

Positive Choices webinar_ an o...of the Generation Vape project

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SPEAKERS

Bronwyn McGill, Emma Devine, Video, Shiho Rose



Emma Devine 00:00

I'd like to say a big good afternoon and welcome to everyone who has joined us today for our Positive Choices webinar series. My name is Dr. Emma Devine, and I'm a researcher at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use based at the University of Sydney. I also work as the project manager for Positive Choices. And a big welcome to you all to today's session. So before we get started, I want to acknowledge that we're all coming together from different parts of the country today. So I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia, and their connection to land, water and community. So today, I'm currently on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and I pay my respects to Elder's past and present, I further acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which you are on and pay my respects to their Elders past and present as well. And finally, I would also like to acknowledge any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us for the webinar today, I encourage you as well, if you would like to pop into the chat, what lands you're joining us from today as well. So before we get started, we've got to cover a couple of housekeeping points. So the first of those being that as participants, you're currently on what we call a Listen Only mode. And what that means is that we are not able to see you or to hear you. If you do have questions or queries throughout the, if something's not working that we might be able to help with, please pop it into the chat instead. And we've got the wonderful Amelia Russell behind the scenes on the Positive Choices account, who will be able to help you out as much as possible. The second point there is that we are recording this session and it will be made available through the Positive Choices website along with the slide handouts for today's session. And at the end of the webinar, we will have a question and answer session. So as the session progresses, please feel free to pop your questions in there. And you should be able to see that on the screen maybe at the top or the bottom, depending on how your zoom has chosen to lay itself out today. So for those of you who might be new to the Positive Choices, and our Positive Choices webinar series, I wanted to give you a quick introduction. So Positive Choices is a website that provides access to trustworthy, up to date, evidence based alcohol and other drug information and, as well as educational resources that are suitable for parents, school staff and students. So Positive Choices is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. And it was developed by the Matilda Centre for Research

in Mental Health and Substance Use here at the University of Sydney, in consultation with our users, so the teachers, parents and students. Some example of re- Some examples of resources that we do houses on Positive Choices are things like fact sheets, videos, of course, our webinar series, we also have games, and we've got classroom based prevention programmes that have been proven to reduce drug related harms. So I encourage you to have a little look at the website a little visit a little nosy around and see if there's something there that might be useful for you. But without further ado, on to today's webinar. So today we are focusing on vaping, which we know is a huge topic of interest and importance to a lot of school communities at the moment and we're really excited to have Dr. McGill and Dr. Rose here presenting for us today. So Dr. McGill is a research fellow with the prevention research collaboration. And her research focuses on chronic disease prevention, and in particular the evaluation of lifestyle modification interventions. She is also a researcher with the Generation Vape project, which is what she will be speaking about today, which investigates e-cigarette use in young people. And we've also got Dr. Rose who is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Daffodil Centre with experience in behavioural research and she's recently completed her PhD so big congratulations, exploring the experiences of stigma in people diagnosed with lung cancer. And Dr. Rose is also involved in the Generation Vape project looking at e-cigarette use in young people so without further ado, that's enough for me, and I will hand it over to Bronwyn and Shiho now to present for us. Thank you!

B

Bronwyn McGill 04:18

Thank you, Emma. Um, well welcome everybody. We're very excited to be with you today. I'm Bronwyn and this is Shiho. So sorry, my screen has my name, but that's because we're sharing my laptop. Okay, we'll get those slides up and get going. Okay, so, as I said, we're really happy to be here to talk to you about our Generation Vape research today. And before we get started, I would like to acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the country on which Cancer Council New South Wales and University of Sydney work is undertaken, and we pay our respects to those who have cared for and continue to care for our country. So a few kind of formalities before we get going. This work would not be possible without funding from our philanthropic, philanthropic partners, the Minderoo Foundation, from the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, as well as the New South Wales Government from New South Wales Health and the Cancer Institute in New South Wales. And also, our research partners at Daffodil Centre and the University of Sydney So this is the Generation Vape research team I wonderful group of people that Shiho and I are very privileged to work with. So people from Cancer Council New South Wales and Daffodil Centre and the University of Sydney, but in particular, we really want to acknowledge, Becky Freeman and Christina Watts, behind this project. And lastly, a lot of the research we're talking about today is not yet published. So we ask that you don't share that on Twitter or any platforms. And we also couldn't quite bring ourselves to take the little bird off here and put the the X on. So we've left the little Tweety Bird for you. Okay, so today, just briefly, what we're going to be talking about is very quickly going over the problem of vaping, a bit about the policy landscape in Australia at the moment, and an overview of what the research project is about. And then we're going to move on to taking you through some of the key findings so far, amongst young people, their parents and their teachers, and then end up with some key messages that are coming out of that research to date. So as you all know, because you're here, because this is a big problem, obviously vaping amongst young people is, as we know, a growing problem. And there are many reasons for that. But partly, it's you know, these vapes are brightly coloured, they're flavoured, they're appealing to young people, they don't look, you know, ugly, they look like something that you might just have in your pencil case, really, they are very convenient.

They are marketed directly at young people. And they're disposable, flavoured, they contain nicotine mostly, they're cheap, and they are very readily available. And that really just creates this perfect storm of this problem of increasing vaping amongst our adolescents. So before I get going too much further into what we're doing, we have a video which was made by a Cancer Council in New South Wales with some sort of first and second year uni students at a university in New South Wales, and it just gives the perspectives that they have on vaping. And although this age group is you know, slightly older than the adolescent age group that we are talking about today, their insights are amazing. And really, it's where our adolescents are going to be in a few years time. So hopefully, we can get this working

V

Video 08:43

You can get them from a vape shop, I know there's like a fair few under the counter places as well. They say that it's not nicotine in them, but they get shipped over from New Zealand so fairly sure there is nicotine in them. Cignal, petrol stations, friends. Yeah, side of the road, club bathrooms. I would probably literally walk into like, any store that looks like they sell like snacks and just ask for a vape and they would give me one. It's like even easier access here than where I'm from in the US. And it's not even like fully illegal in the US. And these 8 to 12 year olds can get them. They're extremely accessible. They're relatively cheap, I guess. And yeah, like easy marts, and just any tobacconist stores around here, you'll get one. You end up going on Snapchat stories and someone's selling IGETs for like \$20 so no I think it was way cheaper back in the day to, you'd just talk to someone at school and within like, you know, at lunch, you could find someone who's selling some. Anyone you can ask will have a vape it's just they're everywhere now.

B

Bronwyn McGill 09:59

So we really find that this, you know, the voices of young people are so powerful and can tell the story way better than then we can. So we thought that was a good way just to start off and set the scene a little bit. I also wanted to just right upfront, go over what the sort of legislative landscape in Australia is at the moment. So about two years ago, in October 2021, the vaping laws changed. And these laws were designed to prevent vaping by non smokers and particularly amongst young people. And sort of the gist of what these laws were that any adults so 18 and over, could access nicotine e cigarettes, but with a medical prescription from a health professional and purchased from a pharmacy. So that's sort of in a nutshell what that legislation says, which is the legislation that is still in place at the moment. You might all have also been aware of vaping reforms, which were announced in early May this year by the Federal Health Minister, Mark Butler, which really aimed to take strong action to reduce smoking and stamp out vaping particularly amongst young children and young adults, children and adults in Australia, through stronger legislation, enforcement, education and support. And what these reforms are proposed to do is to end easy access, so to stop, stop the import of all non prescription vapes and to end vape sales, including those without nicotine in convenience stores and other retail settings. And the proposed reforms also hope to strengthen prescription vape regulation so to increase the minimum quality standards for vapes to ensure that vapes have pharmaceutical like packaging, and reduce the allowed concentrations and volumes of nicotine, and also to ban all single use and disposable vapes. So this is kind of like what we're aiming for. But none of that is in place yet. But it was a very strong and powerful announcement. And we're all watching to see where this goes. So if we think back to around,

you know, 2020 and 2021, we were seeing that vaping was becoming much more prominent amongst young people, and that there were increasing reports in the media, there were concerns from parents and teachers, and this was all growing. So in New South Wales and Australia more broadly, we found that we were really lacking data and evidence around vaping and needed to better understand more about how many young people were using these products, like, why did they vape? Or why were they not vaping? What was their knowledge? And what were their attitudes, and how was all of this changing over time? So the purpose of the Generation Vape research project was to examine these factors, with a particular focus on four groups. So looking at young people aged 14 to 17, their parents and their teachers, and young adults 18 to 24. And the Generation Vape research includes both surveys and interviews or focus groups with these four target groups. And it started in July 2021, and runs every six months until July of next year, 2024. So that we can monitor any changes over time. And for today, we're going to share the key findings from three target groups that are highlighted in red there, from young people, their parents and their teachers. And it's from Waves two, and three, which are in red. So our findings are intended to provide insights to the problem on vaping not necessarily to provide the solutions that, but the value of this data and information that we're collecting is that it might be able to inform some solutions. So what I'm going to do now is hand over to Shiho, who's going to talk through the first lot of results from young people and parents.

S

Shiho Rose 14:39

So, as Bronwyn mentioned, I'll be taking you through a snapshot through some of the results for young people and parents. So I'll start with young people. And for wave three, we surveyed 3151 young people, and we found that, so around a third or 35% have indicated that they've tried vaping. So a fairly reasonable proportion. Of those who have tried vaping, many were quite young. So 70% were 15 years or younger, when they had their first vape. Also of those who have ever tried vaping, around half told us that they used a vape that they knew contain nicotine. And also of those who have never tried a vape before 35% or around a third indicated they were curious about vaping. So it suggests that vulnerability to potential uptake. So our survey also asked those who had ever tried vaping their perceptions about how easy or hard it is to get a vape. And we found that respondents, 8% of respondents indicated that it was hard collectively, 10% said it was neither easy or harmed. And 82% collectively said it was easy to access. So I just want to reiterate that that was 82%, who said it was easy to access a vape. So I just wanted to share some quotes from the interviews that really exemplify this easy access. So this one person said "you can get them from anywhere now literally anywhere." Another agreed, saying "it's not very hard to get. There's heaps of people in my year that I would be able to get one from." The survey also asked young people, whether they were buying their own vapes and of those who responded 22% indicated that they had bought their own vape, and the remainder indicated that they had received their vape from some sort of social supply. So either friends or family or somebody in their social network. So of those who said that they bought their last vapes, that 22%, the majority indicated that they had purchased, their vapes through a retail store, so either a tobacconist, petrol station, convenience store or vape store. Following this, 39% said that they bought their vape from a friend or a dealer. So I guess someone who they will go to for vape purchases specifically. And lastly, 14% indicated that they bought their vape through social media and Snapchat seem to be the most common channel for purchases, but there was also purchases through Facebook and Instagram. And again, just sharing some quotes as well, that that show how people are purchasing vapes. So this person said, they just purchased "just off friends, I guess, I just go to school and tell my friends, I want one. And then the next day, they'll come in with one and I just

pay them." This person said, "I 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're very like overpriced." So next on our survey, we asked those who had ever tried vaping the what they consider to be important factors or appealing factors to wanting to vape. So we provided them with a list of possible options and using a scale from one to five, so one being not very important, three being neutral and five being very important. We asked them to rank each of these responses. And as you can see on the graph, flavourings and taste, ranked as the most important feature. This was also consistent in our interview discussions. As we can see here, one person talked about the appeal of flavours by saying, "imagine you're eating a lolly, but instead of eating it, you're like inhaling it." Next in the graph, we can also see that price and the ability to be discreet, so being able to hide the vape or the vapour, also ranked quite highly. What we're also seeing this graph is that vaping for relaxation and stress relief also features quite high on the list. And it suggests that for some, the appeal of vapes extends beyond the aesthetics or flavours and looks and can allude to possible areas of mental health or addiction concerns. So in our interviews, this was coming out in small amounts. But it's it's something that's starting to emerge. So I'll just share this quote as well. So this person says, "I find vapes calm me down. Yeah, like when you're stressed or something. I have it and I'm like more calm." I just wanted to share some few more quotes that we got from the interviews that really highlights the experiences of young people. So vaping has become quite normalised and socially accepted in that young cohort. There was no stereotypical group that were perceived to be vaping in particular, use was pretty widespread. So, for example, this person said, "it's like literally everyone, like even people you wouldn't think would do that. They do it." There were obvious differences in the social acceptability around vaping versus smoking. And those seem to be quite distinct behaviours across the two. So smoking was commonly seen as something that older people do. And it was also seen as quite a negative behaviour, so often described as being dirty or disgusting, whereas vaping, in comparison was seen as something that was a bit more cleaner, and more pleasant due to the nicer fruity smells. And because of this, it's it's seen as easier to be more discreet. So this person said, "like no one can smell it on you, or like, you don't have to be cautious of how you smell." Another key and worrying thing that was starting to emerge, and it was something that came up in that graph that I showed a few slides ago, was that recognition of feeling addicted. This participant said, "I got to the point where I was using every day. And if I didn't have one, I'd start to start to get really agitated." A few also sorry, a few also share their challenges of trying to quit, particularly in light of the addictive nature of nicotine and vaping. So this quote on the top right says, "I tell myself, this is my last one. And I just go back the next day, and end up getting one." I think this next quote really shows the raw, gives a raw perspective about the challenges in talking about the withdrawals and cravings that are involved with trying to quit, so this person says, "I wish I never started to be honest, I just don't know how I'm gonna get off it. You're just constantly like thinking about it." So now I'll move on to a snapshot of the parents findings. So from wave three, we surveyed 2599 parent participants. And from the survey, this is what we found. So firstly, just over a quarter indicated, knowing or suspecting that their child has vaped. Most so 57% believe that their child has not vaped. And the remainder were unsure Many are having discussions with their children about vape use. And I'll touch a little bit more on that in the coming slides. 36% or just over a third received communications from school. And this was typically through broad newsletters or emails around the issue. And for parents, the level of communication seemed to indicate the level of severity of the issue. So more communications from schools was perceived to be seen as a more serious issue within schools. And 64% of parents see student vaping as a concerning and very concerning issue. And 81% agree that it's a high or very high priority to prevent their child from vaping. So again, I just wanted to share some quotes that have come up in the interviews with parents. So as noted in that last slide, many parents are concerned about their children vaping. And this concern, felt or seemed to be intertwined with their level

of knowledge. So knowledge around what was in a vape, knowledge about the harms of vape. And this parent said, "I think it's scary. I don't think it's been around long enough to know what the long term implications are going to be." There was also a smaller growing perception that vaping is highly addictive for young people, and some are starting to share some personal stories. There was also that concern that young people aren't aware that vaping can be addictive, and that they have a poor understanding of addiction and how it can happen. This participant said, "the perception that it's not 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." So as I mentioned, many parents are having discussions with their children about vaping. But what we found from the interviews is that many don't feel confident about having these discussions. So many indicated that they feel like uninformed or ill equipped to have a proper talk about vaping. So there was acknowledgment from parents that they were unsure of the health impacts. But there was also acknowledgement that they were unsure of research available to support these conversations. So this person said, "I don't know enough of the facts in terms of having an intelligent discussion, I will probably need to look up a bit more stuff." Some also spoke about the need to have quality information available and commented that there was a lot of, lot of conflicting information about vaping. And so the true harms were not really known, or there was a lot of grey around it. So this person said, "Some say, oh, no, it's a lot healthier than cigarettes. And then I've heard no, no, it's worse than cigarettes. You don't know what to believe." And lastly, discussions, but also centred around the knowledge of the vaping laws as Bronwyn touched on at the start of the presentation. And the discussion show there was varied a wide range of knowledge around these laws. So some were aware of that prescription model. However, many were not fully aware of the law, and there was some confusion around accessibility, who could, who could buy them, the age, and all those things associated. But we could also see that there were also many that had no awareness of the law at all. So this person said, I actually didn't think there was a lot to do with vaping. The presence of vape shops in communities also confused parents, as they seem surprised to learn that they could legally sell non nicotine vapes to persons 18 years and over. So this person said, "Well, my teenager goes to the tobacconist and he buys them. He's not 18. So what's going on there?" There's also that sense of anger and outrage about the perceived low enforcement of the laws and participants wanting more action done to limit accessibility. So for example, this person said, "I feel like why is no one clamping down on this? If this is illegal, it's so prevalent, it is so prevalent at the moment". Now, they are passed back to Bronwyn, who will go through the teachers.

B

Bronwyn McGill 27:20

Alright, thanks, Shiho. So, in terms of the teachers that we surveyed and interviewed, these results are based on surveys from about 600 teachers, and from the focus groups discussions of 68 teachers. So in terms of the survey findings, 86% of teachers were concerned or very concerned about students vaping at school. That is, the majority of teachers are really concerned about this problem. 71% felt that preventing vaping at school was a high or very high priority. And this aligns with, you know, the high proportion of parents who also felt that prevention was very important. About a third of teachers reported that their school communicated about harms four or more times in the past six months, which is you know, on average, twice a term really, which as Shiho mentioned, parents were, you know, aligning that level of communication with with the size of the problem within schools. And then 44% And so almost half of teachers were aware of the sale of vaping products on their school grounds. So that's a fairly large proportion of teachers who say that vapes are being sold at their schools. And this is just, you know, just flying through some some of the findings, but I think it gives a

pretty good picture that teachers are really seeing vaping as, as a big problem in their schools, and we've seen across a number of waves that this is an increasing level of concern. So from the focus group discussions where we, you know, we're really able to get some quite lovely, rich data that that makes those numbers seem more more real. So schools were initially taken by surprise, you know, vaping came along and just was massive. So, as this principle says, "vaping is the single most disruptive thing in our school at the moment", and another teacher that "vapes have taken over for sure". So with that kind of, element of surprise also came the fact that you know, vaping has become vaping is social and has become quite acceptable amongst students at school. So teachers have spoken about the fact that, you know, that kids are at school for for six hours a day. But also, this principal felt that "I think kids see school as their major place of association, they don't vape on their own, it's such a social behaviour that I think school is their shared space". So School is a place where students are feeling safe to be able to vape it's, it's the place where a lot of their social interactions happen. And and it's happening in schools. And that it's very broadly accepted. And as this principal says, "almost as an accessory that these kids will carry, like their mobile phone, their vape, their sunglasses sort of thing." And this, I think is, it aligns with the findings that we've found from the parent focus group discussions as well, that it's, it's vaping is everywhere amongst young people. And it's accepted amongst young people as something that's okay for them to do. So teachers expressed, as with parents, as well, a concern about the lack of knowledge and understanding of the health effects of vapes. And we've seen this also through the young people interviews as well, that there's sort of this kind of inconsistency around their understanding of it. But teachers strongly agreed that vaping amongst young people can cause nicotine addiction. They also expressed concern about not knowing what is in vapes, so, you know, they might be vaping, nicotine, they might just be vaping one of the raspberry ones. And that's, that is a real concern, the fact that it's not clear when young people are purchasing vapes, whether they do or don't contain nicotine, and that the only way to determine that is to test that vape. And then there's also all sorts of information or lack of information about what's actually in vapes, in terms of, you know, what, what are the chemicals in vapes? What are they vaping? So this person said, 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. And then lastly, teachers spoke about feeling like they had become vaping police with the needs, you know, that they felt that they had a need to constantly monitor students and use measures such as installing vapedetectors, in toilets, or even closing down toilet blocks to dissuade students from vaping at school. And, you know, some also talked about the effort and time needed to address the challenges of vaping. And this is all just on top of their, their role as a teacher. This teacher, I think, encapsulated it really nicely by saying "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". And then, you know, back to the toilets, the toilets have been a huge theme. In all of this, "we typically find kids vaping in the toilets, we can't go in, we smell them coming out, and they're not sneaking off by themselves. It's a peer group thing." So I think that these quotes, and these themes that we've seen coming through this results are really quite powerful in terms of validating the quantitative data that we've collected. And they give us much more of a picture of what's actually happening for young people, for parents and for teachers. So finally, I want to go through some of the key messages that we've found that came out of that wave of data collection. So firstly, the high uptake and use of vapes by young people, so the use seems to be much higher than previous estimates. So in 2019, the National Drug Strategy Household Survey estimated that 9.6% of 14 to 17 year olds had ever used vape. And the results of our research show that that's more like a third of young people. The, you know, flavoured disposable products that contain nicotine were found to be most commonly used by young people. And that's not unsurprising, given their appeal to that particular population. And that the qualitative insights from young people indicate that the current appeal isn't only about

the flavours, like the flavours might be important to get them started, but the nicotine content of vapes is very important to users. And parents seem a little bit confused as well that flavoured vaping products do contain nicotine and that there's a high level of concern amongst parents and teachers about this. So the next main point is that vapes are currently very easily accessed by young people. Young people can readily access to nicotine vaping products through both social and commercial channels. And young people acknowledge that vaping products are easily accessible with many being purchased directly from retailers, even though it is illegal to sell vapes to people under 18. So the current laws and if enforcement, including the changes from the October 2021 legislation don't seem to be working, they don't seem to be constraining the access to nicotine vapes. I think there's also concern that young people, parents and their teachers have very confused understanding of what the prescription requirements are. And people are frustrated as well that this legislation is in place, but the access is still so, so easy. The next point is that the knowledge and believability of the health harms of vaping varied quite a lot in our research. So young people agree with health statements relating to vaping, with the consequences of vaping on their lung health being the most clearly resonating fact, amongst both, among young people who vape and who have never vaped before so, so that lung health is a health harm that's come through quite strongly. The other health harms are very uncertain. And I think it's because there is a lot of uncertainty around the longer term effects of vaping. But our qualitative findings are showing that there's an emerging awareness of the mental health aspects of vaping as well, that young people are using vapes to support them with coping strategies with managing anxiety and using them for relaxation. So there's a, not much is fully understood about that. But there's an emerging awareness of that aspect of it. And then, lastly, addiction and cessation considerations. So addiction to nicotine in adolescence is of concern amongst young people. It's all sort of concern amongst parents and teachers. And awareness of the risk of addiction was evidenced, it was evident among young people regardless of whether they vaped or didn't vape. And amongst parents and teachers, there's a small but growing perception of the problems of addiction in this age group, and I think, I think the young people seem to have a better awareness of it early on, then parents and teachers did, I think parents and teachers are kind of catching up now. Wave four findings are indicating that, so not not the results we presented today but the ones we've just analysed, are really showing a much greater concern around addiction. And also around cessation like what you know, what support can they provide to young people who wants to stop vaping So lastly, I want to show you another video, which is also recorded by the same group of young university students who talk more more about their experiences and perceptions of vaping.

V

Video 39:44

I'd take big hits from one and you have like coughing attacks and all dizzy , and so I don't know I just really didn't like it and I sort of dropped them quickly. People are on permanent like ventilators and respirators because of the effects of vaping has had on their system. One kid he had some sort of reaction to it and had to call the ambulance and take him to the bathroom, you could have like, like changes in your gums, like, the effects were already so obvious where it's just really awful. Cigarettes when it had its day, a lot of people didn't really think too much of it, and then all of a sudden, like, millions of people have got cancer, so I'm pretty worried. I don't want my generation to die out.

B

Bronwyn McGill 40:41

So, you know, I think that's really powerful, "I don't want my generation to die out". And that's, you know, out of the mouths of babes really. So I think that's the those insights from young people are really powerful for us. And we need to be listening. I'm going to hand over to Shiho to wrap up for us.

S

Shiho Rose 41:06

Thanks, Bronwyn, as Bronwyn just spoke about the words, of the young people are quite powerful. And that video was just quite a stark indicator of the situation of vaping. We thought it might be helpful just to close on sharing some resources that people can access if they want to look up some more information about vaping or avenues for support if they if they wanted to go that way. So the New South Wales Health Have the Facts about, sorry, and Have the Facts about Vaping campaign, and the websites listed up there as well. And it's got a lot of different resources, information sheets, it's got toolkits, it's got videos as well, but also suggestions to seeking support. And they've tailored this information for young people, for parents and carers, for teachers and for health professionals. So this is also something that other states, I believe, are adopting as well, and will be accessible via their state governments, soon, if not now. And before I finish up, I just wanted to let you know as well, if you'd like to know more about the Gen Vape research project, we've got the QR code up here as well. So please scan and it will take you to our project website where you can access publications and short reports and infographics about the findings so far. But also, if you have any questions, after today as well, please feel free to contact us on our email up on the screen there.

E

Emma Devine 42:53

Wonderful, thank you so much, Bronwyn, I will take over screenshare now. I will steal it from you. And a huge thank you for presenting that I think it was really great to see, you know, sort of some of what we're hearing, actually, you know, have numbers attached to it and have really clear figures and sort of what's going on more nationally as well. So a big thank you for doing that. Scary things happening, sort of what's happening, and especially when you were talking about the increase that's happening so much as well. We do have quite a few questions already been popped into the chat that I will start going through. But I just wanted to, in case anyone hasn't found the Q&A section on the Zoom, I've just got a little screenshot of what it looks like on the slides there. If that's helpful at all. And without further ado, I might ask you a few questions. Wonderful. All right. So we did start with just we might have missed, but just some sort of practical ones of how many young people did you were you able to capture in the samples from the data that you were talking about?

S

Shiho Rose 44:06

So for the survey that way three, we have 2151 Young people, so from age 14 to 17, complete the surveys. And for the interview discussions we had, we had 18 from New South Wales, and then a further 18 from the rest of Australia. So 36 interviews, some were individual interviews and some work paired interviews, so with a friend that were included in this data snapshot today.

E

Emma Devine 44:38

Yeah, brilliant. And in the data, there are some questions as well about whether you'd looked at gender differences at all, like are the behaviours or the, the use of vapes, does that differ across you know, males, females in your sample, if you know

B

Bronwyn McGill 44:56

I'll go for the qualitative. In the qualitative data we, because the numbers are quite small, we aren't able to draw any conclusions. There's certainly a lot of conflicting information in there to like, you know, some people are saying it's a bigger problem in boys. And some are saying it's a bigger problem in girls, and and some of saying it's there's no difference. So I think it's hard to tell from the qualitative data. In terms of the quantitative data, it's certainly something that's there, but I don't know that we've noticed a huge difference.

S

Shiho Rose 45:34

Yeah, I don't think that's been, we don't have that information on hand

B

Bronwyn McGill 45:39

It hasn't been a stark difference between them. Yeah, it's it's a problem across the board. And it seems to be in some schools, it's more boys than girls and others, it's different. And same for different, different age groups. And I think that came out very clearly in our latest lot of data to that. It's, it's just such an across the board problem. Yeah, it's different in different places.

E

Emma Devine 46:05

Yeah, definitely. Which I think it's really interesting, because the sort of the research that we've had up until now on sort of substance use more broadly is that, um, boys are typically more at risk for engaging in some of those behaviours. So it is a little bit different, perhaps, in that sense, vaping, that it's much more, yeah, as you say, across the board is everyone, which is also quite alarming. There was a question as well about whether you had any information on distinguishing some of this between sort of more cities and other rural and remote regions, if there was any breakdown in that, or do you think the use might be similar across areas are quite different?

B

Bronwyn McGill 46:46

We certainly have looked at that, in terms of what, yes, the qualitative data. So whether people are from regional or metropolitan areas, and no, there doesn't seem to be a big difference. I think access seems to be a problem everywhere. There's, no matter where you live, you can access vapes.



E

Emma Devine 47:09

Yeah, woah That's alarming isn't?

B

Bronwyn McGill 47:12

It is, yeah. And through so many different ways as well, I think it's, you know, I think the earlier waves it was much more social media driven. But that seems to have changed, even though the laws have changed. The access through, through retail is a little bit more blatant. It's just here, you can walk in as a 13 year old and just buy it if you're lucky.

E

Emma Devine 47:40

Yeah, no, absolutely. And I know. I know, people who do it as well, it's sort of across all age groups as well. I know, obviously, we're focusing on 12 to 17. Here, but it does, and that it's so pervasive. And that ties into another question that obviously, you're focusing on 12 to 17 year olds, but you have data on sort of younger age groups, and we're hearing some emerging concerns in younger primary school ages. And, and also whether you're collecting any information on much older age groups as well.

S

Shiho Rose 48:12

You know, we're not collecting information on younger age groups. So the youngest people, the focus was essentially the 14 to 17 year olds. And we're, I think the literature shows, and just from what we're hearing in news media outlets as well, is that that seems to be the key area of concern. But we actually, as we talked about, as well, parents and teachers were also included in this study. But unfortunately, something that we weren't, we didn't have the time to talk about today was the young adults. So the 18 to 24 year old age bracket, we're collecting information from them as well. So that was through surveys, as well as focus group interviews. And we're finding as well, that this is quite a significant group to collect this information from they, reports show that they're, of the age brackets, this is where this is the age bracket that is most vaping. And is probably that continue on, continuation from adolescent vaping. But it's just that the concerns that this fall around their experiences of addiction and cessation attempts is something that we've been finding in our qualitative results. But in terms of the groups that we're focusing on, those those four groups here are our target.

E

Emma Devine 49:38

Yeah, brilliant. I'm not surprised at all the 18 to 24 year olds are coming out as high users as well at all. I think that checks out from from anecdotal experience and and what we hear as well. I'm just looking through, we're getting a lot of questions, so we won't be able to get to all of them today and we're in advanced really sorry about that. But we will have contact details up at the end of the slides as well that you can get in touch and reach out and either to us or Positive Choices or to Bronwyn and Shiho as well, we can direct questions, as is, as it's appropriate. People are wondering when the 18 to 24 year old data might become available to have a look at as well.

B

Bronwyn McGill 50:24

It's there. It's, um, it's just not published yet.

S

Shiho Rose 50:31

So it is a work in progress. But it's something that we're quite keen to get out as soon as we can. Because it's very timely. And they are a key group of concern as well.

E

Emma Devine 50:43

Yeah, absolutely. So that's a stay tuned, one. We'll touch back again, at some point, I'm sure. Another question that has come up a couple of times, was whether in your interviews and in your survey data, whether you spoke with the young people about, you know, I saw some of your quotes, said, You know, they were post vapers or, you know, no longer vapers, and did you have much discussion? Or have you collected a lot of data on, you know, that transition from having vape to not vaping, and what strategies or, or what sort of motivators might have played a role there?

B

Bronwyn McGill 51:20

Yes, we'll definitely do. That is talked about in the interviews. It's a real mixed bag, like some young people might just vape occasionally and find it very easy to stop if they want to, or they, you know, come and go. Some who say they're addicted, also say, Oh, I just decided to stop and I stopped, whereas others say, No, I can't, I'm thinking about it, I go to bed at night thinking about it. I wake up in the morning thinking about it. So I think, I think there's also quite a bit of misunderstanding around what addiction is. And you know, it's like, I'm addicted to chocolate, I'm addicted to a vape as opposed to I'm actually addicted to nicotine, and I cannot get off this without some help. So I think there's there's a quite a bit of a mixture out there in terms of the students that we spoke to. I don't know if you have anything to add?

S

Shiho Rose 52:20

Oh, yeah, I was just going to add as well like, because we've done a few waves of data collection. Initially, the I guess, the data we're collecting was around use. But as we've collected more data across the waves, we aren't noticing, this is something that is emerging. So addiction, trying to quit, and it's in the most recent wave of data collection, it is something that we've tried to focus on a little bit more. And it is we are getting more information about cessation and the difficulties around it. And we have one more wave of data collection for the interviews. And I think it's something that we were wanting to probe a lot more, I think we're just using the previous interviews to kind of help guide what we should be asking in the future interviews. And yeah, this is definitely something that we're keen to explore more, because it's something that's really starting to emerge.

B Bronwyn McGill 53:18

It's also sorry, if I'm taking up too much time, but it's also something that has come through very strongly from from teachers, you know, saying, you know, we've got children at school who are addicted, and we're talking, addicted to nicotine, serious addiction, they can't go without and we don't know how to help them. That's, it's a real problem. And it needs to be addressed in some way.

S Shiho Rose 53:45

Yeah, absolutely. And as part of sort of talking to teachers and principals, as I do, also ask them what strategies they're already using?

B Bronwyn McGill 53:53

Yeah, it comes it comes out from some of them. Yes, they are. I think teachers are recognising the need to work together with parents a lot more as, and parents seemed more receptive to that whereas early on, we were getting reports that parents were a bit like, oh, no, my child doesn't vape, this can't be right. Now it's more Yes. What can we do? Teachers are talking about using the GPs a lot they are referring families just go straight to GP to talk about support for for stopping we know that cessation support in this age group is underwhelming, so yeah, yeah. I think that seems to be the biggest message that came through in this last wave was that teachers and principals were just referring straight on to health professionals.

E Emma Devine 54:45

Yeah, absolutely. Because of course it's it's you know, teachers have far too much on their plates already to also be be taking on this issue as well.

B Bronwyn McGill 54:53

And dealing with so many so many issues, mental health issues, violence, bullying, there's just this is this, vaping is just one problem they're dealing with?

E Emma Devine 55:02

Yes, yes, absolutely. So it's just, I think, you know, referring out sounds like a really good strategy and a great approach. And I think you've tapped into as well, sort of one of the bigger, overarching issues in this space is that it's still such early days for us, we don't really have the established, you know, strategies, yet, they're all in progress. And I know that some colleagues at the Matilda Centre, for example, are, are doing all they can to get this vaping prevention programme out, as soon as possible. And, but we're still just trying to play that, that little bit of catch up. So and that's where, you know, research like this and data like this, it really gives us you know, we know where to start, we know what needs to be addressed. And it really, instead of, you know, wasting our time going down an avenue that is a blessed significance, we can

really hone the issues As I predicted, and we have lots of questions we haven't touched on and I apologise to the audience members for that. Loads have come through but as I said, we're really, really happy to answer any questions by email. So let me just pop our contact details up as well. And we will also this will all be included in the in the slides which will be sent out also, why is that not changing? There we go. There they are. So really sorry that we didn't get to everyone's questions, but do please send them through to info@positivechoices.org.au and we can pop you in touch with Bronwyn and Shiho, your contact details were also on the slides and people as you were saying were also very welcome to reach out to you as well. But to wrap up and say a huge thank you for joining us today and providing some really, really, really exciting updates on sort of where vaping is going, what it looks like in the space and and we're really excited to see where it goes and all the strategies and interventions. you'll go on to inform through this really important research as well. So a huge thank you.

B

Bronwyn McGill 57:03

Thank you for having us. Yeah,