Literally anywhere.”*

(Female, 14-15yo, Current vaper)

*“I have a friend, who sells them  
occasionally. So, I can probably get one  
from him - it’s not very hard to get.  
There’s heaps of people in my year that  
I’d be able to get one from.”*

(Male, 14-15yo, Past vaper)

# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

### Where did you buy the vape from?



**47%** Through *retail stores*  
(e.g., tobacconist, petrol station, convenience store, vape store)



**39%** Through a *friend or someone else/'dealer'*



**14%** Through *social media*  
(e.g., Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram)

*"Just off friends, I guess. I don't really know where my friends get them from - I just go to school and tell my friends I want one. And then - next day they'll come in with one, and then I just pay them."*

(Male, 14-yo, Past vaper)

*"Um, I've bought from [a corner store] before, and it's like right next to the school as well... they don't ask for ID... but they are very like overpriced."*

(Female, 15-16yo, Ex-vaper)

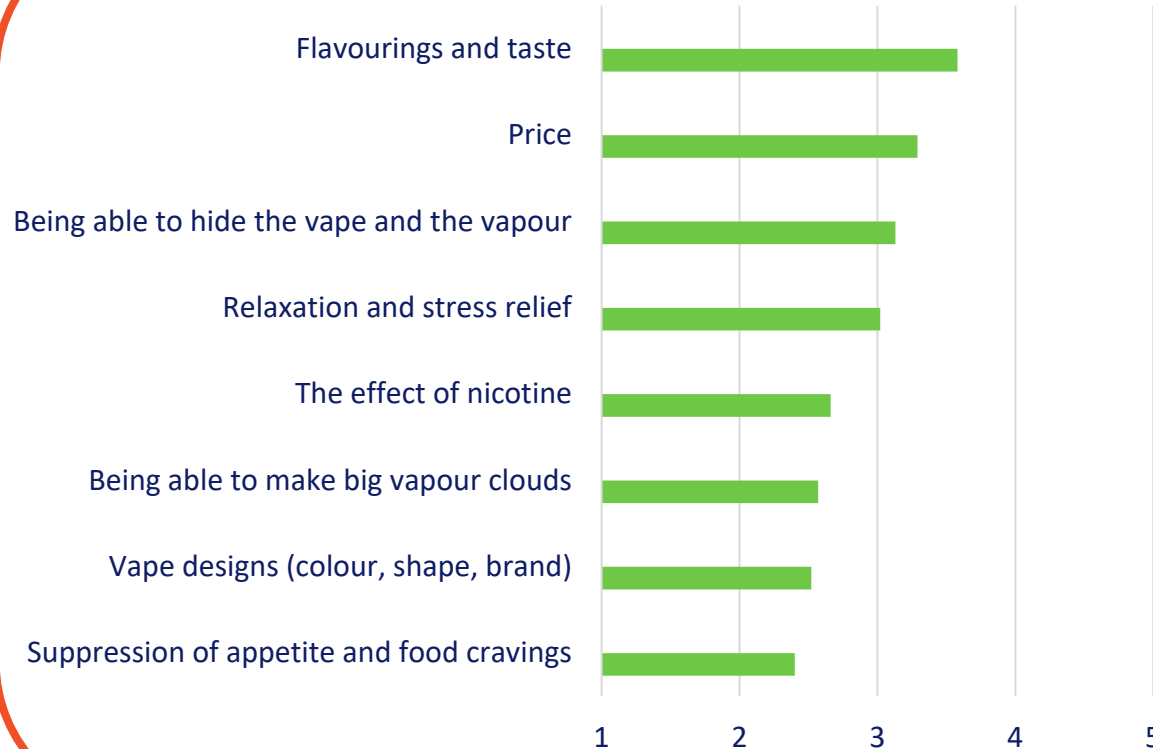


# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years

### How important are the following when it comes to vaping?



Scale: 1 = Not important; 3 = Neutral; 5 = Very important

*“...imagine you are eating a lolly, but instead of eating it you’re like inhaling it.”*

(Male, 17yo, Tried vaping)

*“It’s just you crave it – it’s the mental hit – I find [vapes] calms me down. Yeah, like when you’re stressed or something, I have it and I’m like more calm.”*

(Female, 16-17yo, Past vaper)

# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years



Vaping seen as  
socially acceptable,  
different to  
smoking

*“It’s like literally everyone. Like even people you wouldn’t think would do that. They, they do it.”*

(Male, 15-16yo, Tried vaping)

*“When you go around people after smoking, people can smell it, people can be like ‘that’s really gross, stand away from me’. But, when you vape; no one, no one notices, like no one can smell it on you, or like you don’t have to be cautious of how you smell.”*

(Female, 16yo, Past vaper)

# Results – Snapshot



## Young people, 14-17 years



Addiction  
experienced by  
some, and quitting  
is challenging

*“I was using them for a couple of months - and it got the point where I was, using one every day. And like, if I didn’t have one, after about like 12 o’clock, I’d start to get really agitated like, just little things would annoy me.”*

(Male, 17yo, Current vaper)

*“I tell myself ‘this is my last one’, I just go back the next day and end up getting one...”*

(Male, 17yo, Ex-vaper)

*“I wish I never started, to be honest. I just don’t know how I’m gonna get off it... it’s the first you do when you wake up or before you go to bed. So, you’re just constantly like thinking about it.”*

(Female, 16-17yo, Current vaper)

# Results – Snapshot



## Parents

- 1** 26% know or strongly suspect their child has vaped
- 2** 84% had discussions with child(ren) about using vapes
- 3** 36% received communications from school (either generic or specific to their child(ren)) about vaping
- 4** 64% perceive students vaping as concerning/very concerning; 81% agree it is high/very high priority

# Results – Snapshot



## Parents



Expressed fears  
about lack of  
knowledge, growing  
concerns about  
addiction

*“I think it’s scary. Well I don’t think it’s been around long enough to know what the long-term implications are going to be.”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, One child)

*“I think as well maybe, that their perception that it’s not addictive, it’s not as addictive as smoking... It’s almost like ‘oh it’s just something I can do every now and then, and I won’t become addicted to it’”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, Two children)

# Results – Snapshot



## Parents



Discussions about vapes are difficult, feel uninformed and that children know more

*“I don’t know enough of the facts, no. I find we are fairly open about what we talk about, but in terms of having an intelligent discussion, I probably would need to look up a bit more stuff, to know the facts.”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, Three children)

*“Some say, oh no, it's a lot healthier than cigarettes. And then I've heard no, no, it's worse than cigarettes. So, I don't really know... I mean, I've Googled it even there there's conflicting information. You don't know what to believe.”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, Two children)

# Results – Snapshot



## Parents



Knowledge of laws varied, agreed young people need to be protected

*“I actually didn’t think there was a law to do with vaping”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, Two children)

*“Well, my teenager goes to the tobacconist and he buys them... He’s not 18, so what’s going on here?”*

(Parent, Smoker, One child)

*“I feel like why is no one clamping down on it? They are just selling them everywhere. Why, if this is illegal, is it so prevalent at the moment?”*

(Parent, Non-smoker, Two children)

# Results – Snapshot



## Teachers

- 1 86% concerned/very concerned about students vaping at school
- 2 71% felt that preventing vaping at school was a high/very high priority
- 3 31% reported school communicated about harms 4+ times (past 6 months)
- 4 44% were aware of the sale of vaping products on school grounds



# Results – Snapshot



## Teachers



Schools were taken  
by surprise

*“... vaping is the single  
most disruptive thing in our  
school at the moment.”*

(Principal, Metropolitan, Private  
school)

*“... vapes have taken over  
for sure.”*

(Teacher, Metropolitan, Public  
school)

# Results – Snapshot



## Teachers



Vaping is social and acceptable among students

*“I think kids see school as their major place of association – kids don’t vape on their own, its such a social behaviour that I think school is their shared space.”*

(Principal, Metropolitan, Private school)

*“It’s pretty broadly accepted, almost as an accessory that these kids will carry, like their mobile phone, their vape, their sunglasses sort of thing.”*

(Principal, Metropolitan, Private school)

# Results – Snapshot



## Teachers



Concern about a lack of knowledge and understanding of health effects

Strongly agree that vaping among young people can cause nicotine addiction

*“But we don’t know what they’re vaping. They might be vaping ah, nicotine, they might just be vaping one of the raspberry ones.”*

(Teacher, Metropolitan, Public school)

*“Um, yeah... it’s very concerning. I think it’s you know, it’s a poison that we’re sort of ignoring - like smoking, but it’s probably more dangerous.”*

(Principal, Metropolitan, Private school)

# Results – Snapshot



## Teachers



Challenges of  
managing vaping  
by schools

*“What student wants to listen to a teacher talk about vaping when it’s not their area of expertise - it’s a hard one so a lot of students just disengage..”*

(Teacher, Metropolitan, Private school)

*“We typically find kids [vaping] in the toilets - we can’t go in - we smell them coming out. They are not sneaking off by themselves. It’s a peer group thing.”*

(Teacher, Metropolitan, Private school)

# Key messages



**1** High uptake and use of vapes by young people

**2** Vapes are currently easily accessed by young people

**3** Knowledge and believability of health harms of vapes varies

**4** Addiction and cessation considerations

# Personal stories



**Young people know vaping is addictive, and they are already seeing the health effects.**

[https://youtu.be/\\_4OsHGsa874](https://youtu.be/_4OsHGsa874)

# Helpful resources

## NSW Health - "The facts about vaping"

- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/vaping>
- Information for:
  - Young people
  - Parents/carers
  - Teachers
  - Health professionals



**DO YOU KNOW**

**WHAT YOU'RE VAPING?**

Vapes can have the same harmful chemicals like in cleaning products, weed killer, bug spray and nail polish remover. They just don't put it on the pack.  
Get the facts at [health.nsw.gov.au/vaping](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/vaping)

March 2022 © NSW Health, SHPP (CPI) 220191



**GET THE FACTS ABOUT VAPING**

**WWW**



# Thank you.

Please contact  
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for any questions.

Find out more about the  
Generation Vape Research  
Project via our website!







positivechoices.org.au

# Questions?





# Thank You

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