

November 15, 2018

PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

Vaping Increased Nearly 80 Percent Among High Schoolers Since Last Year, nearly 50 Percent Among Middle Schoolers

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO – 3.6 million middle and high school students are currently using e-cigarettes, according to newly released results from the National Youth Tobacco Survey. This is an increase of more than 1.5 million students since last year.

“These increases must stop,” said FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb in a statement. “I will not allow a generation of children to become addicted to nicotine through e-cigarettes. We won’t let this pool of kids, a pool of future potential smokers, of future disease and death, to continue to build. We’ll take whatever action is necessary to stop these trends from continuing.”

South Central Public Health District joins the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in urging parents and schools to educate their children about the dangers of e-cigarettes, vapes, Juuls, and other electronic nicotine devices.

“We are starting to see teenagers who would never have been exposed to nicotine through cigarettes - have instead been exposed through e-cigarettes,” said Cody Orchard, SCPHD Health Education Specialist. “Worse yet, because this is self-reported we are suspicious these numbers are actually higher.”

According to the survey’s findings, the number of U.S. high school students who reported being current e-cigarette users increased 78 percent between 2017 and 2018. The number of middle school students currently using e-cigarettes rose 48 percent.

The increased popularity of e-cigarettes among youth raises a number of other health concerns:

- Risk of addiction to nicotine early on in life
- Potential harm from nicotine exposure to the developing adolescent brain
- Exposure to chemicals associated with adverse health effects.
- Research shows, compared with non-users, youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to transition to conventional cigarettes – risking a lifetime of addiction to smoking and resulting smoking-attributable disease.

The uptick in e-cigarette use has led overall tobacco product use to increase by 38 percent among high school students and by 29 percent among middle school students in the last year, reversing the positive decline seen over the last few years.

Today the FDA also announced new measures against flavored nicotine products they believe have encouraged the rise in teen tobacco use, and are proposing measures to crack down on products that are marketed to or are appealing to youth.

“We don’t know the long-term effects of these devices,” said Orchard. “It could take years to realize those effects. That’s why the FDA is trying to crack down.”

The South Central Public Health District offers free classes to help end nicotine addiction for both teens and adults. Schools are also welcome to schedule classes on campus. Please call 208-737-5968 to schedule a class or check the calendar on our website for the current class schedule.

Results from the National Youth Tobacco Survey:

<https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm625917.htm>

Full statement from FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb:

<https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm625884.htm>

A link to a report from the National Institute on Drug Abuse that talks about specific e-cigarette numbers among teens in 2016: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/infographics/teens-e-cigarettes>

A CDC page that talks a little bit more about the risks of e-cigarette use: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html