

# Social Influences on Emerging Adults' Vaping

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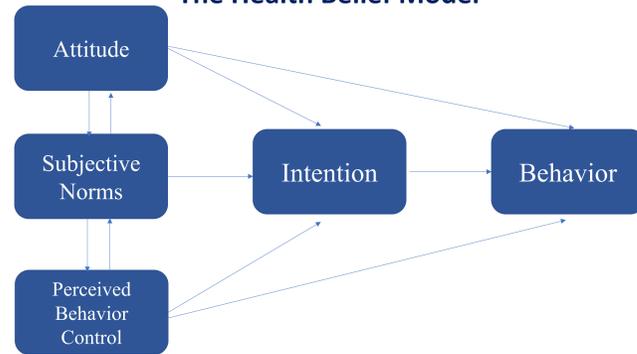
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## Background

- Vaping is a common term used to describe the use of an electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) products.
- ENDS products work through a sensor which triggers a vaporizer to heat liquid flavorings that can contain different substances and chemicals ranging from nicotine to marijuana
- By 2021, the estimated number of adults who vape will reach almost 55 million (Jones, 2019)
- Few studies have examined **interpersonal influences** around ENDS use. The Health Belief Model explains how others can affect behaviors such as substance use, so I used this model to create three hypotheses about how and why others' behavior and attitudes would affect college students' ENDS use.

### The Health Belief Model



## Hypotheses

- Among ENDS users, peers' use will be among the most common reason for starting and continuing ENDS.
- Students who report higher levels of peer pressure to use ENDS products will use ENDS more often.
- Family members' and partner attitudes toward vaping will significantly affect one's ENDS behavior.

## Method

### Survey: Quantitative Component

Procedure	Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruited through psychology classroom visits, flyers, and social media outreach</li> <li>Participants received class credit or were entered into drawing for a \$50 gift card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online Qualtrics survey: 1 hour per participant</li> <li>Larger survey asks questions from distinct research interests of each participating institution</li> </ul>

### Focus Groups: Qualitative Component

Procedure	Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruited through flyers, social media, and email</li> <li>Three student facilitators</li> <li>Participants received a \$10 gift card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-Focus Group demographic questionnaire</li> <li>Recorded responses from focus group questions</li> <li>NVivo thematic coding</li> </ul>

## Participants

### Survey

- 1,319 participants were recruited from seven different colleges and universities in the United States
- 69% identified as female, 31% male, .3% transgender, .7% gender queer
- Age Range: 18-24
- Self-reported race/ethnicity was: 74% Caucasian, 9% African American, 8% Asian/Asian American, 4% Multiracial, 1% Middle Eastern
- 20% were members of Greek Life; 9% were NCAA student-athletes

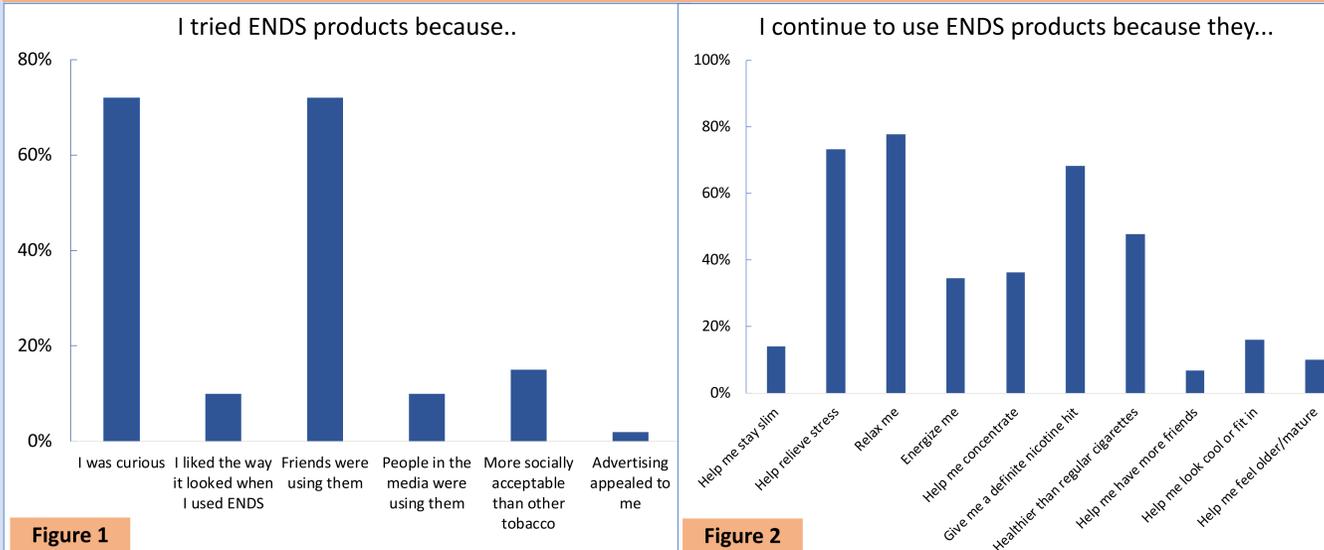


### Focus Groups

- Three facilitators conducted 5 focus groups at Trinity College
- Groups included 6-12 participants
- 33% identified as male; 67% identified as female
- 83% of participants reported ENDS use in their lifetime. Of those participants, 71% used ENDS products in the last 30 days
- Higher rates of lifetime ENDS use and past 30-day ENDS use were reported in focus groups compared to the survey



## Results



**HYPOTHESIS #1:** Figure 1 provides support for my hypothesis. Survey data showed that peers' use was a primary reason students began ENDS use. However, as shown in Figure 2, interpersonal motivations for continuing ENDS (help me have more friends, to look cool or fit in) were not endorsed nearly as often as motivations for stress relief and nicotine hit.

**HYPOTHESIS #2:** I found mixed support for my second hypothesis. Table 1 shows that the most common reasons for ENDS use reported by focus group participants. Friends' use was the most common interpersonal motivation for use. Many participants said they didn't feel pressured by their friends; rather, they just thought to do it when they saw others do it or did it out of habit.

**HYPOTHESIS #3:** My third hypothesis was partially confirmed. Table 1 shows that focus group participants reported that family, peer, and partner attitudes toward vaping influenced their ENDS use; however, others' attitudes were not the deciding factor in quitting completely.

Interpersonal Influences on ENDS use	Table 1	Times mentioned
Use when around friends		25
Partner, friends, family concerned		20
Peer influence on use		18
Accessibility		8
Enhances socialization		6
More inclined use at party		4
Hide from others		4
Hide so others do not ask to use		3

Intrapersonal Influences on ENDS use	Table 2	Times mentioned
Personal wish to stop ENDS use		39
Stress relief		8
Combine with alcohol		7
Negative psychological effect		6
Negative physiological effect		5
Positive physical influence		5
Gratification for assignments		4
Oral fixation		3
Combine with Adderall		2

## Discussion

### Motivations and Attitudes on Vaping

- Interpersonal motivations are among the most common reported reasons for starting and continuing usage, social environment and exposure to ENDS changed personal motives

### Peer Influence on Vaping

- Students reported using ENDS in locations that would enhance sociability such as at events, social gatherings, and parties. The desire to fit in by using ENDS was also expressed

### Social Effects

- Many participants felt pressured to let their friends use their devices, especially in social settings, but expressed the need and desire to hide their device so others will not use it

### Family members and partner attitudes

- Vaping habits changed around family members and partners; many participants reported hiding their device due to disapproval and shame associated with use

### Reasons for stopping

- Negative physiological and psychological risks and family worries are the main reported reasons for stopping. Additionally, cost to maintain ENDS use remains a factor

### Health Risks

- Negative effects such as addiction or lung illness were reported as major worries for students. Vaping-related deaths in the news gave ENDS users anxiety but did not influence them to stop using due to lack of specific factual information

### Limitations

- Participants may not have wanted to express their thoughts on vaping, which could have been due to the presence of other participants in the room. Additionally, there were occasional instances of group members being acquainted which could have influenced participants' willingness to share their thoughts

## Implications & Future Directions

### Lack of Information

- There is an overarching theme of lack of knowledge surrounding ENDS devices. The need for more research is necessary in order to help educate students about the health risks of vaping

### Intervention Research

- Future studies should ask more questions to emerging adults regarding their opinions on intervention methods they believe would be most effective to emerging adults

### Conclusion

- Vaping is becoming increasingly common for emerging adults on college campuses. It is necessary for students to be aware of the social influences and peer pressures surrounding vaping in order to create effective intervention programs

## Acknowledgements

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