**FOCUS GROUP INVESTIGATION   
of UNDERAGE ACCESS TO**

**Electronic smoking deviceS**





Presented to:

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Table of Contents

[Table of Figures ii](#_Toc497145442)

[Executive Summary 1](#_Toc497145443)

[Background of the Study 4](#_Toc497145445)

[Materials and Methods 4](#_Toc497145446)

[Strategies for Obtaining ESDs 6](#_Toc497145447)

[Purchasing ESDs while Underage 13](#_Toc497145448)

[Types of ESDs 17](#_Toc497145449)

[Reasons for Vaping 21](#_Toc497145450)

[Deterrents to Vaping 27](#_Toc497145451)

[Awareness of the Health Risks 30](#_Toc497145452)

[Conclusions 32](#_Toc497145453)

[Appendix A: Transcripts 33](#_Toc497145454)

[Appendix B: Moderator’s Guide 159](#_Toc497145455)

[Appendix C: Slang Words for ESD Products 163](#_Toc497145463)

# Table of Figures

[Figure 1: Card Exercise Example 17](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145324)

[Figure 2: Slang for Vape Mod 17](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145327)

[Figure 3: Slang for E-Cigarette 17](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145326)

[Figure 4: Slang for E-Liquid 17](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145328)

[Figure 5: Slang for Vape Pen 17](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145325)

[Figure 6: Slang for Cartomizer 18](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145332)

[Figure 7: Slang for Clearomizer 18](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145331)

[Figure 8: Slang for Coil 18](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145330)

[Figure 9: Slang for Atomizer 18](file:///C:\Users\ACS\Executive%20Shared%20Drive\Projects\MD%20Focus%20Groups\Report\ESD%20Report.docx#_Toc497145329)

# Executive Summary

## Background of the Study

The Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control (the Center) contracted with Analytic Insight to conduct focus group sessions with Maryland adults ages 18 through 21 who used Electronic Smoking Devices (ESDs) on at least 15 out of 30 days while in high school grades 10, 11, or 12. The purpose of the focus group sessions was to foster a conversation about their usual sources of ESDs while in high school and under 18 years of age. Additionally, the Center sought to discover the strategies that they employed for maintaining access to ESDs at that time.

## Materials and Methods

Four focus groups were recruited using Facebook, Instagram and Craigslist advertising to recruit participants. Participants, young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 who used ESDs while underage and in high school, were paid an incentive of $75. The recruitment methods, moderator’s guide and card sort materials were approved by The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Institutional Review Board (IRB).

## Strategies for Obtaining ESDs

Many participants initially tried ESDs by borrowing them from a friend or family member. As participants became more regular vapers, they began to buy ESDs from convenience stores, gas stations and other retailers. Purchasing ESDs at large retailers such as Walmart or Target was not perceived as a suitable alternative. Approaching a stranger to buy a vape or using a fake ID were also less frequently employed methods of obtaining ESDs or vape supplies.

Several participants noted that although it was easy for them to obtain vapes and associated products from specialty vape shops while they were in high school, these shops are now more likely to card customers upon entry into the store. Additionally, ordering vape supplies online now requires that purchasers provide a photo of their identification and matching credit card information.

## Importance of the Vape Purchase

Many respondents said that once they owned the vape, it was easy to buy e-juices and other parts and materials in stores because the retailers assumed that if they owned a vape, they must be eligible to buy associated products.

Participants said there was a greater selection available online and more affordable prices. Respondents also noted however, that online retailers have become stricter in recent years, requiring photo identification and matching credit card information.

* **Importance of Specialty Stores.** Large retail chains such as Walmart and Target were not typical places of purchase for participants while underage. Additionally, convenience stores and gas stations were not as popular to obtain ESDs compared to tobacco and vape stores due to their product quantity and quality. Specialty stores offered the dual benefits of being open to selling to minors and also providing an educational service by teaching customers about the details of vape products.
* **Characteristics of the Buyer.** Characteristics of the buyer were seen as central to a successful purchase. Participants emphasized the importance of looking older (e.g. having facial hair), appearing confident and demonstrating that they already have access by showing a vape upon entry.

## Reasons for Vaping

Reasons that participants began vaping included family influence and peer pressure, the popularity of tricks and competitions, because it was perceived as a healthier alternative to smoking and the social atmosphere it provided.

* **Family Influence and Peer Pressure.** Several participants said that a parent bought a vape to stop smoking and the presence of the vape provided them with an opportunity to try it. Others saw friends with vapes and wanted to try vaping on that basis.
* **Popularity of Tricks and Competitions.** Participants were aware of the popular tricks seen on social media and many cited them as a reason to vape.
* **Vaping to Replace or Reduce Tobacco Smoking.** A majority of respondents in the tobacco focus groups said that the smell of tobacco was a problem for them as an underage smoker. Many of the ESD participants said they used vaping strategically to camouflage the smell or avoid it altogether. Similarly, many participants noted the pleasant taste of vaping compared to smoking cigarettes.

## Deterrents to Vaping

Traditionally, deterrents to smoking tobacco products include parental disapproval, the disapproval of peers and the health risks. ESDs, in contrast, elicit less parental or peer disapproval and the health risks are seen as minor.

* **Parental Disapproval.** Parents were often unfamiliar with ESDs and respondents described how this lack of knowledge was to their advantage. Less knowledge resulted in less disapproval.
* **Cost.** Participants acknowledged that vaping is an expensive habit that could deter others from vaping.
* **Minor Health Effects.** The health risks of vaping are still largely unknown and participants were unsure of the risks associated with vaping. Most knew that vaping had an adverse effect on their health and described ailments they attributed to the habit.
* **Product Challenges.** Because vaping requires skill and knowledge, respondents had to overcome painful experiences such as inhaling burnt cotton in order to learn to use the products safely and efficiently.
* **Product Quality.** The quality of the ESD products, both equipment and e-liquid was critical to the vaping experience. The safety of e-juices in particular was of concern to respondents who said that many home-brew formulas were available at a low cost, but were of suspicious quality.
* **Logistical Challenges.** Some participants noted that the rules and social mores surrounding vaping are changing. Several said that when they were underage and in high school, it was easier to obtain and use ESD products because so many adults were unfamiliar with them. As the products are becoming more well-known, the rules are becoming stricter.

# Awareness of the Health Risks

Participants said they learned about vaping from online sources and social media such as Facebook and YouTube. Word of mouth was another way participants learned of health risks. Many said that they did not learn about the health risks associated with vaping at school. Indeed, most participants believed vaping to be healthier for them than smoking tobacco products. Some participants did theorize about some perceived health risks since vapor is still entering the lungs.

# Background of the Study

The Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control (the Center) contracted with Analytic Insight to conduct focus group sessions with Maryland adults ages 18 through 21 who used Electronic Smoking Devices (ESDs) on at least 15 out of 30 days while in high school grades 10, 11, or 12. The purpose of the focus group sessions was to foster a conversation about their usual sources of ESDs while in high school and under 18 years of age. Additionally, the Center sought to discover the strategies that they employed for maintaining access to ESDs at that time.

Both State and Federal law prohibit the sale or distribution of any type of ESD to persons less than 18 years of age by a retailer or any other person, including family members. Nonetheless, underage Maryland adolescents have persistently been successful in acquiring and using ESDs, with 20% of Maryland public high school students reporting ESD use in the past 30 days.

When experimenting with ESD use, it is common for underage youth to “bum” a puff or two from someone, or take an ESD. Such acquisition strategies, however, generally prove insufficient to support a regular ESD user, i.e. someone who is using ESDs at least 15 out of every 30 days. Through biennial surveys of high school youth, the three primary acquisition strategies identified by such smokers are: (1) direct purchases at a gas station and/or convenience store; (2) proxy purchases (giving someone else money to buy tobacco for them); and (3) “some other way.”

# Materials and Methods

The study design employed Facebook, Instagram and Craigslist advertising to recruiting participants for the focus groups, offering an incentive of $75 for participation. The recruitment methods, moderator’s guide and card sort materials were approved by The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Young adults aged 18 to 21 were recruited through Facebook, Instagram and Craigslist advertisements. Ads instructed interested respondents to click on a link which brought up a landing page with information about the purpose, location and timing of the groups, as well as a phone number to call to reserve a place in the group. In order to participate individuals had to be 18 to 21 years of age and a user of ESDs while underage and in high school. Young adults were not required use ESDs at the time of the study; the goal was to gain the retrospective perspective of high school students who were using ESDs while underage.

Four focus group sessions were conducted between September 26 and October 4, 2017. Each focus group was conducted in a casual, public environment. Three took place in hotel conference rooms, and the fourth in a business meeting room facility. Refreshments were served.

The sessions each had one moderator and one note-taker. The note-taker's purpose was to take notes using a smart-pen and to watch for body language, facial expressions, and group reactions that would not be picked up by sound recordings. The note-taker and moderator met with the Center’s project manager after each focus group meeting to discuss the group that had just taken place. Each session lasted approximately one hour. All sessions included between 8 and 14 young adults, with an average of 11 participants per group. A fifth group was recruited in the city of Bowie, however not enough participants were available. The Bowie group was cancelled and participants redirected to other cities.

All sessions were tape-recorded. The groups were broadcast via Skype for viewing by Center staff. Groups were not video-taped. Transcriptions of each group are provided in Appendix A.

At the beginning of each group, the moderator introduced herself and gave a brief explanation of the purpose of the study and the procedures of the focus group session. A disclosure statement was given to each participant on arrival. Each participant received a $75 gift card.

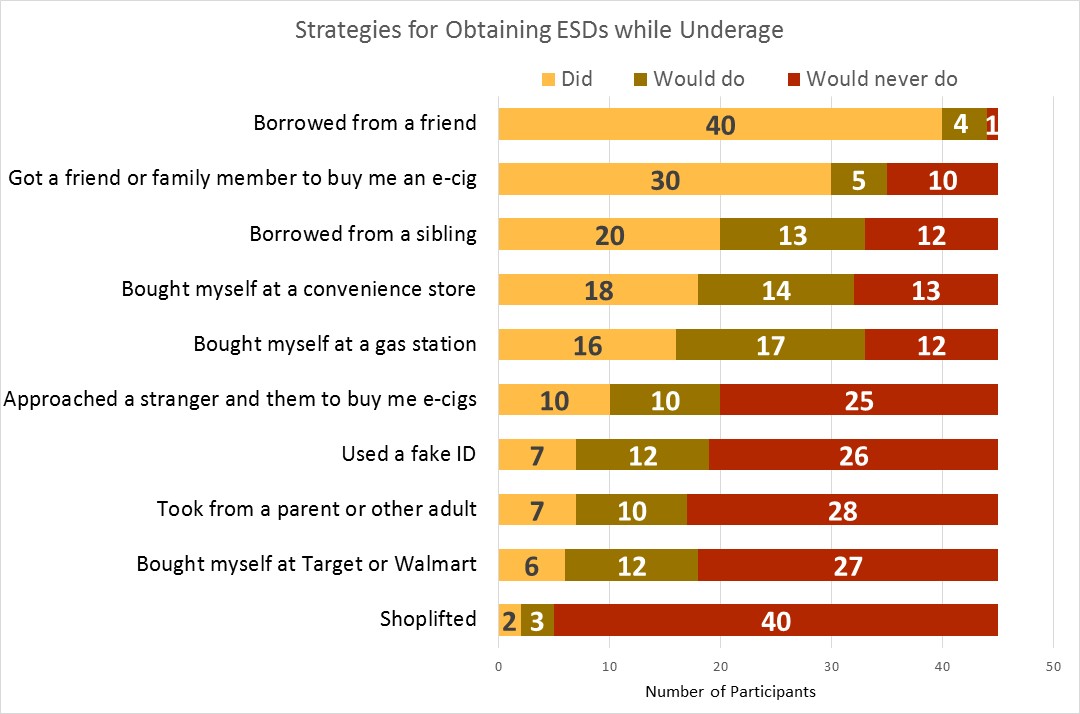
A discussion guide was created prior to the focus group meetings. The moderator’s guide is provided in Appendix B. In addition to the questions listed in the moderator’s guide, AI conducted two group exercises. The first exercise was a card sort where participants read various strategies typically employed by youth to obtain ESDs while underage. Participants sorted the cards into three piles: things they have done as an underage high school student, things they would have done and things they would never do. The groups then discussed each strategy, as well as explored other ways that the participants may have obtained ESDs while underage that were not listed.

For the second exercise, participants listed all the slang words they knew for a series of photographs related to ESD products.

Qualitative analysis of each focus group session was done using a process of thematic analysis. The process began with an initial read of the transcribed data and reading of the notes taken during the session. The analysis procedure consisted of multiple readings of the transcripts to identify key words or phrases. Coding began during the second read of the data. The relevant passages were coded initially using words from the young adults themselves. Subsequent readings of the transcripts and the passages coded in similar ways yielded categories of data describing the critical issues for young adults. Categories from each topic were combined to form themes, which provided a comprehensive view of the data.

# Strategies for Obtaining ESDs

Many participants initially tried ESDs by borrowing them from a friend or family member. As participants became more regular vapers, they began to buy ESDs from convenience stores, gas stations and other retailers. Purchasing ESDs at large retailers such as Walmart or Target was done less often. Approaching a stranger to buy one or using a fake ID were also less popular options to obtain ESDs or vape supplies.



Many participants used other methods to obtain ESDs while in high school, including purchasing ESDs or related products at specialty vape shops and through online purchases. Several participants noted that although it was easy for them to obtain vapes and associated products from specialty vape shops while they were in high school, these shops are now more likely to card customers upon entry into the store. Additionally, ordering vape supplies online now requires that purchasers provide a photo of their identification and matching credit card information.

During the focus group discussion, some strategies elicited detailed conversation. The remainder of this section presents the results for those topics.

## Borrowed from a friend

The majority of participants borrowed from friends or shared with friends, even though many expressed reservations about sharing the mouthpiece.

* There used to be a group of people who would hang around the park, and they would just share everything. Like, vapes, cigarettes, like whatever was out there would just be passed around this little circle, and no one really thinks about it. I think everyone's just like -- well, we're young and this is making us look cool.
* R1: Some people will just let you use their vape and you can just use it for however long while you're with them, they don't care. R2: Yes. It's like a social activity. R3: Yeah like try my juice and whatever.
* R1: I was like -- yeah, hand that to me, I don't care. Well I care now, but back then I was like -- OK, it's whatever. And honestly, I'm not just sharing with random strangers. It's like my friends. My friends that I drink off of. It's not that crazy to me. R2: Still I think it's better to just keep it to yourself.
* Humans can't see germs. Well, obviously, some people, if they have stuff around their mouth, or you see it on there, you're like -- ew. But most germs you can't really detect them and you can't really tell, and there's a lot of things going around. If you pick up somebody else's saliva and they got something then you're fucked. So, I'd be careful. I don't share nothing with nobody.
* I used to carry two tips. Like one for other people and one for me. I had red one, and the black one is for everybody else.

## Having friends or family buy for Them.

Several participants discussed having friends or family members buy vape products for them. Most times participants would use others to buy the e-liquid for them versus the actual vape device.

* I've got three older sisters, every single one of them smokes, so I would just say -- hey, I'll give you an extra two dollars if you in here and get this for me. And every time, they were like sure.
* It’s much more the juices that you are buying. You’re not buying a bunch of the actual NGR, it’s more the juices. You’re having people buy the juices. Kind of like buying cigarettes. That’s what contains the nicotine. You can buy these just about anywhere.

## Approaching a Stranger

Many participants said that approaching a stranger to buy ESDs or vape supplies was not a good idea because the items are too expensive and the available product choices too numerous. ESDs and vape supplies tend to be specialized and valuable. Many participants indicated that there were too many variables in selecting ESDs or vape supplies for stranger-purchases to be a viable option.

* It's typically too much money. Because if you're going to get a mod box that's couple hundred bucks. You ask somebody to go buy that, they're going to be like -- no.
* ... I wouldn't give them that much money to buy; they might just walk off with it.
* Plus with how expensive they are, most strangers would be just like -- oh sure I'll go do it and then take it and run.
* It's too complicated. It's just not simple. It's not like go buy me pack of smokes. I mean maybe juice. I mean even that you're looking at like what type of juice, what flavor, what nicotine level, what size? It's just too much for somebody. It's not like you say -- oh go buy me pack of Marlboro Reds or whatever. It's just so complicated. I mean unless it's a person that obviously knows a lot about it, it's hard for you to just give somebody money to go and get some, especially because a lot of times the cost aren't really defined either.
* It’s not like with convenience stores with cigarettes where they are in and out. People who go into vape stores generally stay a little bit, try the flavors, ask questions. And it, you know, I don’t know many people who go in and out of vape stores generally. They spend a little time.

## Taking from a Parent

In several groups, participants said that a parent or other adult in their household bought a vape in order to quit smoking and then abandoned the effort and the vape or its supplies. The participants were then able to use the vape or supplies unnoticed.

* My cousins… because they were trying to quit smoking cigarettes, so they're using vapes, and I would just try theirs. Smoke theirs.
* For [my parents], they smoke so many cigarettes that after a while they just put the e-cigs to the side and forget about them. So it was really easy for me to just and take and then just go back to my room and they never knew.
* At one point my dad tried to use one of those smaller e-cigarettes to try and quit, didn't like it, so he just kind of tossed it.
* I would steal the juice from [my parents] sometimes. This was back when I was 16. I didn't like it too much; that's why I ended up buying my own. Because my mom liked the Marlboro flavor. Which I thought was the worst I've ever tried. Ever. It burned so much.

## Other Methods to obtain ESDs

Participants frequently purchased ESD items while underage at vape shops and online. A few bought vapes second-hand.

### The Vape Shop

Many participants said the best place to obtain a vape or supplies as at the specialty vape shop since they are incentivized to sell the product.

* They want to sell it to you at a vape store.
* If you're going to buy a vape, you're spending like $50 to $100 on that, so there's way more monetary incentive for them to sell you one underage. Like cigarettes, they're only going to make like what a dollar, so it's kind of not worth it, but vapes, it's very different.
* Yeah you got to get everything, juice. So they could theoretically be making like $100 to $200 on a purchase. There's lot more incentive for them to just forget the ID.
* It was very easy, I guess you'd say. Like going into a Games Stop and talking to a cashier and picking out a video game, just like that.
* I can say they did let me try the nicotine one and then like after I tried every single nicotine flavor, all the different vapes, they were like, oh yeah are you 18? I was like no. They were like, oh we weren’t supposed to let you try that. But they were like whatever.

Participants described the vape store as a place that they would want to go to “hang out”, with “cool” people that generally worked there.

* R1: They’re like bars and stores. Like you sit around and like talk and vape. R2: Yeah, they are set up like that. R3: They all got like couches in them and stuff like that. People just go there to actually just hang. I know some people who will like go there after school just to hang out there. R4: The store I go to, they have X-box and stuff. They let us use the tester juice and fill up our tank with it and stuff.
* Like they’re pretty cool people generally that work in the vape shop.

Many used strategies while at the vape shop to avoid being asked for identification, such as using their vape device upon entering the store.

* RI: If you walk into a vape store, with the vape and you are just trying to buy juice for it, they would never card you. R2: You already have a vape yeah, they would never card you.

Other participants found vape shops to be a risky place to obtain a vape or supplies.

* I have heard horror stories about people going into vape shops and the clerks being so overly protective that they actually called the cops on some underage people trying to buy vape products. I was younger when I first heard about the situations, so it always cut me from trying to go in and get my own.

### Online Purchases

Many respondents said they were able to buy a vape online easily. Once they owned the vape, it was then easy to buy e-juices and other parts and materials in stores because the retailers assumed that if they had the vape already, they were eligible to buy other products.

Participants also said there was a greater selection available online and more affordable prices. Respondents also noted however, that online retailers have become stricter in recent years, requiring photo identification and matching credit card information.

* [The website] asks you, you have to be at least eighteen or older. You can obviously click yes and you get whatever you want online.
* Personally I got mine online. It was actually cheaper that way. You can browse around. They ask you if you're 18, but you can just put whatever, it doesn't really matter. It says, "Are you 18?" You click, "Yes," and that's it and then it'll let you buy whatever, basically.
* Once I found out the company, I would use my mom’s or my boyfriend’s credit card for it.

### Second Hand Purchases

Some participants also talked about buying used vapes.

* You can replace a mouthpiece on vape usually, so if you are buying it used, you can always just replaced the mouthpiece and use it.
* I just bought mine off of Craigslist. That was the cheapest way, I wanted something really nice, cheap and I just found something on Craigslist, I think I took the metro, because I don't think I was old enough to drive, I think I was 15. The dude was really sketchy, he didn't care, he didn't ask how old I was.

# Purchasing ESDs while Underage

Respondents used trial and error to establish best practices for purchasing ESD products underage and shared the best places through word of mouth.

## Learning Purchasing Behaviors

* Usually, when you're in high school, how you get hints of things is when you're around friends and they have something - oh, I got this from this place and it was a good deal. Then you're going to be like -- oh yeah. I'm going to go to this place and check it out. And get this and this. And sometimes they have better things that suit you. So that's how things go around. That's how people get knowledge of good deals and stuff like that.
* Again it could be simply a gas station or a convenient store that sells food based stuff. Maybe you go to the counter and see like little pipes that you can buy. Sometimes they are chill about it. It's not like an actual vape store but you can still get those products there and just like any other kind of products. Either they card you or they won't. It always a trial and error process.
* Maybe people have had success before, like trial and error. So like you hear from one person at work, then you go try, it works and you tell somebody else.
* You would hear like, oh yeah they don’t ID you. Let’s go over there.

One respondent who worked at a place that sold vapes on the boardwalk described how he was instructed to get a higher price from underage customers. Other participants acknowledged that they spent more for products while underage.

* I did that. I was at Ocean City, so I did that. As much as you can, you got to profit. As much as you can you have to profit. That's what the manager told us. We don't actually sell the exact price, we sell it [for] more. Because they really want it. They don't have IDs so they really want it. So they're willing to spend more than it actually is. And then we just sell it to them.
* If you're going to buy the juice as minors, they will overprice it. They're not going to give you a deal. It was like a 30ml bottle they were selling for like $15. They knew I was a minor and they were like -- oh $40. And then I went somewhere else and it was like the guy kept pressuring me to buy and it was really overpriced, it was 9ml bottle or something for $20, it was ridiculous. They overprice it doing that every time.

## Importance of Specialty Stores

Large retail chains such as Walmart and Target were not typical places of purchase for participants while underage. Additionally, convenience stores and gas stations were not as popular to obtain ESDs compared to tobacco and vape stores due to their product quantity and quality.

* You're not going to get like whole vapes at those places. You're going to get Juuls, Vuse, and Blus. Disposable e-cigs, you have to buy cartridges, you're not getting vapes there. And then the other thing with Walmart or Target is, it's not like they're going to get any personal benefit from selling you that. They have every reason not to, because their manager is going to kill them, they're only helping the store out, it doesn't really affect them, they could just lose their job.
* They [gas stations and convenience stores] don’t have really vape stuff. They have Blus and Vuse. And they’re just multiples of like these little cartridge pens and they have like the whole kits. But I’m not going to buy them there.
* You would typically buy them at vape stores, because ones at gas stations were really... Like, the juice would be nasty, and the mods would be crap.
* Typically, I would say that people stay away from convenience stores and gas stations because of all the juice and materials they sell are bad, really pretty bad.
* If you buy at a gas station, you’re obviously going to feel like shit.

## Desirable Store Characteristics

While underage, participants looked for a combination of a convenient location where it is unlikely they will be recognized by their parents or be carded.

* I try to go to the ones that my parents don't go to.
* Well I went to the ones that my parents go to, because usually that's the one where the people know me, so they're not going to ask me a lot of questions.
* Like don't go somewhere where they have like ten thousand signs that say we card.
* I feel like the difference between a gas station and convenience store -- so at a convenience store I feel like it's kind of harder because they're normally owned by a company. It's not usually like that a lot of times at gas stations. It's just a guy operating it so you don't have a lot of people to worry about and it's just less professional usually. And a convenience store is usually bigger, like management chain owned stuff, it's a lot harder for them to get away with selling you something underage.
* It's just easier to go back to the same place, because then at that point the guy's familiar with you, you don't worry about whether or not they're going to ID you, because he didn't ID you the first time and he still kind of remembers you, odds are it's just going to be really easy transaction.

### Product Quality

Because ESDs are expensive and represent a significant investment, participants were careful to choose outlets that provide quality products.

* For me, I pick the store by how it is basically, the more money they spend on like the current stuff and usually they going to have higher quality stuff, with vape accessories, the more money you pay the higher quality whatever you are buying is going to be.
* It depends on what you are looking for. If you are looking for long term use, you'd probably go with more expensive vape or more high quality juice. If it's a one time, you just trying it just you know to see, you'd probably go for cheap not knowing how it's going to be the difference between that and high quality.

## The Clerk Factor

Several characteristics of the clerks were seen as desirable, although the characteristics varied greatly between participants and were sometimes contradictory.

* If they're younger, they never ask you. If they're older they're going to ask you all the time. Older ones take their job more seriously I think.
* I try to go to the ones who look the most stressed. Like if it's really busy in the store, whatever, they're not going to stop and ask you for your ID.
* Me and my friend built up a relationship at this a little kiosk in a mall that we go to.
* Most people that work [at vape shops] are quite passionate about vaping, so they'd tell you that it’s very good for you and that it's changed their lives.

## Characteristics of the Buyer

Characteristics of the buyer seemed to be as important as characteristics of the store or the clerk. Participants emphasized the importance of looking older (e.g. having facial hair), appearing confident and demonstrating that they already have access by showing a vape upon entry.

* If you look guilty, you are going to be guilty. Just act like you grown.
* Be nice, be friendly and act like you are their age.
* Like just try to get somewhere on their social level, somewhere and near that and they'll just be like, yeah they'll chill.
* Especially if you go in vaping. Because they could have that hunch that you’re underage. If you go in vaping, you’re going to leave vaping. So what is anyone outside, anybody’s going to have anything to say about it if you go in with it already. So that’s something different than cigarettes. You’re going in to get cigarettes. You don’t have them. You’re coming out with them.
* That’s a good point though. I remember I would purposefully go into a store already vaping. Like as I was going in the store, I would be vaping just so they would see the vape. They would see that I already have it and that I wasn’t coming in… Cause if you come in without that they might ask for an ID right away. But if you come in and you’re just like vaping really obviously, they’re not going to ask you for an ID most of the time. I think they have once, but most of the time, probably not.

# Types of ESDs

This section provides respondents’ knowledge of slang and colloquial terms for ESD products. Respondents filled out cards showing pictures of a product and asking for slang words representing that product. An example card is shown to the right.

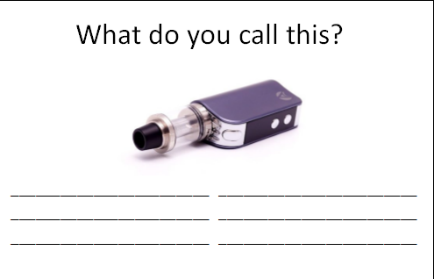


Figure 1: Card Exercise Example

Word clouds are an interpretive device for qualitative data. The more often a word was mentioned, the larger it appears in the word cloud. The word clouds below show the terms that respondents provided for ESD products.

Very few slang words were offered by the ESD groups. Many said that there were few words known because the products are new and do not yet have slang associations. One respondent mentioned that vaping is also more socially acceptable and because slang words are often used to hide activities that are stigmatized, there is no need for slang words to hide ESD use as it does not have a strong stigma attached to the behavior.



Figure 5: Slang for Vape Pen



Figure 3: Slang for E-Cigarette



Figure 2: Slang for Vape Mod



Figure 4: Slang for E-Liquid



Figure 9: Slang for Atomizer



Figure 8: Slang for Coil



Figure 7: Slang for Clearomizer



Figure 6: Slang for Cartomizer

## ESD Preferences

Respondents liked a variety of brands and flavors. Their focus was on flavors and product quality rather than brand association, in contrast to the tobacco focus group participants, who showed strong brand preferences.

Vaping is a learned skill with complex products and product combinations.

Because of the complexity of the products, personalization is involved in developing one’s own vape mod. Many products offer different sizes, strength levels and other features that are customizable or vary depending on how they are combined with other products.

### Brands and Flavors

* I just wanted the one that made the most smoke. I don't really focus on the brand. But I would ask my friends. They have different ones so I compare which ones. I try them myself, and just compare. Then I pick the one that's better.
* I guess it would all depend on like, the season. So if it was cold I'd more pastry like juice. And like summer more probably like fruity. Refreshing.
* It definitely draws your attention. You're just like -- I wonder what that tastes like? Like if you don't have experience with the alcoholic drinks, it kind of makes you wonder what that could taste like.
* The Juul kind of started all. It's like a little thing that comes up like refillable thing pod. That's a disposable. It's like very discrete, its quick, you don't have to light anything, you don't smell. It's more for the nicotine. Yeah it's more for the nicotine definitely.
* You don't want something mild. The popular flavors at least in my experience in school were the ones that gave you a really good flavor when you hit them.
* People get cravings. You want sweet stuff, it actually deals with a lot of cravings. I used to get Swedish fish, and you could vape that, and it's basically kind of like you’re eating the candy, but you're not consuming any sugar.

### Learning the Skills

* With vaping it's kind of hard to know what works, it's a pretty complicated hobby. So you have to kind of get something simple, learn about it, learn what you like and then move and especially because it's so expensive, it's not like buying a $5 pack of cigarettes. You're buying something like $40 to $100 more.
* It gets really complicated at a certain point. Like you're actually having to learn a lot of stuff.
* That is another perk of going to vape shops, is they are huge help. Because they are paid to know what to do and to educate. So if you buy, let's say the kit, they will run you though everything, how to do it, there's guides all over the place on the Internet, your friends can help you, there's a lot of resources.

### Personalization

* [My vape] is my style. I actually have a friend that charges to pay paint Pokémon on mod boxes, so that was really cool.
* You have tanks and drippers, and batteries. It all depends on what you get personally, what your setup is. It's kind of like the same thing with cars, how everyone has different car has a different passion for stuff. It's like that.
* They come like, the Christmas or the color, like you might have a black mod and might get line of red that runs down at a certain angle. Or some that have printed, like stickers on them with different designs.
* I look for something like zero nicotine in there and something that's a little bigger and something that I can use. Something that can fit my lifestyle. I don't want something small, something that can just put out a little bit is smoke may be you want to like do a lot of tricks or even if sometimes you just want to rely on nicotine you having a bad time seen it’s like calm down, yeah. That can handle like different watts.
* It kind of depends on the ratio of PG and VG that you get in your juice because one side of the mixture is meant to blow smoke. It gives you the cloud. The other I think is to get the flavor. So that kind of dictates what you are going to do with your vape. It’s more for indoors, but if you want to use it outdoors, you are going to use more of the flavor and less cloud. So you can go about your day and you are not being an asshole.
* I don't have to mess with the watt or anything. I just fill up my cartridge and just smoke it. It really does depends on what you are using it for and how you like to smoke the certain devices. For me, I am one of those people that just likes smoking something in general. I just like feeling the pull, feeling the drag of the smoke, so that's what I use it for. I don't really use it for the juice or anything. I just kind of, I just need to feel something been pulled.
* I mean you can do crazy coils that have wires that's going inside and out of each other and braided and twisted and wire wrapped on the outside of other wires, you can use red on wire, so custom built is like the biggest thing right now. That's when you are like the extreme and you know that you going to be doing it.
* That was the best part, you can make really weird flavors.
* You make the coils yourself, you'll buy kits for it and the materials and that's where it really becomes a big hobby, like something that you can sit down and do.

# Reasons for Vaping

Reasons that participants began vaping included family influence and peer pressure, the popularity of tricks and competitions, because it was perceived as a healthier alternative to smoking and the social atmosphere it provided.

## Family Influence and Peer Pressure

Several participants said that a parent bought a vape to stop smoking and the presence of the vape provided them with an opportunity to try it. Others saw friends with vapes and wanted to try vaping on that basis.

* If they see it, it’s like monkey see monkey do. So if you're a little kid and you're seeing all of your family members, your parents, or somebody doing some, it's going to cause you to want to do that too.
* For me it was more just like the vape seemed cool and everybody in my school was vaping and then he bought a vape and I was like -- I want to try it, everybody else is trying, seems really cool, I want to try it too. But yeah I personally started with just trying an e-cigarettes, seeing what they were like.

## Popularity of Tricks and Competitions

Participants were aware of the popular tricks seen on social media and many cited them as a reason to vape.

* You see the clouds and you're like, man that's cool, and you don't even think about it, but you'll start challenging yourself, and you'll just see how big of a cloud you can produce back to back. And also the coolest thing is how big the clouds that you blow, like -- I don't know if any of them do, but I do, I think about it all the time -- like how do I hold that amount of smoke in my lungs? I think that that is so cool.
* You create a huge cloud. Just so cool for some reason. You get addicted to it. You're just blowing smoke all the time. It's not even about the vaping, it's about the cloud.
* Yeah. I think it kind of sells itself. Because like when you're smoking it, it just looks cool. Like, it has a lot of effect. It's like hookah times two.
* It’s like show-off thing. Yeah, because you can like blow circles. You can put it on the table and like have it sit there. People do it all the time when they’re vaping. It’s just like another thing that’s different than cigarettes.
* There is a vape shop down and if you can blow up smoke a certain distance you win a prize from them. You going to get card like a free two liter. Yeah, there's conventions and competitions events and big competition.
* They actually have vape competitions where you can make big money. You can actually win like $400 mods and they like give you free juice and everything like that.

## Health Factors

Vaping was seen as a healthier alternative to smoking, as well as a transition to quitting. Although participants were aware of health effects associated with vaping, the long-term risks were unknown.

* When you vape, although I still have negative health effects, it just feels healthier. When you smoke you know from all the stuff you've seen that's been pushed into your head, it's unhealthy and you know you have effects. But for vaping it just doesn't feel as unhealthy, because it feels like it's kind of good for you. It's not, but it feels like it.
* With cigarettes it's tobacco. But you can get juice with no nicotine, no tobacco, none of that. So it makes it seem like it's just not harmful.
* R1: It felt healthier than smoking cigarettes to me. R2: Yeah, my health declined a lot less slow when I started vaping.

## Atmosphere

The deep breathing techniques that are part of the vaping experience can be very relaxing.

* RI: [Vaping is] very therapeutic. Because it's the hum of it. I don't want to sound weird. Breathing it in, there's a hum to the machine and then you exhale, you just see all this smoke and you're just really atmospheric. Especially with a bunch of people. All the smoke in the room and it's weird to say, but it's nice to just sit there in a room full of smoke. R2: Yeah. Like incense. R1: Yeah, smoke that's not killing you. Right now.
* R1: Part of it is that you're taking this deep breath in and deep breath out, so it's also relaxing at the same time. R2: It's like an atmospheric thing almost.

## VAPING TO REPLACE OR REDUCE TOBACCO SMOKING

A majority of respondents in the tobacco focus groups said that the smell of tobacco was a problem for them as an underage smoker. Many of the ESD participants said they used vaping strategically to camouflage the smell or avoid it altogether. Similarly, many participants noted the pleasant taste of vaping compared to smoking cigarettes.

* R1: I would smoke the e-cig so it wouldn't smell as bad going home. My mom would be like “Oh wow, you smell like fruity.” R2: But when you have foreign parents, they know the smell. They wouldn't be like -- it's fruity or anything. It'd be like -- yeah.
* R1: And then vaping came along, and there were all these different flavors and it actually tasted good. And I was like -- OK, cool, I want to do that instead of smoking.
* Smell is huge when you’re a minor because you don’t smell like smoke. And where… I could vape in my room and get away with it.

Vaping was also seen as a more convenient and socially acceptable activity due to the flavorful smell. For example, vaping is something you can do indoors, as compared to smoking cigarettes.

* They work like incense, like they fill up a whole room. In like five minutes your room is going to be smelling like cherry bomb.
* The other thing is like convenience. Because when you smoke cigarettes, you have to go out and smoke the whole cigarette. It’s so much different than vaping. You want to like puff on a vape. You don’t have to smoke a whole cigarette. You don’t have to leave the smell behind.
* It’s so much more convenient. The whole thing is there. You don’t have to light anything. You don’t have to go outside.
* R1: So I think it's a little bit more acceptable than traditional cigarettes. People tend to not really care as much because it smells pretty good, it's a little bit more acceptable. R2: And you don't smell terrible. R1: Right.
* When you're inside. You bring out the vape. But when you're outside you know you have that cigarette. The effect is completely different.
* Theoretically you could vape anywhere, it doesn't leave residue, it doesn't leave a smell anywhere. I mean you could do it in your room, in your house. But smoking, if somebody's a smoker you know they're a smoker, it doesn't matter. If they smoke every day you can tell. You can take showers, you wash all your clothes, like if you've been in somebody's house that's a smoker -- even if they don't smoke inside -- a lot of stuff in their house typically smells of smoke. It's just how it is.
* The only thing that's more awesome about it -- you could pretty much do it anywhere. Besides the mall -- the big stores, stuff like that obviously, and like the hotels, they're like -- you could do it in the car with your windows up if it's raining. You could do it in your room ain't nobody going to smell nothing.

Vaping was also seen as being part of a particular social group.

* Your vape could be the way that you express yourself because you can get so many different kinds, different colors, shapes, and different wattages. There's so many options to it, so it's almost like a whole group of guys with a whole bunch of cars...naturally be drawn together and want to talk about it and share the . . . and so on and so forth. It's the same way with vape, just a different group.
* And with like smoking, normal smoking, although people do hang out, it's not really about the smoking, like they're not talking about it, they don't really care about the smoking, it's bringing them all in one place. But with vape it's about that, people are always interested -- Oh what kind of juice are you vaping, what kind of mod is that, what kind of... it's all this stuff that goes in to it and people talk about that and share the vape, share the juice. You put the tip on the person's vape, try their juice, whatever.

Participants found vaping to be a healthier alternative to smoking with little known long-term health effects. Indeed, many participants felt that vaping benefits individuals who want to stop smoking. With vaping, individuals can manage the level of nicotine in their vape juice, which was seen as a health benefit.

* When you hear about vapes, it's always, this is the better alternative. It's never like, you shouldn't do this. But with smoking, it's like, you shouldn't do this. And I feel it's really hard to be negative against vaping because it's really just... It's kind of pleasant. We haven't really seen the long-term effects, and we haven't really seen people getting cancer or dying because of it. So what should you really tell somebody? Like, you're going to get a cough? I mean, like, that's not enough of a reason. It's like telling somebody that eats pizza, they may get sick eventually.
* I feel way healthier when I'm messing with this than when I had my cigarettes. If I hit this and I cough, I could usually stop coughing after like two coughs. If I'm smoking a cigarette and I start coughing, it's game over; I feel like I'm dying. My face will turn red and everything; it's hard.
* PG is what's in inhalers for asthmatics, so it is actually like kind of for that, so it is safe to breathe in and stuff. That's another reason I think people are OK with vaping and not smoking, because it was created to be safe for breathing in.
* The hype is so focused on our generation stopping smoking that nobody really focuses on the vapes. They look at the vapes as like -- oh, this'll help you stop doing this.
* The managing of nicotine. Whereas with a pack of cigarettes, you may be able to get different brands, light or more heavy. But with vapes, you can directly choose how much nicotine you have in your juice.

Many said their parents were more accepting of vapes because they were less familiar with the risks and generally thought it was healthier than smoking cigarettes. Others noted that their parents were still apprehensive about vaping, with one saying his parents thought it would lead to smoking tobacco products.

* I didn't find it very difficult to have to hide it from my parents. Well, at least not my mom. I was just -- it's just scented oil. And she... I even was like -- you want to try? She's like -- no, I don't do that. And I was just -- it's fine; it's just oil. And she believed it, so it wasn't a big deal of having to hide it or anything.
* They were like, it's not going to kill you. And I explained it to them, like really simply. It's not actual cigarettes. It's not going to do anything. It's mostly just water vapor. So I'm chilling. And they were like – okay; don't do it in our house; don't do it in our face. And I was like -- okay.
* I think for them, seeing a cigarette was so offensive. Like, what are you doing? Versus the vape, they'd just be like -- oh, OK. I guess that's fine.
* Sort of. My father was kind of less mad after I quit smoking and went to vaping, but still didn't really like it.
* They [my parents] just think it’s going to lead to smoking.

While still expensive, some participants said that vaping cost them less money compared to smoking cigarettes. Vaping was seen as an investment.

* The liquid itself equals up to a carton of cigarettes. So out of those bottles, you’re buying a 30 mil bottle, you’re getting like the equivalent to four cartons of cigarettes. So you’re spending 30 dollars as opposed to 150, 200 bucks.
* I wouldn’t say [vaping is] as expensive as cigarettes but it is very expensive. Especially when you’re younger and you don’t have quite as much income.
* It’s much more of an investment. If you do it for a long time, you only have to buy the NGR once so it’s not as if you gotta keep spending $10 a week or however much you spend a week [on cigarettes]. You are basically just buying juice after that. So it can be way cheaper than smoking.

# Deterrents to Vaping

Traditionally deterrents to smoking tobacco products include parental disapproval, the disapproval peers and the health risks. ESDs, in contrast, elicit less parental or peer disapproval and the health risks are seen as minor.

## Parental Disapproval

Parents were often unfamiliar with ESDs and respondents described how this was to their advantage.

I have this really cool pen that doubles as a stylus. At the bottom of it was a stylus too, so I could use it to vape. My dad caught it one time charging, and he was like “What is this?” And I was like “It's just a stylus.” And he was like “Prove it.” And then I lost that one too. I'm always losing them.

## Cost

Participants acknowledged that vaping is an expensive habit that could deter others from vaping.

* Why spend your money on $150 dollars for a vape when you could go get $150 worth of -- I don't know -- Pokemon cards? It depends on the kid. Some kids would rather go out and spend their money on this stuff. I'd be just like -- you could just go spend that money on so many other things.
* I like to collect them now. I have a bunch of them. And it’s something that I keep buying more and more of. Like the more, the next one I buy will be more expensive than this one. And it’s just something that keeps adding up.

## Minor Health Effects

The health risks of vaping are still largely unknown and participants were unsure of the risks associated with vaping. Most knew that vaping had an adverse effect on their health and described ailments they attributed to the habit.

* I stopped vaping now, because even without nicotine, whenever I vape, I get headaches.
* I was just going to say like with the vapes, you know I feel like something in the back of my throat. I can feel somethings you know almost you know borderline sticky. You know getting stuck in my throat and with cigarette you can't feel that tar going in, you just know it builds up over time but with vapes, you can actually feel something in there.
* I feel it's kind of nauseating. Because when you have all that smoke, vape smoke, and you try to do nicotine, it's a lot more than what you would have with a cigarette. One puff is like 5, 10 puffs, so it's just... I threw up my first time. I was sick.
* Instead of tar filling your lungs from cigarettes, you get fluid from the juice. Because what happens if you're not careful, the ball of juice doesn't burn, so you're breathing a lot of it in. After a while you're getting actual juice coating your lungs because some juice particles are going in, and I've read some stuff on this -- they're going into your lungs and it's not getting burned. Eventually that builds up and it irritates the hairs in your lungs, and it gives you a cough. Like, I have a terrible cough. I had a cough 24-7, it was like smokers cough, and eventually I stopped. When I stopped vaping, two or three weeks later, cough gone.
* RI: You do get burns, that's one negative of vaping, especially... If you breathe in… That is the worst feeling in the world. R2: Oh God, it's burnt cotton. R1: Yeah. You will be breathing in basically burnt cotton and it really hurts. R3: It hurts and it stays in your mouth. R2: Yeah it sucks. R1: It sucks. That is the worse part of it, by far!
* People develop allergies to the PG and the VG.
* Some people are allergic to one or the other, so they can get sick from it. I actually think I might have been allergic, because I got that cough. But I don't know.
* We actually had something where we went to high school and the kids were actually in the bathroom drinking the e-cig fluid to actually get high and they were getting terribly sick.

## Product Challenges

Because vaping requires skill and knowledge, respondents had to overcome painful experiences in order to learn to use the products safely and efficiently.

* When I first started vaping, there were a few times where the oil would like, spit out and burn me. And I actually know a few people who have had that issue.
* And some of them explode if you use them too often. Like in the batteries and stuff. There's a video that went around on Facebook of this guy who was vaping and he used the vape and it blew up half of his face. Like his face is permanently damaged because he used a vape instead of smoking cigarettes.

## Product Quality

The quality of the ESD products, both equipment and e-liquid was critical to the vaping experience. The safety of e-juices in particular was of concern to respondents who said that many home-brew formulas were available at a low cost, but were of suspicious quality.

* Sometimes really weird or sketchy juices. I mean you put in your body, into your lungs and there's not a lot of things you put in your lungs. So like especially if you're trying to be cheap with it, you're getting these weird juices that are possibly made not correctly and they can make you sick. There was a scare that went around where the chemical that was in popcorn was in these vapes, in these juices. I don't know what it was doing to people, really making them sick, giving them cancer or something.
* A lot of the problem with vape juice it's not like cigarettes. You can just buy it anywhere. I bought it at the flea market and you don't know what they're putting in that. That's the biggest issue, if you're not getting really nice juice. It can be from China, it can just be random chemicals. You don't know what contaminants is in there, the nicotine they've used, you don't know, you don't know. They may not know what they're doing, they just want to sell you juice and you don't find out till later. So you could really get sick on that. If you get a crappy juice, you could actually get sick.
* It's like that person made it, who knows if they know what they're doing. They could mess up one thing about it. If they messed up one fraction on putting nicotine in, put 10 times the dosage instead of like 1mg they think, oh it's supposed to be 10mg, or instead of 10 it's supposed to be 100 -- you could literally pass out from that. It could kill you with nicotine, because it's a poison, so, you've got to be careful.

## Logistical Challenges

Some participants noted that the rules and social mores surrounding vaping are changing. Several said that when they were underage and in high school, it was easier to obtain and use ESD products because so many adults were unfamiliar with them. As the products are becoming more well-known, the rules are becoming stricter.

* You can't even vape... Places you could vape before -- you could vape basically anywhere; now you basically have to go to a smoking area. Even though it's not the same, and it goes away right away, doesn't leave a smell of the stuff -- you have to go to smoking area, and the whole point of it being was to get away from that for a lot of people. So now they're just back with the smokers, and that's something a lot of them don't want.

# Awareness of the Health Risks

Participants said they learned about vaping from online sources and social media such as Facebook and YouTube. Word of mouth was another way participants learned of health risks. Many said that they did not learn about the health risks associated with vaping at school. Indeed, most participants believed vaping to be healthier for them than smoking tobacco products. Some participants did theorize about some perceived health risks since vapor is still entering the lungs.

## Learning About the Health Risks

* I don't think they really talked about it in school. You always hear just about cigarettes. But no one really mentions vaping. So I think maybe if they did, and they talked about it the same way that cigarettes are talked about, maybe a lot more kids would stay away from it. That's a big "maybe" but didn't stop anyone from going after cigarettes.
* I mean, even in health class. They mainly talked about cigarettes. Vaping was never really mentioned. At least in my experience.
* I really haven't seen that many health risks, I've seen a few but none that are like major.

## Healthier and Safer Option

* With vape I think in a way is kind of better than cigarettes. Because some of the juice that you use, it's less nicotine. So there's levels. They have some that have no nicotine at all. So that hurts you less. If I was them, I would put -- if you use this product then it might help you get over cigarettes. I'm just thinking business, actually. So that would sell.
* When do you ever see someone and they're like -- yeah I'm lying in this hospital bed because I vaped too much. Like, you just don't... It just don't happen.
* You know they're just going to pick one thing and vaping seems to be the safest for what's... At least so far and people just pick that usually and that's their thing. If they're going to do one thing, they're going to do that and it's you know -- safer.

## Perceived Health Risks

* I think it's more likely that you are going to probably suffocate from vaping because it is a water vape, the water goes into your lungs. I had a lot of times where I vape and the water would come out of my nose.
* There's no tobacco so that part's way down. But I mean like, the smoke factor is still there, the breathing it in, the breathing it out -- that's still there. So I mean, you're going to cough; you're going to have to fill your lungs; you're going to have some problems.
* Anything that's not oxygen, going into your lungs, is obviously not good for you. That's all they're made to absorb. So it's anything else. That's not good. And you're going to feel the effects eventually, even if it's only a little bit at a time. Over a long period of a time will feel it. There's no escaping that.
* Something about water vapor that goes up in your lungs, then you drown in a terrible way.

## Warning labels

* I don't think it would discourage anyone. I think that they would just feel like -- OK, it's the same thing as cigarettes. I think that it would help to really have more campaigns and stuff where people see the actual effects of it. I feel like -- you know, everyone here, you just ask them, "so what happens if you vape too much," everyone's like -- nothing really, you just get a little light headed. That doesn't stop anyone.

## Other Risks

Parental discouragement seemed to have the greatest impact on underage vaping. Parental discouragement had less impact compared with tobacco use partly because of the novelty and unknown health risks. Participants were not concerned about being caught purchasing products underage because the rules during the time that they were underage were ambiguous. ESDs offered a low risk of being caught, but a high level of satisfaction when a successful purchase was made.

* My mom is like the FBI.
* I have tried it at least one time after [being turned down], but then if it happens again I am just going to find a new place.
* You actually felt like a pimp. Walking in and out with an e-cig underage. You felt awesome. You’re like, I just finessed them.

# Conclusions

**Strategies for Obtaining ESDs**

Many participants initially tried ESDs by borrowing them from a friend or family member. As participants became more regular vapers, they began to buy ESDs from convenience stores, gas stations and other retailers such as specialty vape shops, as well as online. Online purchases were preferred because retailers did not ask for identification.

Many respondents said that once they owned the vape, it was easy to buy e-juices and other parts and materials in stores because the retailers assumed that if they owned a vape, they must be eligible to buy associated products.

## Reasons for Vaping

Participants described their reasons for vaping with enthusiasm. Several brought vapes to the focus groups and showed other participants their “mod.”

The reasons participants vape included family influence and peer pressure, the popularity of tricks and competitions, because it was perceived as a healthier alternative to smoking and the social atmosphere it provided.

A majority of respondents in the tobacco focus groups said that the smell of tobacco was a problem for them as an underage smoker. Many of the ESD participants said they used vaping strategically to camouflage the smell or avoid it altogether. Similarly, many participants noted the pleasant taste of vaping compared to smoking cigarettes.

## Deterrents to Vaping

ESDs were thought to elicit less parental or peer disapproval than smoking and the health risks were seen as minor. Parents were often unfamiliar with ESDs and respondents described how this lack of knowledge was to their advantage. Less knowledge resulted in less disapproval.

The health risks of vaping are still largely unknown and participants were unsure of the risks associated with vaping. Most knew that vaping had an adverse effect on their health and described ailments they attributed to the habit.

Vaping was viewed by participants as an accepted alternative to smoking that minimizes many of the detrimental effects of tobacco use. The goals of controlling youth access to ESDs generally include reducing youth initiation to a culture that includes tobacco products, protecting the health of users and promoting smoke-free (and tobacco-free) environments. Successful ESD policies will advance these public health goals while working with perceptions of the lesser social and health risks compared with smoking.

# Appendix A: Transcripts

## Annapolis

**Interviewer:** So in order for us to get to know each other a little bit better, I would like to go around the room, get your first name and where you were when you first vaped?

**Answer:** Pretty much the same thing as cigarettes. Oh and I’m XXX. Also, yeah, I mean the same stores that sell the e-cigs sell the cigarettes. You’re the same age. I mean you try to stop smoking after a little while cause like oh my God, I shouldn’t be smoking. Then you buy e-cigs pretty much the same spot.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so where were you though when you first tried an e-cig?

**Answer:** At, in a tobacco shop.

**Interviewer:** Oh, really, OK.

**Answer:** I was going to say something else, but. But I don’t know.

My name is XXX and I think the first time I tried was at school.

**Interviewer:** Like actually at school?

**Answer:** Yeah, in the hallway.

**Interviewer:** And was that high school?

**Answer:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** OK

**Answer:** I’m XXX. I think the first time I tried the vape was, I don’t know, summer. I think I was at a smoke shop probably.

**Interviewer:** OK. And do they, so just to interject, do they let you try out the vapes at a smoke shop?

**Answer:** Well yeah, you can taste test and like, they have like mods, like stuff sitting here like this pretty much, but they have rubber tips or like this will come off and they’ll have like little ones in a plastic case and then you unwrap it and try it on and dispose of it when you’re done.

So you can like test whatever. I’m pretty sure that was it.

And just to add they let you try nicotine in it or no nicotine. They usually tell you, but I’ve had times where they didn’t tell me.

Yep.

They did not ID me for that. I can say they did let me try the nicotine one and then like after I tried every single nicotine flavor, all the different vapes, they were like, oh yeah are you 18? I was like no. They were like, oh we weren’t supposed to let you try that. But they were like whatever.

**Interviewer:** OK

**Answer:** My name is XXX. Hey everyone. First time I tried a vape or an e-cigarette was over at a friend’s house. That’s kind of where I got my experience from it. And then never quit ever since so I’ve been doing it ever since.

My name is XXX. The first time I tried an e-vape or whatever was in my friend’s basement.

My name is XXX and the first time I tried a vape or an NGR I was at my friend’s house.

My name is XXX and the first time I tried a vape was at my friend’s house.

My name’s XXX and the first time I tried a vape was ditching class when I was 15 and a half.

Dude the half’s so important.

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK, so you were at school?

**Answer:** Well I was about ½ a mile away. It was ditching.

**Interviewer:** Oh right you were ditching.

**Answer:** So we weren’t at school.

It was summer time right?

There’s no school in summer man.

You’re confusing me. Uh no. (laughter) No it was like November or something. I don’t remember the specifics. I was 15.

My name is XXX. The first time that I tried an e-cig I was, I believe, either, I was 16 going on 17, or I was 17. It was at work, I worked at a movie theater at the time and someone had a vape and I tried it. And I was like I hate this. Then later on I didn’t hate them so I kept on doing it so.

**Interviewer:** OK. And did you all smoke cigarettes? Which did you do first, did you smoke cigarettes first and then try vaping. Or vaping and ten cigarettes? Or vaping, but never cigarettes?

**Answer:** Cigarettes first.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Vapes first.

Vape first

Vape first

Both at the same time.

Cigarettes first.

Cigarettes. Vape. Dip. Then all three at the same time cause I couldn’t quit any of them.

**Interviewer:** OK. So the first thing we are going to do is an exercise called a card sort. And you’ll see in front of you, you have these cards. And so what we would like you to do is put these into three piles. The first pile is things that you did when you were underage, under 18 and in high school and vaping. Meaning “bought myself at a gas station” means bought a vape or an e-cig. So the three piles are things you did, things you would have done but didn’t necessarily have the chance to do, and then things you would never do. So it’s “did”, “would have done” and “would never do”. And I’ll tell you too before you do them. Once they’re done, what we’re going to do is mark the three piles and collect them all and you’re name is not attached to your pile. So we’ll have everyone’s piles all together. So, the last couple ones are “used a fake ID” and “shoplifted”, so if you want to sort those into the “did” or “would have done”, you won’t be called out in the group for that. Nobody will ever know that is where you put that card.

[Chatter as participants sort cards]

OK, so, let’s talk about the cards. So the first one is “bought it myself at a gas station.” So, how many of you when you were underage were able to buy vapes, e-cigs, those kinds of things, at a gas station or convenience?

Pretty much everyone it looks like. Was that hard to do?

**Answer:** No.

**Interviewer:** Was it embarrassing? Was it awkward?

**Answer:** You actually felt like a pimp. Walking in and out with an e-cig underage. You felt awesome. You’re like, I just finessed them.

Before I had facial hair it was a little scary.

What was the feeling walking out though with it?

Like a king.

Exactly.

**Interviewer:** OK, what about at a convenience store?

**Answer:** Easier.

**Interviewer:** A convenience store is easier than a gas station?

**Answer:** No.

No.

I thought it was for cigarettes personally, but that just may have been where I was going.

**Interviewer:** And for e-cigs?

**Answer:** I haven’t seen vapes at convenience stores.

Yeah

Unless they have the little $20.00 pens like he’s got.

**Interviewer:** What about at a tobacco store?

**Answer:** Tobacco store is where everyone gets them from.

They sell them.

Cause I worked at Wawa and no one, we sold in the year I was working there, we may have sold like two e-cigarettes the entire time I was working there. And I was working on the register so.

[mumbling]

**Interviewer:** What?

**Answer:** Nothing, I was just saying he looked like a Wawa person. Like I picture him working at a Wawa.

**Interviewer:** Oh, OK. I’m not sure that’s helpful. We need to stay on topic here so if you can keep that to a minimum that would be helpful. So what were you saying?

**Answer:** Not that many people, I feel like not that many people buy e-cigarettes or vapes from convenience stores or gas stations. They just don’t sell that many. You’re going to go to a shop cause they’re going to have anything.

Yeah, I’ve done that.

**Interviewer:** Done what?

**Answer:** Gotten at convenience stores. From Wawa actually.

**Interviewer:** And what do they have at Wawa? Like e-cigs or?

**Answer:** Yeah, like little, they’re called Views pens, like little, like this size.

They mostly like, they don’t have really vape stuff. They have Blus and Vuse. And they’re just multiples of like these little cartridge pens and they have like the whole kits. But I’m not going to buy them there.

I bought my Juul from Wawa too. It’s like a little e-cigarette thing.

Yeah

Yeah

**Interviewer:** And what about you XXX? Where did you, where’s a place that you would buy vapes or e-cigs the most often?

**Answer:** Probably like convenience store or gas station. Wal-Mart.

**Interviewer:** So Wal-Mart was actually my next question. How many of you have gotten them at Wal-Mart, Target, big box store kind of places?

[Participants raising hands]

OK. Really, just you.

**Answer:** What about online?

**Interviewer:** That’s a good question. What about online?

**Answer:** Oh yeah.

Online, yeah.

That was my go-to underage because underage they didn’t, they’re just like “are you 18?” and I’m like “yes I am.”

Craigslist. My first real vape was off of Craigslist because they are not going to ID you. It’s just a random person. Cause it’s not like cigarettes. It’s more expensive. You can just buy off Craigslist, like juices. I got all my stuff off Craigslist.

**Interviewer:** So is that individuals putting it on there thinking people who can’t buy it in the store will pay more?

**Answer:** No, no no. It’s like. It’s not like a cigarette. You’re not consuming the vape. You’re just vaping the juice. The actual mod, the NGR or whatever, people will sell on Craigslist. You’re not consuming that, people are done with them, they’re upgrading, they sell their extra stuff. Cause they’re not selling the actual nicotine with it, people just don’t think of it.

**Interviewer:** OK. What about getting your friend to buy you e-cig, vapes, those kinds of things? Did anyone do that while underage?

[Participants raising hands]

So you have to give them money I assume and they purchase it for you?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah

**Interviewer:** And what about the money? Aren’t they kind of expensive?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah.

It’s much more the juices that you are buying. You’re not buying a bunch of the actual NGR, it’s more the juices. You’re having people buy the juices. Kind of like buying cigarettes. That’s what contains the nicotine. You can buy these just about anywhere.

**Interviewer:** OK, so it’s easy to get the NGR, but you want to get the juices that fill it, and that’s harder? Have I got that right?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah

But you can buy them online.

Pretty much, this right here is the whole e-cig itself. And this you can pretty much get anything without the battery for about $100 bucks for the device itself. The fluid, what’s in there, which is what they’re talking about, you have to buy 20, 15, 30 mil bottles. The 20 mil bottle is like $30 bucks so it goes up in price.

You guys got to shop at some better stores.

There are little stores around me where a little 15 mil bottle is only like $7 bucks.

Yeah, but what brand?

They make their own juices there.

Well that’s why.

It still works.

**Interviewer:** So if it costs more than cigarettes, why, and you’re smoking cigarettes already, why do you start vaping?

Answer: One if these things here, you can smoke the liquid itself equals up to a carton of cigarettes. So out of those bottles, you’re buying a 30 mil bottle, you’re getting like the equivalent to four cartons of cigarettes. So you’re spending $30 as opposed to 150, 200 bucks.

And the other thing is like convenience. Because when you smoke cigarettes, you have to go out and smoke the whole cigarette. It’s so much different than vaping. You want to like puff on a vape. Like that’s it. You don’t have to smoke a whole cigarette. You don’t have to leave the smell behind.

It’s all about smell.

It’s so much more convenient. The whole thing is there. You don’t have to light anything. You don’t have to go outside.

With me, as a minor, there was no combustion so you don’t have to carry around lighters, matches or anything like that, which is a big convenience. Smell is huge when you’re a minor because you don’t smell like smoke. And where… I could vape in my room and get away with it.

And it smells tasty.

It tastes good and it smells good. And that was a huge reason why I started doing it. And also the managing of nicotine. Whereas with a pack of cigarettes, you may be able to get different brands, light or more heavy. But with vapes, you can directly choose how much nicotine you have in your juice.

And you can pick different juices that taste different. Like I want coffee or I want this. Like whatever. It’s not like cigarettes where you’re just smoking the same thing everything. Like oh I want a dessert juice so I’ll get coffee or Swedish Fish, something like that. You can even get juice that tastes like cigarettes.

Is this question why we vaped?

I don’t know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, we just kind of…

**Answer:** It was just the same for me with cigarettes, just boredom. I helped my father with a lot of construction stuff back then. I’d go and make a $100 bucks so I’d always buy stuff at the tobacco shop

Smoke tricks.

**Interviewer:** And is everyone here familiar with smoke tricks?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah

[Crosstalk; general agreement]

**Interviewer:** Ok, and was that appealing to you too?

**Answer:** Cloud competitions.

Yeah

**Interviewer:** Ok, and you guys?

**Answer:** Nah, that’s too far.

It wasn’t a big reason. I didn’t really care about tricks personally at all. Honestly I made jokes out of them. I’d be riding with my friends and I’d be like, watch this smoke trick. And I’d just blow it out and start coughing.

Some people take it seriously.

Too seriously.

They actually have vape competitions where you can make big money. You can actually win like $400 mods and they like give you free juice and everything like that.

It’s like show-off thing. Yeah, because you can like blow circles. You can put it on the table and like have it sit there. People do it all the time when they’re vaping. It’s just like another thing that’s different than cigarettes.

Yeah, I feel like vaping was almost an aesthetic thing too. Like it’s more of a show-offy thing than just smoking.

Yeah

Yeah, totally.

Because it’s much more customizable.

**Interviewer:** Ok, and then, getting a friend then to buy you juice. So they would go in and buy you juice for you, but you would already have the mod?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah, I did that a lot.

It’s easier to do that than smoke a cigarette. You only have to get them to buy you juice maybe once every two weeks. I mean you’re like, if you’re not killing your e-cig and not going through tanks like in an hour, which I don’t even think is possible.

I do that.

Yeah, I do that.

I mean I have. I’ll just sit at my computer and I’ll just (mimics vaping repeatedly).

[laughter]

I’m not even kidding.

It’s like eating a bag of chips. You don’t even know you’re doing it.

Yeah

You just keep doing it.

It’s like the perfect thing.

I’ll like look around in my room and I’ll be like oh my goodness.

[laughter]

And I’ll be like, oh man, I’m about to burn out my coil.

You get accustomed, like as the smoke gets thicker and thicker, you don’t really see it as much and then you like walk out of, if you’re doing it in your room, you walk out and it’s like no smoke. And you’re like oh my God.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK. Do you think you’re parents are more tolerant? Are parents generally more tolerant of vaping than smoking?

Answer: I think so.

Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah.

Personally, no.

**Interviewer:** OK, why not?

**Answer:** Uh, they just think it’s going to lead to smoking.

Yeah.

But I was smoking before.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK. And borrowing from a sibling? Do you have siblings who also vape? Brothers or sisters?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah, my sister’s got a really expensive NGR.

Not siblings, but family. I had a cousin who would let me borrow.

Give me some of that dude.

Yeah, my great-uncle, his son, his brother and his friend. He had a really expensive one. He would lend that to me sometimes. I’m sorry, his friend though. But yeah, sometimes that.

**Interviewer:** Ok. What about approaching a stranger and asking them if they can buy you some juice?

**Answer:** That would be weird.

**Interviewer:** It would?

**Answer:** It’s [unintelligible]

Yeah

I agree, yeah.

Like you don’t know what juice to get. Like you don’t want him to go in there and just like.

Like honestly I’m not sure I’ve ever been ID’d buying juice to be honest.

I have.

Yeah, if it’s got nicotine in it.

**Interviewer:** So not asking a stranger. That’s not going to work?

**Answer:** It’s just too complicated. Like everyone knows cigarettes. You go in, oh I want some Marlboro Reds. When you go into buy juice, especially if they don’t… You can’t ask a random person. You have to ask someone going into a smoke shop. And you don’t know what they’re going in for unless it’s a vape shop and then you got to ask them to buy this very specific thing that you want. It’s just too complicated.

And also, at the same time, people don’t… It’s not like with convenience stores with cigarettes where they are in and out. People who go into vape stores generally stay a little bit, try the flavors, ask questions. And it, you know, I don’t know many people who go in and out of vape stores generally. They spend a little time.

Yeah.

I would say at least the minimum amount of time I’m in a vape store is like 30 minutes. I’m always in there for a solid amount of time.

Yeah, cause if you just need one thing, you’re going to just buy it on the internet. You’re not going to drive all the way to the vape store. You can’t buy cigarettes on the internet.

Or the vape store.

Cause they’re like bars and stores. Like you sit around and like talk and vape.

Yeah, they are set up like that.

Yeah.

They all got like couches in them and stuff like that. People just go there to actually just hang. Like I know some people who will like go there after school just to hang out there.

The store I go to, they have X-box and stuff.

[laughter]

Oh yeah. They have that at Planet Vapes.

They let us like, say we’re staying in the store, they’ll let us use the tester juice and fill up our tank with it and stuff.

**Interviewer:** And if you’re under 18, can you still go hang out?

**Answer:** Recently they’ve been cracking down.

Yeah

I think, I remember right when I started, which was a few years ago, like they had just. Like this was when the FDA really started to make a lot of rules. It’s still a new thing.

Yeah

And that was around the time where you had to be 18 to even enter the store.

A lot of stores weren’t enforcing that yet. Recently I’ve seen it.

That place in Baltimore, remember?

Yeah. They didn’t really ID cause if people…it’s so much more. Like smoking isn’t so much a hobby. It’s just something people do. But this is so much more a hobby. It’s so customizable and there’s more, it’s not just about the vaping. It’s everything around that. So I feel like you’re not ID’d as much because people don’t really care. They assume if you have the vape then like, you know, you’re fine.

Especially if you go in vaping. Because they could have that hunch that you’re underage. If you go in vaping, you’re going to leave vaping. So what is anyone outside, anybody’s going to have anything to say about it if you go in with it already. So that’s something different than cigarettes. You’re going in to get cigarettes. You don’t have them. You’re coming out with them.

That’s a good point though. I remember I would purposefully go into a store already vaping. Like as I was going in the store, I would be vaping just so they would see the vape. They would see that I already have it and that I wasn’t coming in… Cause if you come in without that they might ask for an ID right away. But if you come in and you’re just like vaping really obviously, they’re not going to ask you for an ID most of the time. I think they have once, but most of the time, probably not.

**Interviewer:** OK. Were there other strategies for how to enter a vape store appropriately so that they don’t ask too many questions, ask for ID, or ask your age?

**Answer:** Well, to be honestly, the whole ID thing. Mainly, and I’m sure every single person here will be the same, is more likely only when you’re trying to buy a mod.

Yeah

When you’re looking at a mod and go to check out, they’re going to ask for an ID when you’re trying to buy that. More likely than a bottle.

Which is funny, cause that’s not even the nicotine.

Yeah, it’s literally just the box.

Yeah, a lot of the stores, go in. Like I got ID’d like the three or four times I’ve gone in a vape store. I think they ID you as soon as you walk in. Even if I was vaping.

Yeah, they are getting a lot stricter very quickly.

I’m a regular at a few stores. They still, like in the past month, they’ve ID’d me.

**Interviewer:** OK. So that’s more of a crackdown now than it was when you were under 18?

**Answer:** I think so.

Very recently, yeah.

Yeah

Yeah, and even another thing that they took right, right as I was getting ready to turn 18 they made it so at. I know it was at one store that I went to very often. I’m not sure if this is all of them, but the name on the credit card, if you used a credit card had to match the ID. And if it didn’t match it then they couldn’t do the purchase. But there was a very easy loophole. You just go to Wawa and get cash and go get this.

**Interviewer:** OK. So when you’re picking a vape store, did you go to the same vape store when you were underage so you knew who the clerk was and they knew you?

**Answer:** Yeah

Friendships

**Interviewer:** So how did you pick the store? Did you try a couple different ones? Did you just go to the one closest to your house?

**Answer:** I asked friends.

**Interviewer:** Ok, awesome. So you’re friends kind of knew where the best place was to go that wouldn’t ask for ID?

**Answer:** They knew that people would try it and then would tell you.

Yeah, like rumors get out.

You would hear like, oh yeah they don’t ID you. Let’s go over there.

**Interviewer:** OK, and then if over there. If the place that your friends told you about was on the other side of town or someplace where you really had to travel, would you go out of your way to go there?

**Answer:** I mean I would try in town first and if I got ID’d or for some reason couldn’t get some. Or like he said. It’s gotta be someone who knows about these things. Cause it’s not just like Marlboro Reds. You gotta say the name of the juice company, the flavor of the juice company, who much nicotine that’s in it. It’s all so specific. Way more specific. So if you can’t find one in town, then yeah, you go to where you can get it.

The other thing is like it’s not really like cigarettes where you can’t just go in and buy five cartons of cigarettes. Like buying this huge thing. You can just buy 125 ML and it’s like a pretty big bottle. You’re not going to have to go back for a long time. You have like one juice and you’re basically good. And it’s very easy to just get a big bottle and put it somewhere. It’s not like trying to conceal a bunch of cigarettes somewhere.

**Interviewer:** So what’s the difference then… It sounds like if you buy it at a tobacco store, it’s a lot easier than just a general retailer like a gas station or something like that. But has anyone here ever been turned away when they tried to buy juice?

**Answer:** Yeah, yeah

Yeah

Yeah

Oh yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK, and was that difficult? Was it embarrassing? What was the worst part about it?

**Answer:** Usually, I mean, they’re like oh sorry man, I really can’t do it. Like they’re pretty cool people generally that work in the vape shop. But they just, sometimes, you know if the manager is there or something. Like even if you’re cool with that person, they’ll be like, I got to ID you.

Yeah the thing with like the vape shops is there are people. Like people at the smoke shops. It’s not the same type of people that are at the vape shops. Like it’s usually like foreigners at smoke shops. And they have to carry these things cause that’s just like common culture now. They don’t know anything about them. But at the smoke shops, I mean vape shops, they’ll typically ID because that’s all that they do there and like they could lose everything by doing that. I don’t know. It’s kind of a gray area. Like usually you’d get turned away at the door. They’re going to let you know so you don’t waste your time.

**Interviewer:** OK, did anyone have a fake ID when they were under 18?

**Answer:** I had one in high school.

**Interviewer:** You did have one in high school. Did you use it to buy vapes, liquids?

**Answer:** Like twice, and the second time it got confiscated.

I came with a friend that had one.

**Interviewer:** But that worked? Did his work?

**Answer:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** OK. Have you ever been discouraged by an adult? Either at a vape shop or somewhere else? Has anyone ever told you this is a bad idea, you shouldn’t do this, you shouldn’t have this?

**Answer:** My parents.

Yeah

**Interviewer:** Parents, OK.

**Answer:** People in the vape shops aren’t going to tell you that.

[laughter]

Remember that person who yelled at me at Safeway? There was someone who yelled at me at Safeway. This woman was like, you don’t even know how bad that is for you.

And then that kid that told on you in class.

Yeah, I also got, yeah. In class, in school, like in the actual classroom. I remember this kid like told the principal and they were like trying to find me, but never did. But.

**Interviewer:** Trying to, they couldn’t find you because?

**Answer:** Yeah, I was just somewhere else. I was cutting class or something. I don’t know.

I’ve had the opposite happen where it’s like people will encourage it like to help stop smoking. To me that’s like comparing ice cream to frozen yogurt. And you know.

Healthier.

There’s a huge difference.

And there was one time where I was at school as well and somebody caught me vaping in the bathroom. Rather than being like, Aw, going and telling on me, they were like, that’s awesome, let me hit that dude. And then yeah, I let them hit it.

**Interviewer:** That was an adult though?

**Answer:** Well, actually, they were 18 but it was a fellow student.

I went to a private school and I was driving home from school one day and I was doing it in my car and one of the counselor’s behind me had saw it and they called me into the office the next day. They thought I was smoking weed out of it. And so they were sitting there talking to me, and they were going to drug test me, and I was like, OK, I’ll pass or whatever. And then they like started talking about vaping and why do you do this? It’s pointless and stuff. And I was like I don’t know, it’s just like a hobby that I have. And I had to go to the counselor for like two weeks just to like, every day, just to like talk to her, are you going to quit. And I was like, no I’m not going to quit. It was annoying.

**Interviewer:** Interesting. What about parents? Does anybody’s parents discourage you or do you worry? How does that work?

**Answer:** Basically for me it was the same as the cigarettes. The cigarettes and vape were at the same time. And my Dad was like this is going to kill you. You’re going to end up in a grave. And he’s like I’m not going to let this thing do it to you. If anything it will be me. And he was threatening me so that is how I stopped doing that too.

**Interviewer:** OK. So what would you say the worst consequence that you faced vaping underage?

**Answer:** Money.

Um hmm.

**Interviewer:** The expense of it?

**Answer:** Yeah, a big waste of money. It’s a lot. I wouldn’t say it’s as expensive as cigarettes but it is very expensive especially when you’re younger and you don’t have quite as much income.

But now I kind of see it as a [unintelligible] effect. Kind of a dumb way to fight boredom. Kind of the way I was doing it. There are cheaper things to do.

It’s much more of an investment. If you do it for a long time, you like only have to buy the NGR once so it’s not as if you gotta keep spending $10 a week or however much you spend a week. You basically just buying juice after that. So it can be way cheaper than smoking but just like. It really depends, you get a different pen, get a different tank, get a different this, get a different that. Like a tank could be like $50 bucks. You know, if you get a nice one, or something like that. Or like a special RBA or you know coil stuff. There’s so much stuff to it. You’re getting cotton or…

NGR tank

And like the more that I’ve been doing it, like this is like my fifth one I’ve bought. I just like to collect them now. I have a bunch of them. And it’s just something that I keep buying more and more of. Like the more, the next one I buy will be more expensive than this one. And it’s just something that keeps adding up.

**Interviewer:** OK, so it’s like a hobby?

**Answer:** Yeah

Yeah, it pretty much is, yeah

But it’s just like so different than smoking.

Yeah, there’s a lot more to it.

**Interviewer:** OK, and with your friends is it, like, someone has some like cool, new something. And you get that to because it looks interesting, or you try it and you like it?

**Answer:** Juice.

Yeah, like I’ve definitely. Well I did have friends that vaped and you know, we’d either trade, buy from each other, try different juices from each other, possibly buy that. Yeah, basically like what you said where people would have new things, try them or whatever, and we might get them or trade. It’s just kind of like increases the factor or whatever. I don’t know. It shows that it is a hobby cause it can be an exchange between friends.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so the second exercise we are going to do is about slang words and the words that teenagers in particular or young adults use to describe various things related to electronic smoking devices. So if you could go through the cards and just write all the names that you know. And if there is a picture that you don’t recognize, feel free to ask. Some of the pictures might be a little hard to figure so feel free to ask if you don’t recognize them. And if you recognize what it is but don’t know of any other words, just go ahead and write that and then that’s it.

[Chatter as participants work on cards]

**Interviewer:** So before we go on to look at these I have one more question to ask you about buying vapes or e-cigs. What about the little disposable e-cigs?

**Answer:** Cartridges?

**Interviewer:** Yes. Did anybody buy those?

**Answer:** Yes there's the Blus and everything [crosstalk]

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** Blus have the flavor cartridges at the top, you can change vanilla, strawberry, coffee all that stuff, but the batteries are the same.

I didn't know that used to do that. Long time ago they didn't used to.

I bought a lot of those Vuse cartridges up, like $7.59 every two days.

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Answer:** Yes.

Almost cheaper than smoking now.

That is cheaper than smoking.

Well you buy the Vuse pen once and then you buy the cartridges, which come in two. You go through them pretty quick.

**Interviewer:** OK. Are there advantages to getting those instead of the whole vape mod thing?

**Answer:** Sure.

The only advantage is like if you're not really into vaping, it's a lot simpler just to get a cartridge than to have this crazy rig that's huge and --

See this is huger but the advantage of this -- more liquid and it's got a bigger battery and it'll last way longer, more power. But that one is like just pretty much the beginner e-cig for someone just trying to quite cigarettes and doesn't want to like vape and everything.

More smoke.

And these also like, they aren't as smooth and everything like that. You're not getting nearly as much smoke, there's not much you can do with them. It's basically like a cigarette. I wouldn't say that anyone who's really into the hobby probably wouldn't use one of those, unless that was like their second pipe.

Generally those are good for like high nicotine.

Oh yeah they can hold super high nicotine.

40mg.

**Interviewer:** So it's more nicotine but less smoke?

**Answer:** Mhmm yes.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** It's also how you hit it. It's not like a straight to lung hit, it's like a mouth to lung hit. So it's not like getting directly into, you take a smaller hit and stuff.

Yeah. That's why a lot of times, if I had one of those first of all, baby pen ones and then hit one of my friends Big Boys ones I would like cough right away, because as he's said, it goes straight to your lungs and you're not used to that and it's just kind of oohh..

**Interviewer:** OK. So what do you call this? What is it first of all.

**Answer:** [multiple voices]: NGR.

**Interviewer:** NGR, OK.

**Answer:** Or just a mod.

Box mod or something like that.

Or just a vape.

**Interviewer:** OK. Box, mod, vape...

**Answer:** E-cig.

**Interviewer:** E... well this isn't really an e-cig though is it?

**Answer:** Yeah it is. It's an electronic cigarette, that's what all of these are.

I guess, yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK, so would anybody else look at that and say -- "Oh that's an e-cig or can I have your e-cig"

**Answer:** I mean most people don't call it "e-cigs," but technically they are considered an e-cig.

**Interviewer:** OK, but -- box, mod...

**Answer:** Vape.

**Interviewer:** Vape.

**Answer:** NGR.

**Interviewer:** NGR. Anything else? Does NGR stand for something?

**Answer:** I thought it was Nylon Grip... I don't remember.

I think it's like a brand or something.

You know how like for example Q-Tips is like not really what it's called but that's the brand? It's kind of like that I think with this. Not really sure but everybody...

Sounds cool.

I thought it was like a tool company but... [laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK. So what about this? What's this?

**Answer:** [multiple voices] Pen.

**Interviewer:** That's the pen, like that pen right there, OK.

**Answer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Any other? Just a pen?

**Answer:** E-cig.

**Answer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** E-Cig.

**Answer:** Yes, I think I've actually heard some people call the little pens like e-cigs before so...

-- and being shaped like that, you know.

I think you hear pens for that most and then like the actual e-cigarettes are the ones that kind of look like cigarettes, they're in the same shape.

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK and that's probably this?

**Answer:** Yes. That is pretty much. If you hear "e-cig" it's probably about that.

**Interviewer:** OK. And are there any other names for this?

[chatter]

**Answer:** I guess e-cig, I don't know, pen.

**Interviewer:** OK and then what about the little vials?

**Answer:** Fluid, juice.

Juice.

Juice.

**Interviewer:** Fluid, juice.

**Answer:** Yes, liquid, fluid or juice.

E-liquid or vape juice is probably the two big ones.

**Interviewer:** OK. And then this one?

**Answer:** Batteries.

Battery.

**Interviewer:** Battery.

**Answer:** Juice. [laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK and is that really true, that's it's just all sort of juice, I mean that's? Or are you just...

**Answer:** No, no, I mean like I have called it that.

Some of vaping is so general.

This is a battery for this and this is a battery for this. This one takes two of these and this is the only one that this one takes. But these are both just batteries.

Yeah, most of this stuff is like because everybody just makes it up and people haven't had that much time to come up with stuff. So it's whatever it looks like, or whatever people think it is.

It's not like -- hey bro can I have an ubu, just like weird stuff like cigarette... I've never heard anyone call anything vape wise like a weird street name, unless there's some underground illicit vape is going on.

**Interviewer:** That's what I'm looking for.

**Answer:** I don't think there is.

That's what the NGR is probably.

I know somebody who made... Because he was like nicotine fiend 4.0 and he made a custom vape that went up to well past FDA, like wattage wise. He made like .001 like coils, it was ridiculous. He was like -- I can't use this anymore because I'm afraid I'm going to actually get burns on my hands.

You do get burns, that's one thing that... I know we haven't really gotten there yet but like the juice, if juice runs out you will get burned. That's one negative of vaping, especially... It's more complicated. If you breathe in, there's no... That is the worst feeling in the world.

Oh God, it's burnt cotton.

Yeah. You will be breathing in basically burnt cotton and it really hurts.

It hurts and it stays in your mouth.

Yeah it sucks.

It sucks. That is the worse part of it, by far.

And especially if you're getting a coil that's going near the end where it's about to die, like basically burn out... Because it's basically just like a coil that heats up -- if you get near the end, where you have to change it, it taste terrible, you can tell, you can taste the burn stuff. And if you take a huge hit and it's burnt, it sucks.

God yeah.

But it's good.

It's like Lucky Charms.

Yeah it's better because there's no juice in it, so I mean technically... [laughter]

It is horrible.

It sucks.

**Interviewer:** OK and is that something that happens by accident or is that like something that regularly you just have to deal with?

**Answer:** Oh yeah.

Yeah.

If you like... Just got to pay attention.

Yes, if you pay attention, you're good. But sometimes, like let's say I'm driving and you know I'm doing like [makes noises] and then suddenly I go argh because I'm out of juice.

If you're almost out and you know like sitting on the side and it's not in the coil and then you then vape it then, that can happen. It's nothing you're trying to do, but it's just you, not paying attention or you not looking at the...

If I stop paying attention to this on the drive home, it would happen to me. It's at that level where there's no juice in it, then it would definitely happen.

I use a dripper usually, I was using my tank today. So especially for a dripper it has like holes in the side, not like a tank so every five or ten hits you have to re-drip juice back on the cotton and after about a few hours if the juice is sitting in there and I'm not using it for a while the juice will gunk up. And then sooner or later it will burn the cotton and so you can taste it as you go, so you have to change the cotton.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** This is why it's such a hobby because it's not as simple as just like smoking a cigarette.

Every single person in this room has a tank.

I have like four drippers, I just didn't bring them.

We can't even show them the difference between...

Basically these things store a bunch of juice, but like an RDA which is... You actually pull it off, it just has cotton there, the coils are right there. It's not as if juice is sitting in it. It's just you will drip some juice on to the cotton, it sits right on the coils and you're literally burning it right there. It's not as if it's sitting in a tank. You have to keep putting more in.

Yeah and you make the coils yourself, like you'll buy kits for it and stuff like that and the materials and all this other kind of stuff and that's where it really becomes a big hobby, like something that you can sit down and do.

It's really hands on, like the only benefit to it is kind of just like bigger clouds, and you get a lot better flavor and stuff like that.

Get a lot better flavor.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** Basically instead the center of this is our coil. That thing in the center right there -- that is a coil for these. And then on the other ones, which they're talking about, which nobody has here, like he said there's the coil and then when you fire it heats up the coil, the cotton's running through the center of the coil and then the cotton's wet, the coil gets hot and it burns the vapor off of the cotton. But that's... Drip, drip, drip... But it's also way more messier. Way more.

It's messy, it leaks everywhere.

I get it everywhere on me. Because all I use is a dripper usually. Like all of my shirts have juice stains on them and stuff.

**Interviewer:** So this all seems kind of complicated. How do you learn all these pieces and parts and what you need and...

**Answer:** That is another perk of going to vape shops, is they are huge help. Because they are paid to know what to do.

And educate.

Yeah, and to educate. So if you buy, let's say the kit, they will run you though everything, how to do it, there's guides all over the place on the Internet, your friends can help you, there's a lot of resources.

They'll even build your coils and stuff.

Yeah. They can build your coils for you. Pre-built.

It gets so complicated, because when you get into the RDA stuff, where you're not just buying a tank, you're literally buying wire and you're actually taking like a pen or something you can wrap wire around; you can measure, see the gauge of the wire, how big it's going to be -- you'll wrap it around something and actually put cotton through it. And there's a certain point where based on how big the gauge of wire is, you have to deal with the wattage. So if it's too many watts and there's not a fuse there, it'll burn the wire. It gets really complicated at a certain point. Like you're actually like have to learn a lot of stuff.

**Interviewer:** I'm not quite sure how to ask this, but is this like a "boy" thing? Is it common among girls? I don't mean to put you on the spot being the only female respondent here, but... And the rest of you probably know both women and men who've been your friends and as... When you were underage, was this common among girls?

**Answer:** I think a lot of girls use their boyfriends'.

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK. But can I ask your perspective?

**Answer:** Girls like, most of the boyfriend thing, like some of your boyfriends, they have it so you just vape with them. Or they would go to the vape shops, and stuff, so you would go with them, and their friends would be vaping, or like hookah, whatever. So...

I know quite a few girls who own their own vape. I don't know. I've not met a single girl who gets as in deep as making your own coil cell. I know very few guys who do it. It's as I said before, that is the people who it's like -- this is their hobby.

It's kind of like a nerdy thing.

Yeah, it's almost...

You're dealing with electricity, you're dealing with like -- wattage, amp -- like all this stuff that I feel like it's just not necessary to vape. Like at this point, you're way past -- like you're at the point where you're like, in the cigarette world like grow your own tobacco, and like getting the fine blend, and like smoking Davidoffs and stuff, you're not really smoking like normal cigarettes at that point.

**Interviewer:** OK. And do you know any girls who build their own coils?

**Answer:** No. From my school, it wasn't that deep. It was kinda... you know.

It was a lot more recreational now. I see a lot less people vape than I did like... Like two years ago, I think... 2-3 years ago I think it was the peak, where people were taking it really seriously.

And it was...

It's so regulated now.

It's very regulated now. A lot more regulated.

You can't even vape... Places you could vape before -- you could vape basically anywhere; now you basically have to go to a smoking area. Even though it's not the same, and it goes away right away, doesn't leave a smell of the stuff -- you have to go to smoking area, and the whole point of it being was to get away from that for a lot of people. So now they're just back with the smokers, and that's something a lot of them don't want.

Mhmm.

**Interviewer:** OK. What about this?

**Answer:** Tank.

Tank.

Atty.

They're called atomizers. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And what about this one?

**Answer:** Coil.

Coil, yep.

**Interviewer:** That's the coil?

**Answer:** That's like the factory made coil. Like the ones that I have here, he has. All of us.

That little Italian thing right there is pretty much what's in that picture.

Inside that there's like a wrapped fuse and there's a cotton wrapped around it, so it's kind of like the pre-made version of what we were talking about with the coils we make.

And the more you use it, the darker the coil would get to the point where sometimes I will be take and use a new coil and the cotton inside will be black like pitch black, and that's when it's like done.

It also has a lot to do with those clear liquids. Those brown liquids. The brown liquids are going to make, even if it's a fresh coil, it's going to make it look more burnt quit. If you got a clear liquid, obviously the cotton's going to stay looking fresh for longer.

Even like sour liquids will affect your cotton more than normal liquids.

**Interviewer:** Last one. What is this?

**Answer:** Tank.

It's just another tank.

**Interviewer:** A tank too. OK.

What about flavors? When you're underage, how did you learn about different flavors? What kind of flavors did you like?

**Answer:** [inaudible]

Either that, or you try your friend's and then you'd be like -- oh what flavor's that? That's awesome. And then if you were underage, you'd be like -- alright, well this is what I want. And you'd know exactly what you want, so it's easier.

It really is the same concept as like an ice cream shop. Like it's almost just the exact same thing.

You're going to try flavors and you know which ones you like and what time of the day. Some people will actually smoke breakfast flavors. You can get like, English muffin, you can get all kinds of stuff, coffee. I'm not a fan, but coffee and stuff. Especially because people that don't have time or they just don't like drinking coffee are going to go actually get coffee.

Maple.

Chicken.

Cravings... People get cravings. You want sweet stuff, it actually deals with a lot of cravings. I used to get Swedish fish, and you could vape that, and it's basically kind of like your eating the candy, but you're not consuming any sugar.

Like today, like since I've turned 18, I will get... I like dessert flavors, especially after dinner because it's nice to get something sweet after that and not have to worry about what I'm eating dessert-wise, because I'll eat like an entire float and I'll be like, oh... But when I was younger I would just get flavors based off things that I likes, such as like [inaudible]

Yeah, there is a blue raspberry lollipop one that I really liked.

Rice Krispies is always been delicious.

Froot Loops.

Yes.

I'd say [inaudible] at friend's house, is a party or something too. Feel like asking about type of juice that is. They'll tell you.

Most people let you try their juice.

People don't even care. Use their tip. Sometimes people let you switch tips. Just the tip though.

**Interviewer:** OK. And does that bother anybody sharing tips with friends or...

**Answer:** If I have my dripper, I won't let people try it really because if they hold it for too long, they'll burn the cotton. But if I have a tank I really don't care, even though I spend $30 on this drip tip.

**Interviewer:** And then what flavors do you think are most popular among high school kids?

**Answer:** [inaudible]

Unicorn milk. That is a very popular one. I'd say sweets are very popular. Desserties.

Fruity and sweet are generally the most popular amongst anyone really.

Custards.

Custards are huge. I'd say the ones for minors are just about the same for anyone else.

It's more like a candy type flavor like, what appeals to younger kids. I don't know anyone that vapes a tobacco flavor.

Yeah.

I know a lot of people do menthol though. Menthol's like... I know a lot of friends that have menthol. I have menthol in this right now. I know some people that get off cigarettes sometimes they do it though.

That does make sense.

The menthol? That is so gross.

I've never even tried the menthol, but it probably would taste [inaudible]

I had one menthol once and I actually enjoyed that. I can't remember what it was but it was good.

It can't be a straight menthol though; it's got to be like a exhale menthol, like fruity inhale.

This is like a berry. Berry is a menthol.

**Interviewer:** OK. So when you first started to vape, what were your reasons? What did you...

**Answer:** Quit smoking.

**Interviewer:** OK. Quit smoking. Anybody else do it to quit smoking at first?

**Answer:** I just wanted to look cool at first when I was young. And then it developed into a terribly expensive habit and I regret it. But I can't get out of it.

**Interviewer:** And looking cool, does that include seeing like the vape tricks and wanting to do the tricks too? And are there particular... A couple of you are shaking your head.

**Answer:** I don't think I'm that fat, but...

It's just fun. I mean it's something to do when you're bored.

Go to a contest and be all hype about it.

Yeah, that's very sociable.

But at the same time... People don't do it just... Half the people that enter that contest aren't into it terribly. They give away so much free stuff... Like I could go there with this and walk out with five bottles just for going to that vape shop and standing there for like 45 minutes. So I could walk out with like $180 worth of juice just for going there and messing around for a little bit. As opposed to spending my own money. That's why some of the people go to those also.

[inaudible]

[laughter]

**Answer:** You're going to get a napkin. Clean up your juice. That's it.

**Interviewer:** So what's kind of the coolest part about vaping?

**Answer:** The clouds.

Yeah.

The clouds.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** When I started I thought that'd be stupid and now I'd hate it, but it is very satisfying for some reason.

Yeah, just to see like you create a huge cloud. Just so cool for some reason. And you get addicted to it. You're just always blowing smoke all the time. It's not even talking about the vaping. It's about the cloud.

Yeah, eventually...

"Cloud chasers."

**Interviewer:** Oh, cloud chasers.

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Have you heard that expression? "Cloud chasers."

**Answer:** Yes, it's strictly for the cloud. [inaudible] cloud chasers in school.

Part of it is that you're taking this deep breath in and deep breath out, so it's also relaxing at the same time.

It's like an atmospheric thing almost.

And eventually you start challenging. You see the clouds and you're like, man that's cool, and you don't even think about it, but you'll start challenging yourself, and you'll just see how big of a cloud you can produce back to back. Like what the most biggest cloud you could get is. And also the coolest thing is how big the clouds that you blow, like -- I don't know if any of them do, but I do, I think about it all the time -- like how do I hold that amount of smoke in my lungs? I think that that is so cool.

You got so deep into this.

Micheal Phelps.

It is. I just think about that. At least once I day I'm like -- how are my lungs that big?

It's wild that they hold that much.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** How many of you currently smoke cigarettes?

Just two people.

**Answer:** Casually.

Socially.

**Interviewer:** OK. Maybe occasional. And was vaping part of quitting cigarettes? Because I think most of you said earlier, too, that you smoked cigarettes in the past so did you use vapes to quit? How is it that you don't smoke cigarettes now but you continue to vape.

It's easier...

**Answer:** It just makes it easier, because I just started vaping around the period where I cut down on smoking. I didn't directly feel like any asthmatic effects from vaping. But I eventually quit that altogether.

Just when you smoke, it replaces cigarettes. I mean -- which is easier.

You vape at the same time you wanted to smoke. Really just [inaudible]

The only thing that's more awesome about it -- you could pretty much do it anywhere. Besides the mall -- the big stores, stuff like that obviously, and like the hotels, they're like -- you could do it in the car with your windows up if it's raining. You could do it in your room ain't nobody going to smell nothing.

Baseball game.

You can do it at sports events.

Oh yeah, I was doing it at the game and I got yelled at. They're like -- we're about to kick you out. It's like -- man I'm just having my e-cigs. They're like -- we're going to make you leave the... What was it like the Oriole game?

She was like -- you have to go into the smoking section.

That little box? Yeah, I know what you're talking about.

...was like an e-cig.

You can't vape.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel any health effects from vaping?

**Answer:** Healthier.

**Interviewer:** Healthier?

[laughter]

**Answer:** I feel way healthier when I'm messing with this than when I had my cigarettes. If I hit this and I cough, I could usually stop coughing after like two coughs. If I'm smoking a cigarette and I start coughing, it's game over; I feel like I'm dying. My face will turn red and everything; it's hard.

I could say from the vape -- I had like, a constant cough the entire... I know you remember that. The entire time I vaped I had a cough, and it was like there was fluid in my lungs and I'm sure... Because what happens is like, when you vape, sometimes if the vape's not powerful enough, like a box, it doesn't burn all the juice that you're sucking in, it gets in your lungs. Well after a time it builds up in your lungs and it creates an issue. So right when I stopped vaping, like two, three weeks after that, the cough just went away. That was like, all the time, that was really bad, my cough, and I didn't think it was attributed to that but it definitely was.

I mean if I get a sinus infection, I'll turn my watts really high up so it's really hotted. I'll do it and I'll just blow it through my nose and my sinuses are cleared.

Oh yeah.

I do that, but you got to like hold a napkin here or something...

Yeah, it gets a little messy sometimes.

That sounds brutal.

It works.

It's like going into the deep end of the pool and your sinuses just blow, it's similar to that.

The stuff that's in the juice, it's "pypro glycerol" and there is VG...

Vegetable Glycerol.

It's actually... PG is what's in inhalers for asthmatics, so it is actually like kind of for that, so it is safe to breathe in and stuff. That's another reason I think people are OK with vaping and not smoking, because it was created to be safe for breathing in.

**Interviewer:** OK. And are there any other downsides to vaping?

**Answer:** Not besides the expense.

There was the "popcorn lung" scare with like this one chemical, "dialite." But after... I have never seen a juice with it in it and it's like what makes the butter flavoring in popcorn. That's why they call it "popcorn lungs." And there's actually a lawsuit of some guy who ate popcorn every day for like seven years or whatever and he got it, so he sued Orville Redenbacher I think it was and he got like seven million dollars for it. Then there were using it in the buttery flavor of vape flavorings. But now they took it all out completely.

Yes the FDA shut that down really quick.

A lot of the problem with vape juice it's not like cigarettes. You can just buy it anywhere. I bought it at the flea market and you don't know what they're putting in that. That's the biggest issue, if you're not getting really nice juice. It can be from China, it can just be random chemicals. You don't know what contaminants is in there, the nicotine they've used, you don't know, you don't know. They may not know what they're doing, they just want to sell you juice and you don't find out till later. So you could really get sick on that. If you get a crappy juice, you could actually get sick.

**Interviewer:** OK. And has anybody ever gotten juice that they thought was questionable or...

**Answer:** Oh yeah. For sure.

Yeah.

I've never gotten anything. I always buy from stores and...

But if you're cheap.

But the ones that are like house blends and stuff like that, even some of those are pretty iffy.

Yeah, some of those you can get a little mmmm.

It's like that person made it, who knows if they know what they're doing. They could mess up one thing about it. If they messed up one fraction on putting nicotine in, put 10 times the dosage instead of like 1mg they think, oh it's supposed to be 10mg, or instead of 10 it's supposed to be 100 -- you could literally pass out from that. It could kill you with nicotine, because it's a poison, so, you've got to be careful.

**Interviewer:** OK. So where did you learn about the health risks, especially all the... You kind of are just a wealth of information. So where did you learn all that?

**Answer:** For me that was because my Dad, like I said the whole thing about my Dad he asked me to stop doing that. And I was putting together an argument as to why it was fine and he didn't really care. But I researched and I was like finding studies and all this stuff about how it's safe and they tested on animals and all this stuff.

Tested on animals? [laughter]

Actually like having the animals live on vape.

What?

That was their life. They were living on vape. And they proved... Because that was how they originally proved that this was safe for asthmatics to be inhaling. Because that was the problem, people were like -- well, is this safe to inhale? Then they tested it with combustive, like a vaporized version of this, the only thing that's unsafe is if the chemical doesn't get burned or if there's weird chemicals in, or some people are allergic to the VG, so they have to get more expensive, I think it's... If they're allergic to VG, they have to get all PG juice or most PG, which I believe is more clouds or, I'm not...

No, max VG is more clouds.

Max VG is more flavor.

OK. Some people are allergic to one or the other, so they can get sick from it. I actually think I might have been allergic, because I got that cough. But I don't know.

**Interviewer:** So you researched it on the internet to...

**Answer:** Yes. There's a lot of studies and stuff but that was back when there wasn't as much. I'm sure there's more now.

**Interviewer:** OK and you were researching it to prove that it was OK to your father, but discovered that it was actually...

**Answer:** Well, no no no. I still think it is OK. But the problem is there's not as many long term studies and stuff, that's the problem with this. With cigarettes, when people started smoking cigarettes they assumed that, oh it was safe. Because people in the short term they were smoking cigarettes, and they were like, oh it's more relaxed, I feel fine. But then in the long term they realized all these health effects. So like how could we really know what the long term effects? We can just assume, but we don't really know, so like it's questionable. I mean I don't know either way what the right answer is, but.

I guess I'm going to go along with that.

He was talking about the health risks and everything. Everybody else here said about the smoking, it's fine. But we actually had something where we went to high school and the kids were actually in the bathroom drinking the e-cig fluid to actually get high and they were getting terribly sick.

Gross.

Dirty.

Icky.

That's expensive.

Yeah, that's $30 a bottle... Just buy some liquor or Bud, God.

Like another weird thing is you can actually spill the juice... Didn't it happen to somebody you know or something?

Yeah. It actually leaves a rash. Because it has nicotine in it, it'll leave a rash.

Because your body will absorb that and it's a poison, so that could also...

Because with my dripper, I spill juice all the time and I've never had like a rash or anything like that.

Is it because you have such high nicotine maybe?

It's a possibility, yeah.

You're patient zero, you're immune.

Too much vape, your blood is now vape juice.

**Interviewer:** So where did the rest of you get information about health risks?

**Answer:** I said they started cutting down on cigarettes and a bunch of us started going towards vaping and e-cigs, show that it's healthier maybe. That's pretty much it.

Word of mouth for me. A lot of the health risks and stuff are word of mouth.

Facebook.

I feel like people at the vape stores are really up front about it. It's not like they're trying to hide anything from you. They'll just tell you. They'll be like -- it's not really that tested on. They're pretty honest, honestly.

**Interviewer:** OK. And did knowing about the various health risks, did that impact at all how much you vape or?

**Answer:** No, not at all.

No.

It's like cigarettes, you know they're terrible for you, but you're addicted, you just smoke them. You don't even think about the risks, you're just -- "I need a cigarette," that's all you think about.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** I really haven't seen that many health risks, I've seen a few but none that are like major.

Something about water vapor that goes up in your lungs, then you drown in a terrible way.

You just got to figure out, what's the thing for you, like what is your poison and vaping is... To be honest because most people are comparing it to cigarettes. They're like -- well I'm going to smoke, smoke cigars, smoke weed, vape, whatever it is, or like dip or do everything -- some people.

Everything.

-- You know they're just going to pick one thing and vaping seems to be the safest for what's... At least so far and people just pick that usually and that's their thing. If they're going to do one thing, they're going to do that and it's you know -- safer.

A lot of people start with it now too. I think we were at like the cusp. Because vaping wasn't big until a few years ago. So I think it's definitely changed where people were smoking cigarettes first, then vaping, I think it's the other way vaping then cigarettes. But I think most people just stick with vapes.

**Interviewer:** OK. Those are really all the questions that I have for you. So thank you so much for coming. What we'll do is we take the sign-in sheet around again and if you can just initial that you were here and that you got your $75 Gift Card which we'll also give you at the same time. That's kind of the end of the Focus Group. So thanks so much for coming. And hang on just a minute and we'll come around.

[chatter through to end]

## Baltimore

**Interviewer:** So, to start off, what I'd like to do is start at this side of the... Actually let's start at this side of the room. And go around the table and just tell us your first name and what the circumstances were when you first vaped or had an e-cigarette, for the first time. So, can we start first?

**Answer:** Yes. My name is XXX. Yes, as far as vaping I would do like electronic cigarettes once in a while, not so much nowadays, but a few years ago. They were just cool I thought.

**Interviewer:** That reminds me though too, that this group is really about when you were under eighteen. So it's a little harder for us to do research around and talk to people who are minors. And so instead of doing that we're talking to people in the 18 to 21 year range, but asking about when you were under eighteen. So, the group's really about when you were under eighteen and in high school, so...

**Answer:** When I was in high school I think I was just like when vaping was just getting big so I can't really say before I was 18. Because like senior year, that's all I remember... first came out.

**Interviewer:** OK, so that...

**Answer:** I'm a little bit older now.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** Hi, I'm XXX. I actually tried my first e-cigarette at a vape shop, it was pretty easy, I just pretty much walked in and said -- "Hey can I try some flavors?" And they just kind of let me try it and that was the first time I tried it, and ever since I liked it, so still vape.

My name is XXX. I think I bought a vape pen off of somebody that rode my bus, I was like 15, 16 and that was the first time I even tried it.

**Interviewer:** OK, so you actually paid money for something you'd never tried before?

**Answer:** Ah yeah.

**Interviewer:** And what made you do that? What were your reasons?

**Answer:** I don't really remember. I think I just want to try it, but I remember they had 24mg of nicotine in it, having like never really smoked or anything. That's like the maximum you can even get and I was like -- "Jesus this is crazy, really hurts." So I was vaping 24mg nicotine for months, two or three months before I realized what that even was.

**Interviewer:** OK

**Answer:** My name is XXX. I started vaping when I was in sophomore year, I think ditching class, a friend let me borrow one and I then I went to a vape store to try . . .

Hi, my name is XXX. First time I tried vaping was with my best friend and he went into a Vape shop just bought one -- they didn't like ID him or anything. And we were just sat around the park and we trying it, that was my first experience with it. I think it was no nicotine in that one.

Hi, my name is XXX. I guess the first time I tried vaping would be afterwards was he bought a vape. Later I started vaping too. And e-cigarettes, my parents would have them laying around, so I would just use them whenever.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** My name is XXX and the first time I tried vaping, I was seventeen and I was visiting an older friend at college and she had a vape so, that was my first time trying it.

My name is XXX and my first time vaping my mom gave me hers...used it and kept it.

**Interviewer:** OK. So, you see in front of you are two sets of cards and the first one has a list of the places you might get with e-cigarettes. Tobacco is listed on one, I think the word cigarettes, it's the word cigarette but it's really referring to e-cigarettes.

And we're really looking at when you were under 18 and in high school. So what we'd like you to do is sort the cards into three piles. The first pile is things you did when you were under 18 and in high school and the second pile is things you didn't do but you would have done, I mean you could have done if the circumstances presented itself. And the third pile are things that you would never do.

So, it's things that you did, that you would have done and you will never do. And just so you know, we won't look at how you sorted, how any individual has sorted their pile. We'll just collect them and put them all together and then we would discuss a little bit. But no one's going to look at your pile or call you out on what you put in your pile.

So, there's three piles: things you did, would have done and would never do. There's some post it notes there and if you write on the post it notes, just on the top card -- did, would have done, never do.

**Answer:** I don't have anything...

**Interviewer:** That's perfectly okay if you don't have a never do pile, that's alright.

**Answer:** I actually don't have a middle pile. I have never and did do.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** And I'll just come around and collect them.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** [09:53] OK so the pizza is here if you want to take a minute and get a piece of pizza that would be awesome and then we'll start, we'll discuss after.

[chatter] [11:11]

**Interviewer:** OK, so the first one here is "bought it myself at a gas station." How many of you have bought a e-cig or something like that at a gas station? A couple. OK. What about the convenience store? A couple there too. So what's the difference between a gas station and a convenience store, when you're underage?

**Answer:** I mean gas station the only difference is between a gas station and convenience store is like gas pump's there.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** Anybody else?

**Answer:** Yeah, I feel like the difference between a gas station and convenience store -- so at a convenience store I feel like it's kind of harder because they're normally owned by a company. It's not usually like a lot of times gas stations, it's just a guy operating it and they're lot less likely... It's usually just one person, so you don't have a lot of people to worry about and it's just less professional usually. And a convenience store is usually bigger, like management chain owned stuff, it's a lot harder for them to get away with selling you something underage.

I can personally say convenience store is way harder.

**Interviewer:** OK. OK, are there any other differences? And those of you who didn't buy e-cigarettes at the gas station and or the convenience store, where did you get them?

**Answer:** Vape store usually.

Yes.

**Interviewer:** Vape store.

**Answer:** Yes.

Vape store is the easiest.

**Interviewer:** OK. And you're nodding your head in the corner I see too?

**Answer:** Yeah, they want to sell it to you at a Vape store.

**Interviewer:** Even when you're underage?

**Answer:** Yeah.

They don't check.

Because even the difference the cigarettes at a Vape store and the vape at a Vape store, or not at a Vape store but like a . . . [13:07] store is that with cigarettes, they have to sell it to so many people who are underage, but if you're going to buy a vape, you're spending like $50 to $100 on that, so there's way more monetary incentive for them to sell you one underage. Like cigarette they're only going to make like what a dollar, so it's kind of not worth it, but vapes, it's very different.

There's a lot that goes into it. Get a tank and coils...

Yeah you got to get everything, juice. So they could theoretically be making like $100 to $200 on purchase, and there's lot more incentive for them to just forget the ID.

**Interviewer:** OK and what about Walmart, Target, big box stores?

**Answer:** Not juice.

**Interviewer:** They'll check your ID? OK.

**Answer:** I haven't even tried.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** Sorry, if we're going to talk, can we talk in the focus group and not just to each other.

**Answer:** Oh she was just asking if they were selling them there and I just said they really only sold cigarettes that I know at Walmart.

**Interviewer:** OK. Yeah, I think that might be true.

**Answer:** They sell a lot of those like Walmart and all that stuff, they sell like Blus and Vuse -- those are the two brands that most stores will sell.

Oh yeah, yeah yeah they do have...

But they look like cigarettes, they're not vapes. You're not going to get like whole vapes at those places. You're going to get Juuls, Vuse, and Blus, all sound similar. It does. Disposable e-cigs or like you have to buy cartridges or something, you're not getting vapes there. And then the other thing with Walmart or Target is, it's not like they're going to get any personal benefit from selling you that. They have every reason not to, because their manager is going to kill them, they're only helping the store out, it doesn't really affect them, they could just lose their job.

**Interviewer:** OK, so it's better to get like somebody who owns the store?

**Answer:** Yes

**Interviewer:** OK and is that your experience too on this side?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK. What about getting a friend or family member to buy them for you?

**Answer:** That's my situation.

Definitely.

**Interviewer:** And how does that work?

**Answer:** I've got three older sisters, every single one of them smokes, so I would just say -- hey, I'll give you an extra two dollars if you in here and get this for me. And every time, they were like sure.

When I was younger, I had an older friend... that looked a little older.

**Interviewer:** Borrowing money from a sibling or a friend. Is an e-cig something you can borrow from somebody?

**Answer:** Way easier than smoking too. Like cigarette they have to give you a cigarette, but with vaping, I mean it's much cheaper, especially if they're the kind of person who buys a lot of juice. Like some people will just let you use their vape and you can just use it for however long while you're with them, they don't care.

Yes. It's like a social activity.

Yeah, oh, like try my juice and whatever, sounds really weird, but.

**Interviewer:** OK. So there's a lot of sharing, like "try this" kind of thing?

**Answer:** Mhmm. Yes.

**Interviewer:** What about approaching a stranger and asking them if they'll buy you an e-cigarette or vape?

**Answer:** It's typically too much money. Because if you're going to get a mod box that's couple hundred bucks. You ask somebody to go buy that, they're going to be like -- no.

And it's too complicated. It's just not simple. It's not like go buy me pack of smokes. I mean maybe juice. I mean even that you're looking at like what type of juice, what flavor, what nicotine level, what size? It's just too much for somebody. It's not like you say -- oh go buy me pack of Marlboro Reds or whatever. It's just so complicated. I mean unless it's a person that obviously knows a lot about it, it's hard for you to just give somebody money to go and get some, especially because a lot of times the cost aren't really defined either.

**Interviewer:** OK. Great. Right, so, you don't necessarily know how much it's going to be.

**Answer:** Yeah, it's not like a pack of cigarettes is going to be around six bucks. It could be like, a 30ml bottle of juice could be somewhere between like five bucks if it's really cheap or on sale or like forty bucks if it's really good, you just never really know, even more.

You're right. Plus with how expensive they are, most strangers would be just like -- oh sure I'll go do it and then take it and run.

**Interviewer:** OK. What about shoplifting? Is that...?

**Answer:** Harder.

Impossible. It's usually kind of . . . [17:57] because most of the time I was going to vape shops when I learned.

**Interviewer:** So I got it that the smaller places are good. But how do you pick the place where it's a good place to buy an e-cigarette? What are the signs that you look for?

**Answer:** Word of mouth.

Friend recommendations.

Yes.

No, 'under 18' sign. It's true.

Not a big black and white "we ID sign outside."

Yeah exactly.

**Interviewer:** Anything else.

**Answer:** I never really bought them or borrowed them, I would just like... So when I would vape, like I said he bought a vape so I would just vape with him. But like e-cigarettes, I wouldn't borrow them, I'd just take them from my parents.

**Interviewer:** And with e-cigarettes, do they have enough that you can take one and they don't notice?

**Answer:** Well for them, they smoke so many cigarettes that after a while they just put the e-cigs to the side and forget about them. So it was really easy for me to just and take and then just go back to my room and they never knew.

**Interviewer:** And how many of you have a parent who either vapes or smokes e-cigs?

**Answer:** I've never . . . before, that's weird.

At one point my dad tried to use one of those smaller e-cigarettes to try and quit, didn't like it, so he just kind of tossed it.

**Interviewer:** Same kind of thing, he just set it somewhere and forgot about it?

**Answer:** Yeah.

My parents just went back to regular cigarettes.

**Interviewer:** OK. So when you had a place where you were able to buy e-cig there, did you go back to the same place over and over again, or did you try different places around?

**Answer:** It's just easier to go back to the same place, because then at that point the guy's familiar with you, you don't worry about whether or not they're going to ID you, because he didn't ID you the first time and he still kind of remembers you, odds are it's just going to be really easy transaction.

**Interviewer:** Yes, this is the focus group, come on in.

**Answer:** I've been wandering this hotel for fifteen minutes.

**Interviewer:** Come sit down. If you want to sit up here that would be awesome.

So let me review really quick for you. The group is really about using e-cigs and vaping when you were under 18 and in high school, so that's kind of the general topic, that we're talking about.

So the first time you vaped or used your e-cig, it sounded like a lot of people got it from a friend or someone that used. So at what point did you start purchasing them for yourself? Did you do it like a couple of times, a lot of times, was it a week or month, a year how did that work?

**Answer:** Like after a month, my mom give me her old one, like a month and half later I lost it, so I bought another one.

I feel like once you are familiar with it... It's one of those things that's really hard. Like when you're a normal tobacco smoker, you go to the store, either you've tried a cigarette or you just go to the store and you buy cigarettes. I mean there's a lot of options, but they're all relatively similar. But with vaping it's kind of hard to know what works, it's a pretty complicated hobby. So you have to kind of get something simple, learn about it, learn what you like and then move and especially because it's so expensive, it's not like buying a $5 pack of cigarettes. You're buying something like $40 to $100 more.

**Interviewer:** Alright and so do you start with an e-cig and then kind of work your way up to vaping?

**Answer:** Personally...

I started with a vape pen.

Yeah I started with those little NJOY sticks.

**Interviewer:** What's the NJOY stick?

**Answer:** It's like an e-cig.

It's just like Blu and what-not.

**Interviewer:** And then how long was it before you got a vape? So it's the e-cigarette first and then you decide you like it and then you go looking for a vape, is that how it...?

**Answer:** For me it was more just like the vape seemed cool and everybody in my school was vaping and then he bought a vape and I was like -- I want to try it, everybody else is trying, seems really cool, I want to try it too. But yeah I personally started with just trying an e-cigarettes, seeing what they were like.

I started with normal cigarettes and I kind of just kind of got coerced into vaping, because of the health things, because I'm an asthmatic, so I started to feel the effects of cigarettes after about a year and half, two years. So I just went straight to vape right after that.

**Interviewer:** How many of you also smoke cigarettes, when you were in high school and under 18? OK, so everybody, basically. And did you smoke cigarettes first and then the e-cig to the vape?

**Answer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Have you had an adult try to discourage you from using e-cigs?

**Answer:** No.

**Interviewer:** No? OK. And I saw a couple of people shaking their head, yes?

**Answer:** Sort of. My father was kind of less mad after I quit smoking and went to vaping, but still didn't really like it.

I had someone call me out, well, it was partially my fault, but in Safeway I was like vaping... This was before, a while back, before there was any laws against, they treated vaping the same as smoking. I was vaping in Safeway and a woman come up to me, there was a couple, and she wasn't mad I was vaping inside, but she started telling me how terrible it was for me and how I shouldn't be doing it and I looked way too young to be doing something like that. I think I was almost 18. She was like -- yeah it's so terrible for you, how the hell you can do this and you're going to die young and all that stuff.

**Interviewer:** OK. But it didn't stop you?

**Answer:** I kind of laughed at it, no, to be honest with you.

**Interviewer:** OK and what about you? You were nodding your head yes too.

**Answer:** Well my mom and despite my entire family being severely heavy smokers, they tried to stop me and not have me smoke. You know I was surrounded by second hand smoke all the time, so it's... But everybody I've known it's like -- oh you shouldn't smoke, you shouldn't vape, you shouldn't e-cig. But all I can think is, you do it more than me, like 10 times more than me. I do it once or twice for fun and you're sitting there every day with a pack of cigarettes.

Don't you feel like that's because they don't want you to end up like that, because that's how they started?

Well the thing is I tried smoking a cigarette or two and I didn't like it, so every time they tell me that, I'm like, I don't like cigarettes. I'm not going to start with cigarettes and vaping is more of the thing I just do to relax and when I'm hanging out with friends. It's not like an every day constant thing that I try to afflict into my daily life, because I know it's not the best for you. But it's also a good stress relief.

**Interviewer:** OK. So what do you like about e-cigs and vaping?

**Answer:** Flavors.

Yeah, flavors.

. . .[26:02] inhaling it.

Then just the social aspect of it, on top of the flavors and everything else.

Big clouds, large clouds.

It's calming.

**Interviewer:** So what's the social aspect?

**Answer:** So I think it's a little bit more acceptable than traditional cigarettes and . . .[26:10] and stuff. People tend to not really care as much because it smells pretty good, it's a little bit more acceptable.

And you don't smell terrible.

Right.

**Interviewer:** What was that?

**Answer:** I said: "And you don't smell like terrible." Because it doesn't leave... Theoretically you could vape anywhere, it doesn't leave residue, it doesn't leave smell anywhere. I mean you could do it in your room, in your house. But smoking, if somebody's a smoker you know they're a smoker, it doesn't matter. If they smoke every day you can tell. You can take showers, you wash all your clothes, like if you've been in somebody's house that's a smoker -- even if they don't smoke inside -- a lot of stuff in their house typically smells of smoke. It's just how it is.

**Interviewer:** So the social part of it, is it different than the way people kind of gather outside to smoke cigarettes? How does the social part of e-cigs work? I mean do you pass it around? Do you share it? How does it work?

**Answer:** It's customizable.

Your vape could be the way that you express yourself because you can get so many different kinds, different colors, shapes, different wattages. There's so many options to it, so it's almost like a whole group of guys with a whole bunch of cars...naturally be drawn together and want to talk about it and share the . . . and so on and so forth. It's the same way with vape, just a different group.

Yes. And with like smoking, normal smoking, although people do hang out, it's not really about the smoking, like they're not talking about it, they don't really care about the smoking, it's bringing them all in one place. But with vape it's about that, people are always interested -- Oh what kind of juice are you vaping, what kind of mod is that, what kind of... it's all this stuff that goes in to it and people talk about that and share the vape, share the juice. You put the tip on the person's vape, try their juice, whatever.

**Interviewer:** So do people recognize... I mean I'm trying to picture when you're in high school and you have this vape that is the colors you like and everything, how do other people know, or does it matter that they know? How do other kids know that you have this or is it just for yourself?

**Answer:** Well it depends on how open you are with it. Like if you carry it to school with you and you don't get caught, then I mean you're probably going to go show it off to your friends and at lunchtime be like --- "Oh do you want to try this new juice." But if I'd actually bought a vape personally I would have kept it at home, because my school was bad, I wouldn't have trusted anybody. I would have told people...[crosstalk]

Yeah, you got to love the vape life, if you vape...

It's like a cool thing.

I can bring bring it to school and not get caught with it, it's a big cool thing.

If you've got the strong juice too, they're like oooh. Everybody wants to try it.

The cigarette thing was kind of a cool factor and kind of a boredom factor for me too at first, then it kind of felt dirty. Then I didn't feel too many repercussions from vaping, so it was exactly the same thing.

**Interviewer:** So when vaping or smoking e-cig would it be as part of a group or usually by yourself?

**Answer:** Usually be by myself, but with my friends, I do it and be like -- let me try that and I'd try it.

**Interviewer:** Aha, OK, so the sharing and the trying, but then it's also kind of on your own too.

**Answer:** Yeah.

I always did it with a group, or at least with a friend.

**Interviewer:** OK. And who are the other kids who are vaping?

**Answer:** All. [laughter]

**Interviewer:** I know. But like what kind of kids, was it... Like usually in high school there's sort of different groups.

**Answer:** The wanna be cool kids.

I think everyone.

**Interviewer:** Is it everyone?

**Answer:** At least from my perception, it was pretty much anyone from any group.

Especially if you have a beard.

For our school it was more so the kids that were trying to be cool or like the kids that we slightly punk or slightly gothic, you'd have all those kids with vapes and stuff and it was just whatever.

That more often though, the stand out kids and then you have the really popular kids -- those were the first ones to get.

Yeah when the movement just started it was I think around when I was in sophomore year, it was mostly the stand out kids, like she was saying. But like a year later it was everybody.

But like typically a lot of the popular kids all those type people that were just doing it to be cool, they didn't really have vapes. A lot of them had either vape pens or e-cigs, but a lot of them didn't have real box mod vapes, you have specifically like Juuls, specifically.

**Interviewer:** So the other pile of cards that you have in front of you has a list... It's a bunch of pictures on it and it's actually the second pile for those of you who came in a little late, with the pictures. So the idea of this is to tell us what the slang words are that kids use to describe these objects. And some of them are a little hard to recognize, so feel free to ask if you're not sure what the picture is.

[quiet voices/chatter]

**Interviewer:** OK, so the first thing was the vape mod, I think. Is that what this is?

**Answer:** Box mod.

**Interviewer:** Box mod, OK. I heard, Vape, just vape. What other names does it go by?

**Answer:** I've never seen that before.

Not many people are like secretive with names, like they are with cigarettes.

Some people call them like regulated mods.

Yeah.

Regulated basically means that there's a screen on it that controls the wattage, some wattage control on it that's regulated . . . [36:14] which means . . . button. Unregulated is you kind of need to know a lot more to do something that's unregulated because you can't control anything. Basically the control is from the coil.

**Interviewer:** So I notice... I confess we've done some other focus groups with these same cards and I've noticed that there seem to be very few like slang words for things related to vapes. Why do you think that is?

**Answer:** Because it's not really illegal.

**Interviewer:** Because it's not illegal?

**Answer:** I think it's because it's new, it's really new.

I mean the names are just pretty simple for it, like why come up with some other term when you can just call it vape.

There's no really bag stigma around it right now. Right now it's just known as a better alternative to smoking.

**Interviewer:** OK and so the names, when you have slang names for something, is that kind of a way of hiding what it really is?

**Answer:** I would think so.

Yeah.

Maybe in high school, yeah, or some people come up with stuff just to come up with stuff, just to call it something different.

Or maybe you're at work so you have to hide...but not too much to hide.

**Interviewer:** OK. So there's not too much to hide, what happens if an adult catches you with an e-cig or a vape when you're under 18?

**Answer:** Nothing really.

Depends on who it is, because like your principal or your parents they might take but I mean like...

School takes it.

Yeah, the school takes it...that I know. If it's just like some random person just saying -- oh you shouldn't do that, give me that. I'm just going to be like -- hmm no, and walk away.

Most strangers don't intervene.

And if they do, you just walk away, don't care.

**Interviewer:** And so did anyone have any slang words for any of the things on the cards.

**Answer:** Not really.

No.

**Interviewer:** OK. Interesting. What about flavors? What flavors do you think are most popular in high school?

**Answer:** Sweet.

Fruity.

**Interviewer:** Anything else?

**Answer:** Just the strong flavors.

**Interviewer:** The strong ones, like...?

**Answer:** Nothing in particular, but like they're saying like the fruity ones, but you don't want something mild. The popular flavors at least in my experience in school were the ones that gave you a really good flavor when you hit them.

Yeah anything just really sweet. I mean honestly can't even think of a non-sweet flavor. I can think of one or two, but not that people actually smoke. The only ones that I can think of that aren't sweet are like English Breakfast, which some people will smoke or will vape at breakfast or Marlboro, which is literally cigarette flavored

Yeah the tobacco flavored.

-- But I really can't think of anything else that's not sweet that people vape.

Yeah totally, sweet and fruity and candy.

Yeah candies, like desserts, cereal, everything, anything sweet.

**Interviewer:** What about the alcohol flavored ones?

**Answer:** My personal favorite was - Fireball Whiskey.

Oh yeah.

That tasted exactly like it. Like I've had a shot of Fireball, it tastes exactly like it. It's like crazy. I mean without the alcohol.

**Interviewer:** Do kids like to smoke this?

**Answer:** That attracts them even more, because it's like, oh, we're already doing something we not supposed to do, so you just take it to another level -- alcoholic vape pens.

**Interviewer:** So what was it about the devices...I mean first of all, did you have a favorite either vape or e-cig or brand or anything like that? Was there...?

**Answer:** Not particularly.

Well there was... I don't know. There is for juice, I think there was definitely better brands, like I don't know specifically, but there was definitely like... There was a brand, I think it's like Nebulous or something and they make really good juice, it's all high quality stuff, especially of you're not going to be really cheap with it, you want to use something that's high quality. But then there's also... I don't remember it's been a while since now, there's was a brand that I really liked for the actual vapes which were all touchscreen, could even connect with your phone and everything and I mean those are pretty cool, it was really high quality.

For me I didn't really care about e-cigs, like they were OK, but once I started vaping I liked all the smoke and the feel and the smells and it was just there were a lot of things that were more attractive about vaping than a lot of other things when it comes to smoking. And I think that's probably why everybody's OK with it, because it really is a lot more attractive with a lot of reasons.

But like the juice I want somewhere local, a lot of people go to their own locals and shops, like smoke shops because some people have custom flavors that they can make for you. It's, in my opinion, more of a local thing that I've seen around here. You ask where they got it from, they're not going to say like a store that you would probably know, it probably some store that they're really close with, that they've been going to for a while and they're trying the flavors.

**Interviewer:** And so when you were under 18 did you go from e-cigs to vaping while you were under 18, so did you vape when you were...?

**Answer:** Yeah I would use vape. . . 18.

I tried e-cigs, but I kind of just went straight into vaping, e-cigs didn't really stick with me.

**Interviewer:** OK and where did you get the vape?

**Answer:** I started using my friends and then after about maybe three or four weeks or so I just went into the vape shop and talked to the guy for like 20 minutes, tried a couple flavors, then just bought a whole set.

**Interviewer:** OK and he never asked for ID or anything like that?

**Answer:** No, it was very easy, I guess you'd say. Like going into a GamesStop and talking to a cashier and picking out a video game, just like that.

Personally I got mine online. It was actually cheaper that way. You can browse around. They ask you if you're 18, but you can just put whatever, it doesn't really matter. It says, "are you 18?" You click, "yes," and that's it and then it'll let you buy whatever, basically.

I just bought mine off of Craigslist. That was the cheapest way, I wanted something really nice, cheap and I just found something on Craigslist, I think I took the metro, because I don't think I was old enough to drive, I think I was 15. The dude was really sketchy, he didn't care, he didn't ask how old I was . . . [inaudible][43:31]

**Interviewer:** And then what about buying juices. Is that hard to do when you're underage?

**Answer:** You can find them in the mall.

Yeah.

I feel like that was harder though, getting the juices rather than like... It's not something I can just find on Craigslist, I couldn't really order it online, because I didn't want my parents see or open packages or anything. And all the places that would sell to minors, like places in the mall, I was in the mall, went to two different places and both of them that sold to minors, like really overpriced the juice.

Yes.

It's to minors.

Which is something if you're going to buy the juice to minors they will overprice it, they're not going to give you a deal. It was like a 30ml bottle they were selling for like fifteen and then they knew I was minor and they were like -- oh $40. And then I went somewhere else and it was like the guy kept pressuring me to buy and it was really overpriced, it was 9ml bottle or something for $20, it was ridiculous. They overprice it doing that every time.

I actually got juice from Ocean City on the boardwalk. It was my senior walk. I was so. . . [44:40] I needed some juice. So I went there and just got it. I even bought a new little hookah pen. That's when I first got the hookah pen and then afterwards she was like, "how old are you?" I was like, "errrr," and I just bolted.

**Interviewer:** Oh OK. That's funny, so she asked you after it was all...

**Answer:** After she sold everything.

I would have just said 18, and then left.

They just get so used to like "err."

**Interviewer:** So much do you like to customize the vape you had and again while you were still under 18? Did you get into customization or did that happen later?

**Answer:** I didn't do customization.

**Interviewer:** OK, yeah, or not at all.

**Answer:** I didn't have my own personal vape, I just vaped with my friend.

**Interviewer:** Did you have favorite flavors that you liked?

**Answer:** Yeah, like the fruity ones, but whatever she had honestly.

I think me and my friends we bought... Because the problem is if you buy a lot of juice, so much... Because you get bored with flavors. You think you're going to smoke like 30ml or 120ml of one flavor, but you never really do, like unless you really like it. So we would just all be at his house and we would just split the juice and same thing with the vapes. We would even switch out the vape stuff. We had stickers on our vape, not like little stickers, we had like wraps, vape wraps.

You ever mixed the flavors?

Yeah.

That was the best part.

You can make really weird flavors.

And like another thing besides the... I don't know if it's going to help you, but if you had a mint or really really strong flavor that had like menthol or something weird in it, you'd have to replace the coil. Because it would actually stay in the wool around the coil for the cotton and you could taste it . . .flavors later. From my experience.

**Interviewer:** So what were the advantages of vaping? What was the best part about?

**Answer:** No smell.

I liked watching the smoke and I like you could customize how big the puffs would come out and I thought it was cool the way it would look, all these big thick clouds of smoke. Like I said for me it was calming to just sit there and smoke and relax from the day, just take break from everything.

It felt healthier than smoking cigarettes to me.

Yeah.

Yeah, my health declined a lot less slow when I started vaping.

[laughter]

I feel like that's true. When you vape, although I still have negative health effects, I just feel like it just feels healthier. When you smoke you know from all the stuff you've seen that's been pushed into your head, like you know it's unhealthy and you know you have effects. But for vaping it just doesn't feel as unhealthy, because it feels like it's kind of good for you. It's not, but it feels like it.

Kind of tricks your brain into thinking it's something else, especially if you have a different, a candy flavor, makes you feel like you're having a piece of candy.

Ah it's just candy.

Yeah exactly.

With cigarettes it's tobacco. But you can get juice with no nicotine, no tobacco, none of that. So it makes it seem like it's just not harmful.

Very therapeutic.

**Interviewer:** It's therapeutic how?

**Answer:** Because it's like the hum of you. I don't want to sound like weird. Breathing it in, there's like a hum to the machine and then you exhale, you just see all this smoke and you're just like...

It is really atmospheric.

Yeah.

Yeah, especially with a bunch of people, like a basement or something. Well that's weirdly specific.

[laughter]

All the smoke in the room and it's weird to say, but it's kind of nice sometimes to just sit there in a room full of smoke.

Yeah. Like incense.

Yeah, smoke that's not killing you. Right now.

Slower than cigarettes.

**Interviewer:** What are the downsides of vaping?

**Answer:** I heard they explode.

The expense.

I was at work one time there was this guy that was trying to pick up his prescription and we're sitting there talking to him and the pharmacist could smell something burning. So we're looking around the pharmacy and everything, turns out it was actually the vape in his pocket started just burning up and it gave him a burn.

I think somehow in his jeans the button got pressed and it just started burning his thigh. He didn't even notice for about two minutes. Just looking around for a fire and all of sudden started jumping up and down.

**Interviewer:** OK so that's definitely a downside.

**Answer:** Can be dangerous.

Sometimes really weird or sketchy juices or just... I mean you put in your body, into your lungs and there's not a lot of things you put in your lungs. So like especially if you're trying to be cheap with it, you're getting these weird juices that are possibly made not correctly or whatever and they can make you sick. There was a scare that went around where there were these like the chemical that was in popcorn was in these vapes, in these juices and I don't know what it was doing to people, really making them sick, giving them cancer or something I don't know.

**Interviewer:** OK and where do you learn about the health risks?

**Answer:** Online.

Facebook.

**Interviewer:** Facebook. So that kind of means friends? Does that mean friends?

**Answer:** Yes, friends sharing . . . [inaudible][51:17] because she said she saw it later about a vape blowing up, I heard about that too.

Yeah, but I heard that on the news. I heard about the vape pens.

Blew up in his face or something like that.

I actually heard more benefits than downfalls on social media and stuff.

**Interviewer:** OK. So there's more benefits. What are the benefits?

**Answer:** It's better than a cigarette and a Black & Mild.

**Interviewer:** And do you think it is healthier than smoking cigarettes?

**Answer:** Definitely.

Yes.

I would say it's still healthier just not to smoke at all. But I mean if you're going to smoke it's definitely, I would think it's a lot healthier to smoke a vape over a cigarette. Because I mean they actually, actively have nicotine filling you and it's like that's not good for you.

**Interviewer:** But what about when the juice has nicotine in it?

**Answer:** I wouldn't use the nicotine ones.

I didn't either.

I've tried the ones with nicotine in, only because my parents wanted to try quit smoking, so they did they whole step by step process. You start it -- I think it was 24, the top one. you start at 24 and you eventually go to 21, and so on and so forth. I would steal the juice from them sometimes. This was back when I was 16. I didn't like it too much; that's why I ended up buying my own. Because I felt personally, the one with the nicotine in it would burn a little more. Especially the ones with the higher one. Because my mom liked the Marlboro flavor. Which I thought was the worst I've ever tried. Ever. It burned so much. I want to say that's because of the nicotine though.

I feel it's kind of nauseating. Because when you have all that smoke, like a vape smoke, and you try to do nicotine, it's kind of... It's a lot more than what you would a cigarette, like one puff. It's like 5, 10 puffs, so it's just... I threw up my first time. I was sick.

I think even like, just having... Starting vaping for the first time or... Even if the juice has no nicotine -- even just... I'm vaped in a year, and just a week ago, I tried somebody's vape, and no nicotine, I coughing like crazy. It just messed my throat up and everything. And I could not stop coughing.

**Interviewer:** Do you build a tolerance?

**Answer:** Definitely

You definitely do.

When you stop... Like he said, you just die the next time.

It still comes through hot. The smoke.

Yeah, I used it like, maybe like three hours, vaping on and off. And eventually I just got used to it again. But...

**Interviewer:** So what are the health risks, do you think, to vaping?

**Answer:** When I quit smoking, my breathing kind of came back for a while, but after a heavy vaping, almost... Well, probably every single day for a like a year and a half, it kind of got bad again, to where I quit altogether.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** That might just be because...

It's just all like, throat and lungs stuff.

Yeah, pretty much just like... As unhealthy as it is smoking cigarettes, except there's no nicotine. So that part is way down. There's no tobacco so that part's way down. But I mean like, the smoke factor is still there, the breathing it in, the breathing it out -- that's still there. So I mean, you're going to cough; you're going to have to fill your lungs; you're going to have some problems.

Yeah, instead of tar filling your lungs from cigarettes, you get fluid from the juice. Because what happens if you're not careful, is the juice doesn't burn, the ball of juice doesn't burn, so you're breathing a lot of it in. Well after a while you're getting actual juice coating your lungs because some juice particles are going in, and I've read some stuff on this -- they're going into your lungs and it's not getting burned and eventually that builds up and it irritates the hairs in your lungs, and it gives you a cough. Like, I have a terrible cough. I know some people don't have this, but when I did it, I had a cough 24-7, it was like smokers cough, and eventually I stopped. When I stopped vaping, two or three weeks later, cough gone.

Yeah. His coughing was really nasty during that period.

**Interviewer:** So if you were going to do like a TV commercial, if you were designing a TV commercial to convince kids not to vape, what would you tell them about it?

**Answer:** They explode.

[laughs]

Common sense.

It burns the back of your throat up.

You're going to cough.

Anything that's not oxygen, going into your lungs, is obviously not good for you. That's all they're made to absorb. So it's anything else. That's not good. And you're going to feel the effects eventually, even if it's only a little bit at a time. Over a long period of a time will feel it. There's no escaping that.

And to be like, why spend your money on 150 dollars for a vape when you could go get like $150 worth of -- I don't know -- Pokemon cards. It depends on the kid. Some kids would rather go out and spend their money on this stuff. I'd be just like -- you could just go spend that money on so many other things. You're like, 12, 16, you don't need to spend your money on this smoking stuff.

It'd be way harder than cigarettes.

I feel like it's so much harder to design a commercial against vaping than it is cigarettes. Because like, to a normal person, there's a lot of benefits of vaping. Like, a lot of what we're talking about is benefits. And smoking -- everything... Like the smoking folks here -- everything you talk about is negative things. How expensive it is. How it messes... Like, all this stuff it messes with. How hard it is to get all this stuff. But with like vaping, like, most of the things are benefits. Like, great flavors, great this, great that...

Same thing with the cigarettes. You smoke like a pack a day. That's like what like 50, 60...

Yeah, we're not even talking about addiction.

-- buy like one cigarette less, of like two months, until you're like tired of it...

Most people I know that vape, smoked cigarettes before hand too.

**Interviewer:** OK. And why do you think vaping and smoking are so close to each other?

**Answer:** I think the main...

Oh, yeah. People that try to quit cigarettes and tobacco, but they go to vaping, it's what I... see.

**Interviewer:** What were you saying?

**Answer:** That's what I say, right there.

**Interviewer:** OK. But none of you were trying... Or were you trying to quit cigarettes when you first started vaping.

**Answer:** Yeah sort of.

Kind of.

I was trying to find something new. That's the careful part.

**Interviewer:** It was new?

**Answer:** Yeah. Because I had my first cigarette; I did not like it. I had a black mount. It was cool, but I didn't really like it. And then they had these hookah fest, so I was like -- OK. I think I like this. I was trying to find something. I was just trying to find something.

You don't really hear a lot of negative propaganda about vapes. And that's probably why it'd be so hard to do as, like you said, create a commercial for it. Because they hype is so focused on our generation stopping smoking, that nobody really focuses on the vapes. They look at the vapes as like -- oh, this'll help you stop doing this. And I mean, in all honesty, the only bad thing I have ever seen myself is, like I said, them exploding.

Yeah.

It's like picking out the lesser of two evils.

Right.

And I don't even know how many people it's really helped versus how many people have started vaping that would have even started smoking.

Yeah, right. Because it's just cool.

We always talk about -- when you hear about vapes, it's always, this is the better alternative. It's never like, you shouldn't do this. But like with smoking, it's like, you shouldn't do this. And I feel like it's really hard to be negative against vaping because it's really just... It's kind of pleasant. It's just hard... I mean, we haven't really seen the long-term effects, and we haven't really seen people getting cancer or dying because of it. So what should you really tell somebody? Like, you're going to get a cough? I mean, like, that's not enough of a reason. It's like telling somebody that eat pizza, they're going to -- may get sick eventually. Like, they may get sick from it. But like there's no long term effects that we can actually tell people.

I don't think vaping's been in the limelight long enough for this to happen yet. Because I mean, you know, cigarettes, like, way back in the day, took a lot of propaganda to be against cigarettes.

They thought it was fine.

Yeah.

I mean, even in health class. They mainly talked about cigarettes. Vaping was never really mentioned. At least in my experience.

[inaudible] in health class.

**Interviewer:** Did you know when you were under 18, did you know anyone who vaped that didn't smoke cigarettes?

**Answer:** A lot of people. I think that everybody then... Yeah, I do that vape. Didn't smoke cigarettes.

Yeah. I think in our age range, most people.

When it started getting popular, a lot of people, they just got it because it was getting popular and not because they wanted to try and quit smoking or what actually was out there on the market for it.

**Interviewer:** OK. I think that was all the questions I have for you then. Thanks so much for coming. We'll come around.

## Columbia

**Interviewer:** So did, would have done and would never do. Okay so let's start with got a friend or family member to buy me a Vape or e-cigs. How many of you have ever done that? Okay and so does this mean give them the money did you give them the money to buy it for you or just like get them to buy you one?

**Answer:** Actually my boyfriend surprise, he's like this is to get you off the cigarette, here is an eighty dollar (inaudible 02:05)

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Answer:** I just went to the convenience store and bought it and came back out and I was like what the heck? That was out of nowhere.

**Interviewer:** Has anybody else gotten one has a gift?

**Answer:** My friend was going out of State to a convention about it and it was (inaudible 02:24) that gave him fourty bucks for it. (Inaudible 02:26)

Yeah I had a friend who just pick (inaudible 02:30) So he used to get me one.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and then did you have your hand up too?

**Answer:** Yeah, my mum gave me her old ones, (inaudible 02)

**Interviewer:** Okay, so was there just the one person who was their friend or relative or the person who gave it to them, their intention was to help them quit smoking did anybody else get one with the intention you, yep?

(Inaudible 02:56)

**Interviewer:** Okay. And so what about giving them the money to get them to buy you one?

(Inaudible 03:09)

**Interviewer:** Okay and does that happen like outside of the store is that arranged in advance how did that come about?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 03:15) yeah.

It's really hard to do it outside the store. Yes, that's kind of like risky. They (inaudible 03:26) like ID's and like not bringing in your friends, they don't have ID's and looking up or anything. Yeah (inaudible 03:32) they check at the doors.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and other people are kind of nodding is that generally understood that stores are harder to get into?

(Inaudible 03:42)

**Answer:** Just like even some places even sell more than just like big products, so its more expected if they caught you regardless of what you are doing.

**Interviewer:** Okay and what of this product means tobacco?

**Answer:** Like Zippos, lighters and knives, vodca products, tobacco. So, yeah all that kind of stuff.

**Interviewer:** Okay and is it hard to get into those stores when you're under aged?

**Answer:** Yeah.

I mean you can settle (inaudible 04:14) yeah, two seconds, can I see your ID? You can even be up at counter the moment you walk up the door, you have to have your ID out. I think that also depends on where you go that (inaudible 04:24). Yeah, I don't I have ever run into that.

**Interviewer:** Okay so you know places where you can go under age and kind of?

**Answer:** Yeah, there's all those places, yeah.

(Inaudible 04:37)

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how do you know about those places?

**Answer:** Friends, usually

It's more or less should we find out through the social, yeah. Where we go and how to get the stuff.

**Interviewer:** Okay and is there like a lot of sharing of where the best places are to go?

**Answer:** We usually just Google it. If me and my friends get something from there, we would just Google it and go there.

**Interviewer:** Okay, when you're under aged though isn't that kind of risky?

**Answer:** I mean never ran into any problem of risk because I mean myself I usually looked older it and was so.

**Interviewer:** Okay, what about approaching a stranger and asking them to buy you either a vape or (inaudible 05:30)?

**Answer:** That's kind of risky. (Inaudible 05:32). Its difficult. Yeah (inaudible 05:36-38). You would be able to do it outside the big shop (inaudible 05:42) all those gas station. That'd be a little easier to do

(Inaudible 05:48) would have been that's because you can just go online and online.

Yeah. To ask you, you have to be at least eighteen or older and can obviously click yes and you get whatever you want online. I bought mine

**Interviewer:** Okay, is the reason because they want to come back to online that's a really good point but for the stranger and asking them to buy you one, why is that so difficult what's difficult about it?

**Answer:** We have no done it before. The first time I tried the red.

Yeah.

We were walking from, it was actually (inaudible 06:26). We were walking to high school to seven eleven, that's like three miles away and we wanted to try the blue cigarette I think. We ask this one guy that was outside and he was like, you guys can't buy it yourselves? We ask him and we were like no. (Inaudible 06:44) its like twenty dollars and I guess like a five dollars extra, and he bought us the blue cigarette (inaudible 06:52)

**Interviewer:** Anybody else, is anybody else had any success with that?

**Answer:** Which one?

**Interviewer:** Asking a stranger?

**Answer:** Oh no.

I thought about ordering online, yeah. That's pretty easy.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so what about ordering online when you're under age, how many of you?

**Answer:** That's way to go about it.

If you want to like wait.

**Interviewer:** Okay so quick show of hands how many when you were under age have ordered something on line? So kind of most but not quite all, couple nos. Okay.

**Answer:** Once I found out the company it was easier to track down I would just use my moms or my boy friends credit card for it.

**Interviewer:** Okay, that's right so to order it online you still need a credit card. Who's credit card did you use?

**Answer:** (Inaudible )

**Interviewer:** Underage?

**Answer:** Debit card, whatever.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Anybody else?

**Answer:** (Inaudible )

**Interviewer:** Like a prepaid card, you put money on it. Clever. So is how many of you have done that bought the prepaid card too use the money online, okay?

**Answer:** Well that’s specific when he gets but yes.

**Interviewer:** What about using a fake ID for a person?

**Answer:** (Inaudible ) of your not using it for booz or club.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What about buying it yourself at a convenience store?

**Answer:** Definitely. Do it that way and not be (inaudible ) do it that way. Just go ahead and buy it.

**Interviewer:** Okay and at a gas station?

**Answer:** Yeah, definitely. Anything that has to with like a store. If they don't ask you for your ID or anything you can probably more than likely do it, but if you go inside the convenience store where you can see people getting carried already in front of you then it's part of the habit.

(Inaudible 08:58) eating around here that (inaudible 09:01) products. Again it could be simple gas station or a convenient store that totally sells you know food based stuff and may be you go to the counter and see like little pipes and the windshield, like (inaudible 09:15-17) that you can buy and sometimes they are chill about it. It's not like an actual vape store but you can still get those products their and you know just like any other kind of products, either they card you or they won't. It always trial and error process.

And there are like big stores that you can just walk into, like pretty much get whatever you need. Yeah.

Typically, I would say that people stray from convenience stores and gas stations because of all the evolve what they materially sells, really pretty badly (inaudible 09:50) like cigarette. (inaudible 09:52-58) or get online.

You can get like single cheap, single used things for cheap LA gum, you can use those sources than gas stations.

**Interviewer:** So usually high school students don't really have a lot of money is it popular to go get the cheap ones or do they rather?

**Answer:** Yeah.

If you have the money, just save the money, that way then it's better for the outcome where to buy all these stuff so.

It depends if you want it at that moment and if have cash you might just go and gas stations.

And at that point I'd rather buy my own oil and ask my friend if I can just use his vaporizer.

I think I would say like the more expensive ones than the cheaper ones like in the school.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So which is more difficult to get, the vape or the oil?

**Answer:** The vape.(Inaudible 10:47-10:49). If you walk into a vape store, with the vape and you are just trying to buy juice for it, they would never card you yeah

You already have a vape yeah, they would never card you.

That's like your engine's ticking all.

(Inaudible 11:01-11:05) pretend like you are like you're old enough.

For oils, you can come by cheap like as cheap as twenty bucks, may be even ten or fifteen for just like very small bottle.

More cheaper now (inaudible 11: 14-16)

**Interviewer:** And so they are easy to get underaged too, does anybody?

**Answer:** Oils is off and on depending on where you are going and where you buying from.

**Interviewer:** Okay what's the best place to get oil?

**Answer:** Online vape store.

**Interviewer:** So online for both the vape and oil?

**Answer:** Yeah, (inaudible 11:38) pretty popular though but like around here. Okay. A lot of people go to they put a guard and they do card a lot too. If you make a purchase they call (inaudible 11:500) well I don't know about that but like (inaudible 11:56)

Actually I have a friend that work their so, he knew I under aged but he look me up like.

Yeah, but it depends on the store and (inaudible 12:08)

**Interviewer:** Okay. And has anybody else had a friend at a store that knew them that met them in under age because they had a connection?

**Answer:** Me and friend built up a relationship and this a little chaos in a particular mall that we go to and like (inaudible 12:25-32)

I have friend that work (inaudible 12:35:-40) besides than just chill.

that's a bad rare because being underage I think typically they won't hire and score like that and you have to be eighteen and twenty one.

**Interviewer:** Okay so at least you have to if you're under age you're probably like sixteen seventeen and you have a friend who's just a little older?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 12:58)

**Interviewer:** Okay. What about Target or Walmart like the big stores?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 13:05-15)

**Interviewer:** Okay, what about borrowing from someone. Can you borrow a vape?

**Answer:** Here you can borrow.

It depends, if (inaudible 13:24) they probably won't trust you. (Inaudible 13:26-33)

**Interviewer:** Okay. What about buying one second hand, is that?

**Answer:** Yeah. You can replace a mouthpiece on vape usually, so if you are buying it used, you can always just replaced the mouthpiece and use it.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and is that something if you're under age is that like something you would think of that there is a way around?

**Answer:** If I have to you know like apps today like that like go up and stuff like that to find used stuff more easily I probably would go that route.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so if you're looking to buy a vape and you're either vape or oil and you're under age how do you pick the retailer. I mean where do you if you're not going online, other than online. If you're going in person what do you look for?

**Answer:** Whoever would be willing to sell it to you.

**Interviewer:** What's the sign? What's the sign from the street?

**Answer:** Probably the cheapest prices, the friendliest kind of looking store. May be not friendliest but (inaudible 14:37) with my friends be like, "where do you go to get your stuff?"

Okay, so most (inaudible 14:43) does that mean like kind of small low key?

(Inaudible 14:47) many people have had success before, like let me say trial and error. So like you hear from one person at work here then you go try, it works and tell somebody else.

Like don't go somewhere where they have like ten thousand signs that say we card.

Yeah exactly (inaudible 15:06)

**Interviewer:** Who has these signs?

**Answer:** Everywhere. (Inaudible 15:10)

Some places have like a mountain if signs hanging around like yeah we card in your face while you're shopping, it's like are you old enough to be here?

For me, I pick the store by how it is basically, the more money they spend on like the current stuff and usually they going to have higher quality stuff, with vape accessories, the more money you pay the higher quality whatever you are buying is going to be.

**Interviewer:** Okay and so as an underage person if it's a higher quality and more expensive are they more likely to card you are less likely?

**Answer:** It depends on what you are looking for. If you are looking for long term use, you'd probably go with more expensive vape or more high quality juice. If it's a one time, you just trying it just you know to see, you'd probably go for cheap not knowing how it's going to be the difference between that and high quality.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and do you go to the same place over and over again or do you like to spread out your business again when you were under aged?

**Answer:** If you find a good place, you'd just go. Yeah, if you find a good place you can't just stick with the same old you, you know, if it doesn't work out yeah.

Go as much as you can without raising questions. Yeah. When you start going and you state to get the feeling like hmmm, I should start going differently, red flag. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And what are the red flags?

**Answer:** Just if they start trying to card you more and other people working there and more chances of you getting asked, you know where is your ID and then if you go enough times and get asked where is your ID, you keep saying, "oh I left them in my car." You know some places that's almost grounds for just banning you from the store. Yeah. Like I have been to one place, like frequently but then one time they are like our supervisors here are just going to show me something. I was like what? So. Once you become a regular in the store, its super easy and even if they are like new hires like all you have to do is, like (inaudible 17:09-17)

**Interviewer:** Okay, and the story you were just describing where your friend was working there and said whether he's a friend or not said You just got to show me something did they just want you to flash?

**Answer:** They just want me to hand them something to prove that like I was at least showing something because they said there supervisor was here so

**Interviewer:** So they just kind of wanted to make a show they weren't going to turn you away you could just show your ID That said you were under age but they just look at it and say okay you're good and then?

**Answer:** Cause I liked pick up like a business card.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how close to home was the place that you like to go did you have to travel?

**Answer:** Pretty close. If you didn't drive, you going to have to find the closest that you can.

Just walk or take a bus.

**Interviewer:** Okay so what about under sixteen for no driver's license no car?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 18:12)

**Interviewer:** Okay, so you get a friend. Is it any easier to get in the vape store when you are with someone?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay and are there any conditions like that someone do they have to be over eighteen or do they see what's how how does it work look older okay.

**Answer:** Probably someone you trust that you know isn't going to (inaudible 18:38) like make it look like you shouldn't be in there. Who knows like how to talk to somebody and what if you want something, then you like remember, not like stutter, not messed up.

Like go in there, they act like they buddies like you know, they are buddies for themselves. Yeah

**Interviewer:** Okay. So how important is that sort of confidence I mean I'm hearing that it's important to go and look like you know what you're doing is that?

**Answer:** If you look guilty, you are going to be guilty. Just act like you grown.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and XXX in the corner, have you ever been turned away from a place trying to buy a vape and told know?

**Answer:** No, I can't remember being turned down.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and what about you XXX, you have?

**Answer:** Oh no.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so what's the worst that would happen or do you think being? Okay.

**Answer:** Probably you wouldn't come back.

**Interviewer:** Yeah okay. So then if you got turned away from from somewhere would you go back and try again a week later or you just never go back to that place?

**Answer:** Have tried it at least one time after that but then if it happens again am just going to find a new place.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so is there anything about the clerk that makes it either easier or harder?

**Answer:** I think I mean most of them are usually like our age. Yeah. And we keep up the good conversation like no, you just sit there and (inaudible 20:18) was wrong and like this kind of just goes good for me, I mean that's from my experience.

Be nice, be friendly and act like you are their age.

Like just try to get somewhere on their social level, somewhere and near that and they'll just be like, yeah they'll chill. Am going to sell the (inaudible 20:37) it doesn't matter.

**Interviewer:** Okay, as a clerk at a store ever told you like lectured you or try to tell you this is not a good idea this is not good for?

**Answer:** No I would probably walked out by then. Yeah. You wouldn’t stay around for that.

Most people that worked there are quite passionate about vaping, so they'd tell you that its very good for you and that it's changed their lives and that it, so yeah.

I have heard horror stories about people going into vape shops and people getting, I mean the clerks being so overly protective that they actually called the cops on some under aged people trying to buy vape products. I mean that's never happen to me but a few times occurred stories like that. So and I was younger when I first heard about the situations, so it always cut me from trying on more than one occasion like to go on to get my own.

**Interviewer:** Okay and what do you think would happen if they called the cops?

**Answer:** I would run. You wouldn't stay long enough for them to arrive.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and what about the day of the week or the time of the day is there a better day of the week or a time of day?

**Answer:** Wednesdays

**Interviewer:** What about right after school? You know four o'clock in the afternoon in a week day, is that bad do they know that you just walked out of the high school and you're coming?

**Answer:** That's a little too soon. Usually at night. Yeah. A lot of convenient stores don't let big groups come in, they only let in one person. Just around that time you know so I can see that been a problem too

**Interviewer:** Okay, and what about alone, with a friend, part of a group. Is there a way that's best to approach?

**Answer:** I think with a group plus one. I think with a friend. At least one other person.

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay and I heard a couple of loans too.

**Answer:** Yeah, that's just for (inaudible 21:51)

**Interviewer:** Okay. It seems like it might be easier to strike up a relationship and chat with at least with just one of you?

**Answer:** Yeah. (Inaudible)

**Interviewer:** Okay, so holding your keys in your hand to make it look like he drove?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So what other, like what other places would you go to get either vape or a juice? Besides, so we've got like vape stores obviously, where else do you go, gas station?

**Answer:** It's really gas stations. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Is that pretty much it?

**Answer:** Yeah, like go online. Online is the best yeah. like you don't need a license to sell it (inaudible 23:45) falls under tobacco regulations.

I don't know, I assume you do.

Yeah.

I mean, if all others fails, I can always ask my friend, hey can I buy you a juice of you and I can just buy another one later.

I still have a couple of friends from high school that made their own juice from buying ingredients online. Yeah, thats pretty package. They have plenty of recipes.

**Interviewer:** Well that's popular really?

**Answer:** Yes. Because you buy high quality material and you make it yourself so you know its kind of clean, polluted or anything. (Inaudible 24:17-22)

**Interviewer:** Okay and so what flavors are most popular?

**Answer:** It depends on the price. Fruity, minty, preference.

**Interviewer:** Sorry?

**Answer:** It's the preference. Fruity, minty, soured anything that you can think of.

**Interviewer:** Okay and I heard a menthol. Hang on we have to do this one at a time. Cause it's really, if everybody's talking it's not going to work. So menthol, what about tobacco flavor?

**Answer:** No.

**Interviewer:** So tobacco is the most unpopular. What about the alcohol?

**Answer:** Pastries, dessert, fruits it's like it work for anything. Personally I am using (inaudible 25:13) right now, its just like one of like candy and like dessert kinds.

**Interviewer:** And for under age kids, high school. Is there a particular kind that you think is more popular or it just depends on the person?

**Answer:** It depends on what you like. (Inaudible 25:30-34)

**Interviewer:** Okay. So the next exercise is what we want to learn from this is what the slang words are that people used to refer to various Vape and (inaudible 25:48)) related things.

**Answer:** One thing you have to know is that, there really sign for this because one it's not like it's hard or it's not cool or anything and you kind of just go by. It's technology. Yeah

**Interviewer:** Hang on, you guys in the corner could you not do that. So thank you.

**Answer:** When you are buying from retailers, it's called a certain thing (inaudible 26:12) you have coils, you have the atomizer and all. There is no reason to give it, it's kind of hard. They got brands specifically, Juul, Vuse, whatever is it, so these are kind of all part of the same thing

**Interviewer:** Okay, you said it's not cool, is that?

**Answer:** It's like smoking is not cool, but you're probably young and you think it's cool so you do it anyway but I mean it is. From your high school, it looks like everyone certainly do it, yeah. Like by the time you graduated from high school it will blow up pretty hard. Because everyone is saying it's safe so everyone who didn't smoke cigarette, smoke vape. Yeah, and everybody who have smoked cigarette wouldn't mind like switched to this. It's like an alternative. Yeah. So like may be stay away from buying so many packs like whatever it is so.

Yeah also I found something in the odd, you got basically this is a tank and this is also a tank, there's no difference unless this was a disposable one, I guess there would be a different kind of name for that.

So these are exactly the same, this is an atomizer, it's also have a coil in it (inaudible 27:20) it's all type of coil really, it technology obviously.

This is the same as the first one, the blue (inaudible 27:28-32) its just with the tank you screw it off. So it's either you are going to put batteries in it or its going to have embodied batteries and plug it with a charger.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so where did you learn like the difference between an Addy and a Atomizer?

**Answer:** An atomizer, you are way ahead of us already.

**Interviewer:** So where did you learn? Okay YouTube?

Yeah, friends.

(Inaudible 28:05) and are like they'll tell you and the thing. Yeah when you are buying they'll tell you. When you smoke it you be like or yeah this is sounds from what I and then they.

And actually, if you buy like a whole pack of the vaporizer it usually come with may be a follow up juice and sometimes with the direction that they going to use the vape would be like this is the piece, called the mouthpiece and this is the oil cartridge and this is the battery.

Sometime told you I you buy like package.

**Interviewer:** Okay and so like let's say at the age of sixteen, how would you rate your own expertise in knowing what the different parts are and you know pieces?

Answer: Yeah, not too hard.

**Interviewer:** By seventeen?

Answer: She was really educated. It's like eighteen. When you are younger you are ready to spend too much money in it right, so you are going to do too much research. When am like putting on eighty dollars on an looking in what's the best, look at the reviews, look at what people is saying on YouTube and then I would go ahead with my decision.

**Interviewer:** Okay and then do you start out, do you start with (inaudible 29:19) and graduate to the vape mod or you know like how do you, what's the progression?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 29:30-34).

**Interviewer:** So you wouldn't want to buy one, right off?

**Answer:** Right, here. (Inaudible 29:40-44)

**Interviewer:** Okay and you do that with an (inaudible 29:46)

**Answer:** Yeah basically.

**Interviewer:** And so what is the most popular brands of juices?

**Answer:** You don't really go by brand you go by the flavor. Like the juice. The most popular brand in Maryland is Charlie Noble, because it's made in Maryland.

Never heard of it.

It's too early for the whole economy of vapes and the whole accessories that goes along with it. So you got a lot of brands they all don't have too many reviews now, no all I them are tried and trusted, so there's lots of them. I know of a couple. Everyday like they are coming with a new one, yeah.

We have the fix, its like a little. It's like a little thing, yeah. I have seen plenty of people.

That's the jule. Is it the jule? Yeah. It's like the off brand jule. Like lack of the amount of regulation around it, though there's a lot of people kind of jumping into the game right now.

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So when the Juul that (Inaudible 30:58)

**Answer:** The Juul kind of started all. It's like a little thing that comes up like refillable thing pod.

**Interviewer:** Okay and what do you like about it?

**Answer:** That's a disposable. It's like very discrete, its quick, you don't have to light anything, you don't smell. It's more for the nicotine. Yeah it's more for the nicotine definitely.

Yeah.

I found out that a lot of people who are not worried about spending too much money in (inaudible 31:21) it tend to be more expensive. For me I was like am going to do like a one time thing, buy a good price vape and (inaudible 31:30-36)

A vape is also like get zero nic yeah you have zero negativity. Its just like straight to the.

You have options

**Interviewer:** Okay, so what would you say your favorite vape or device is? Okay and what is it though about that you like? I assume you mean like a particular vapes? Are there I mean is there one. When you go to the vape store, you are looking at five of them, how do you decide which one you want?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 32:14-19)

Interviewer: Well, that's what am asking you about, what ate going to do with the one that you want?

**Answer:** I look for something like zero nicotine in there and something that's a little bigger and something that I can use. Something that can fit my lifestyle. I don't want something small, something that can just put out a little bit is smoke may be you want to like do a lot of tricks or even if sometimes you just want to rely on nicotine you having a bad time seen it’s like calm down, yeah. That can handle like different watts. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so you like the variability with the watts, for the watts to go up and down?

**Answer:** Not exactly what am saying but you just can't do that. Yeah. That's the different between certain different ones

It kind of depends on the ration of PG and PG that you get in your juice because one side of the mixture is meant to blow away, it gives you the cloud and the other I think the best at concern is to get the flavor. So that kind of dictates what you are going to do with your vape, (inaudible 33:20-24) more in doors, but if you want to use it out doors and get like nicotine sometimes and not like attract all the attention in the world, you are going to use small of the flavor and less cloud. So you can go about your day and you are not being and asshole.

**Interviewer:** Okay so there's indoor versus outdoor?

**Answer:** Kind of.

And tricks versus no tricks

It depends on how much is there. Yeah. It's all of the purpose. If you like trying to look cool you get the (inaudible 33:48) I you want that nicotine live, that’s what you do it for (inaudible 33:58) and more pure, yeah.

I think am one of those people that preferable likes things that looks more mobile, not too big but not too small either so like I don't really like things like that and I don't like the mud boxes but am perfectly vaporizer paint because I don't have to mess with the watt or anything I just fill up my cartridge and just smoke it and going back on what they said earlier, it really does depends on what you are using it for and how you like to smoke the certain devices and for me am one of those people that just like smoking something in general, I just like feeling the pull, feeling the drag of the smoke, so that's what I use it for, I don't really use it for the juice or anything. I just kind of, I just need to feel something been pulled.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Does anybody else has another preference that you look for?

**Answer:** Like the vape mods, it's always like, it depends like. I like mine to be like looking sleek (inaudible 35:05-09) like granade, for me that's how it looks.

(Inaudible 35:25) you can something that looks like this or something else that looks like the shape of a phone, they are like sticking out from it. Yeah. It looks like that or yeah that's with the mod box looks like.

It's my style. I actually have a friend that charges to pay paint Pokémon on mud boxes, so that was really cool. I just met him last year but his mud boxes and there is like a big ass gear dose on and I was like, "oh you paint Pokémon on your pips?" and he's like, "yeah (inaudible 35:51) something like that but it's really nice look very cute.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Where you still underage when you switched from (inaudible 36:00) to vape mod box?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And, how much did you like to customize it at that point?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 36:11-14)

**Interviewer:** Okay, did anybody here customize a vape at all while they were still underage?

**Answer:** I was on a website, they were dropping a new one but I wasn't able to get bit in time. It was actually a (inaudible 36:28) I didn't get the chance to get but (inaudible 36:34-44)

I don't people customize it that much, because nobody else cares about your vape and they not going to spend time looking at it (inaudible 36:58)

**Interviewer:** Okay. What about the tricks did you start vaping at all because you want to do the tricks?

**Answer:** Yeah you can do tricks not like other forms of smoking. You can do tricks.

Yeah but it's definitely a lot better.

**Interviewer:** And does anybody do tricks, do you all do tricks?

**Answer:** I do it sometimes (inaudible 37:21) not every time (inaudible 37:24-31) If I do, it would probably be a thing if there was enough tricks to do that all tricks.

**Interviewer:** But do you guys have something to say? Because it would be great if you would say it?

**Answer:** Yeah am sorry. There is a vape shop down in (inaudible 37:51) if you can blow up smoke a certain distance you won a prize from them. You going to get card like a free two liter. Yeah, there's conventions and competitions events and big competition.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so what did you want to accomplish by vaping, like what is?

**Answer:** For smoking cigarettes. Yeah. It doesn't work long term, (inaudible 38:18) a lot of my friends like after a while if satisfied, it's just not enough yeah, it's not enough. Cigarettes are like perfect you can get to look like a vape. Okay. You can get close, but you won't

It's not actual cigarette, it's not real smoke.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so tricks aren't that big anymore. Is there anything, what is big?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 38:56-58) and there is one, there is a rebuildable type of atomizer that has just a positive and a negative post and you can use a nicrone wire, campo wire, titanium wire and you wrap coil and on that coil is what you vape off and you can do things, I mean you can do crazy coils that have wires that's going inside and out of each other and braided and twisted and wire wrapped on the outside of other wires, you can use red on wire, so custom built is like the biggest thing right now. That's when you are like the extreme and you know that you going to be doing it. It comes out a lot cheaper because, usually after a while you have to replace the coil and replace the whole atomizer. It cost, they charging way too much for how much they pay for. You just get the coil, wrap it around something like, some and replace it band it works way better than you buy cotton to hold the juice and its way cheaper than replacing the coil every time.

Okay, so it's cheaper but you said it's way better to, but no it's the same.

I mean, it’s way better but you are going to be doing it a lot.

**Interviewer:** Okay and you think it's better?

**Answer:** You only customize your experience because you can take twenty six gage wire, which is a really thing wire and you can get a twenty six gage nichrome wire and wrap it little tiny and have the tinniest little micro coil. That's really going to be flavor full and a really small cloud but really bring out the juice versus you can use eighteen gage canpo, have a massive coil that's just going to be insane cloud and super-hot and no flavor.

Another big thing is they keep coming out with knew oils, new concentration, adding new stuff to make you get into it. Like another coming out with new oils. There's still a whole lot of nicotine oils out there, yeah. And just flavor full but you know no real like half of the products and the oils and there are some that don't come with nicotine or anything in it. Yeah, I think the direction is going is more towards what you are getting out of it now instead of like the best part of it. Are you smoking to get high or you smoking just because of the tobacco or social or do you just like the taste of the flavor you know, whatever you are looking for.

There this many (inaudible 41:35) well, you can just and squarely be taking like the apps off a bit which is like super convenient.

(Inaudible 41:51-53) they work like incense, like they fill up a whole room, in like five minutes your room is going to be smelling like cherry bomb.

Personally how I vape is that I would get juice without nicotine and if I want nicotine, I would trip it. Trip your nicotine into it. (Inaudible 41:15) however you want it.

**Interviewer:** Okay, are there kids in high school who are like experts that you can go to who know? Okay and who like are there science kids I mean it seems very technical are they?

**Answer:** If you're asking about the (inaudible 42:37) that does this, is definitely not kids that are out there trying to act hard and they smoke and they think it's too lame to buy vapes they'll probably get more kids that are into you know working on computers and they don't really go out as much as those people and those types. Who they want to trip on it. That's not the plan of everybody, so it's more people like kind of still their and do it just for themselves. The people I knew are like that were really into it that like do everything (inaudible 43:06)

Most of the customer area, whatever is mainly people that have smoked something before either cigarette or (inaudible 43:24) or something before that. I think they all (inaudible 43:28-32) no enjoy it. It's fun, that's what they would say.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so would you classify faith as part of more a part of tobacco and smoker culture or pot and Stoner culture?

**Answer:** It's clash of the two. It's like in between. I think it's its own culture.

**Interviewer:** It's its own culture? Okay

**Answer:** Yeah. It's not unusual, you are asking how big some things are, it's not big, I don't it's going to be big, its all personal.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so what's the upside, what's the best part about vaping? There's the smell you, mentioned the smell.

**Answer:** That it’s healthier. (Inaudible 44:22- 24) it's not offensive.

Yeah, but I think they are working on new technology, like researching out to get different kind of oil that people won't be allergic to.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so people have allergies?

**Answer:** To the oil. I actually developed one research (inaudible 44:45)

**Interviewer:** Oh really?

**Answer:** It's not like allergies were like (inaudible 44:50) it's like super bad for the sinuses.

Well you can get it without problem can you?

Yeah and you are going through a lot cotton and you going through really expensive juice and sticks. So that's probably (inaudible 45:07) try to get and work towards people who are allergic towards juice and get back demographics too you know get there money as well.

And we smoke nicotine oils and after a while I started noticing it. Whenever I take a drag in it, it would just kind of feel weird in the back of my throat and I don't what it was may be something I can read into it about that. Like when I vape in doors I do it more often than I used to but I do not like (inaudible 45:37) in my throat.

Yeah, it's like I just want to get out. I think I had that as well when I was like using really cheap juice, I noticed that it would affect me until I started using high quality juices and you know a lot more time and money goes into it. I think it didn't affect as badly.

It doesn't affect me at all, I use a juice that I trust and I've been using for a while and it's really nice. I don't know I don't have any problems with (inaudible 46:07) everybody else but I feel perfectly fine and I love that and keep vaping.

**Interviewer:** Okay. XXX, what do you think about like the health effects?

**Answer:** I think that there is no knowing what the health effects are because we haven't had a (inaudible 46:23) yeah. I think it's more likely that you are going to probably suffocate from vaping because it is a water vape, the water goes into your lungs. I had a lot of times where I vape and the water would come out of my nose. Oh wow, that's due.

I think it's going to be a lot different than what we see with cigarettes and all the tar the builds up, with cigarettes, it's not going to be a lot of, but it would be may be other things that like a defection and whatever else you know.

I was just going to say like with the vapes, you know I feel like something in the back of my throat. I can feel somethings you know almost you know borderline sticky. You know getting stuck in my throat and with cigarette you can't feel that tar going in, you just know it builds up over time but with vapes, you can actually feel something in there.

**Interviewer:** Okay and so what do you do when you feel it?

**Answer:** I cough. You cough until you just don't care about it.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Has anybody cut down or stop vaping for a while because you felt like it was…

**Answer:** I can’t vape at all.

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Answer:** Yeah. I mean, like I did it for like a month and I quit because it felt weird and I got another one because I lost the previous one and then I switched to few more months and then I lost it again. Found the right jule and I was like am going to go get a new juice and I did and I smoked for just a week and then I stopped.

**Interviewer:** Okay, has any of you felt any health effects from vaping?

**Answer:** No, I don't really felt anything and have not really heard of how my friends are doing but am sure down the road (inaudible 48:10-13)

**Interviewer:** Do you worry about it? Does anybody really think about health consequences or does it matter?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 48:25-27) respiratory infections in general just because of that extra moisture that's in your lungs, I don't know if it's necessary just water vape that but your lungs is just. If you are constantly vaping your lungs just kind of wide all the time, so it makes sense.

I guess so then pops the question, what do you stick with, cigarettes or you know vapes? Because personally, I would like stick with cigarettes. I don't really like vapes more than I do now. I do want you to quit though both. Oh yeah. But if I got to choose, I would probably stick with cigarette.

**Interviewer:** Okay so, does everybody here smoke cigarettes?

**Answer:** Yeah, no.

**Interviewer:** No, there is a couple of nos.

**Answer:** Just occasionally.

**Interviewer:** Just occasionally, okay. Where did you learn, all these about the health risk?

**Answer:** Back in school.

**Interviewer:** In school really?

**Answer:** (Inaudible 49:24-34) been coming for at least three and a half years and they've not been using as much as they are using it now.

Yeah I think when we were in high school, the more bigger problem was the cigarette, vapes was just now coming out, so they (inaudible 49:46)

**Interviewer:** Okay, so when you say you learn about it online now like where online?

**Answer:** Obviously get a lot of information on the chemical breakdown of what goes into it and what exactly you put in your body.

**Interviewer:** But I mean, are there sites that you trust that have accurate information, is it just like some guy posting you know what he says is?

**Answer:** Partially if I start reading something and it seems like it's just a here giving out a lot of opinion, not too much fact, I would check sources, I would read about the different things before I you know make decision.

Sometimes you can find links to like more about this product through trusted shopping sites so, like just for me I went to, there was two different sites, there was "Admost" and there another one called (inaudible 50:45) USA and I don't remember which, but I think one of them had like links to you know like learn more about vapes then from there it would take me different things, like learn more about health risk and everything else. So you just kind of find leaflets everywhere, find your to trusted sites, to trusted information.

If want to go with a friend that's been up for a long time on making juice and so obviously though, he's been in the game longer and if I had to go with the good reviews and people like (inaudible 51:20) as oppose to whose new and with less trust. Typically you would want to go with a higher quality brand, paying a little extra money would definitely go a longer way.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so does everybody here plan to continue vaping?

**Answer:** No, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Anybody else?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Does anybody plan to quit or want to quit?

**Answer:** Eventually. Until we find out the big health effects.

Yeah, I think over time we would find out more about it and we'd probably decide.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And yeah in the experiment on yourself, do you find that, because we talked about the different kinds of vapes like the (inaudible 52:16) versus the mods, does one impact you more than the other? Okay so the negative?

**Answer:** Like percentages of nicotine.

It all depends on the kind of juice you buy. Juice you buy and how much you use in them. That's like main source of what you are doing so, it all just depends in whatever product you are using (inaudible 52:43) less products, you probably going to get something going on. It's just depends. Cause you never know what kind of chemicals they are putting in there, so you have to like (inaudible 52:50) whose trusting and whose like most successful and all that.

If you buy a gas station you obviously going to feel like shit.

**Interviewer:** Really so gas station? Okay.

**Answer:** And don't go too cheap, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay, well great, thank you so much. That's all the questions that I have for you, so thanks so much for coming. You've been so helpful and we'll go round. You need to initial the signage sheet and we'll give you your gift card, seventy five dollar gift card.

## Gaithersburg

**Interviewer:** So if we could go around, introduce your first name and where you were when you first used a vape. And so, can we start with you?

**Answer:** My name is XXX and I first used a vape when I was in high school.

My name is XXX and I used a vape when I was in high school.

My name’s XXX and I also used a vape in high school.

My name is XXX and I used it in high school.

My name is XXX and I vaped in high school.

My name is XXX and I also used a vape in high school.

My name is XXX and I vaped at work.

My name is XXX and I used a vape in high school.

My name is XXX and I vaped in high school.

My name is XXX and I used my vape at home.

My name is XXX and I used it in high school.

My name is XXX and I used my vape in high school.

My name is XXX and I vaped in high school.

**Interviewer:** So the first thing we are going to do is to look at some cards that are in front of you. The ones with the words on them. And so if you would sort the cards into three piles. So the first pile is things that you would do in high school as an underage person, things you would have done if the situation arose but things you didn’t necessarily do, and then things you would never do.

[participants sorting cards] [chatter]

The first one I'm looking at is "bought it myself at a gas station."

Has anybody bought a vape, especially when you were underage and in high school?

Have you ever bought a vape or an e-cig at a gas station?

**Answer:** Yeah, I did.

Not at a gas station. At the beach.

**Interviewer:** At the beach, like from a vendor, like...

**Answer:** From like the boardwalks.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** So I [inaudible]

But the middle of... You know that little electronic... Vape. Not... Pens. Yeah, that's what I meant.

**Interviewer:** OK. Like a vape pen?

**Answer:** Yeah, they count, right?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, sure.

And what about you? You were saying yes.

**Answer:** Yeah I've bought it before. But like, I would go and the guy would just never ask for ID so he would check me out with it every time.

**Interviewer:** OK. Did anybody else...

**Answer:** [inaudible] . . . high school . . . that's how I got introduced . . . buy it for people.

**Interviewer:** OK. So that's how you kind of got introduced to smoking, because you looked older and people would get you to buy it for them?

**Answer:** [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK. And if it seems like I'm repeating what you're saying, it's because I'm just trying to make it louder, so I can make sure.

What about at a convenience store? Has anybody bought e-cigs, vapes, or pens at a convenience store?

Not so much?

At a vape store, OK, while you were underage in high school?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK. Is it hard to do? Is it easy to do?

**Answer:** No, back then it was easy. Now it's harder. Now they always card you.

And if you have a connection, like somebody that works there.

But when vapes first came out, they didn't have nicotine or anything extra added to them, and now they've become more common, like more and more people are starting to use them to stop smoking, and to get the less nicotine possible.

I think they have different levels, right?

Yeah. Now they have more harder levels and stuff.

But there's some that have no nicotine as well. Like no nicotine at all. So people use that as well.

But some have nicotine. Like, for people who used to have really bad cigarette habits and stuff like that. They have a lot of nicotine in them, and when they go to the vape store, they can tell them -- hey, I'm struggling with this, and they'll give them . . . to calm them down. To slowly ease them off of it.

**Interviewer:** OK. So if you're under 18, you can go in a vape store and get advice? And talk to them and find what you want to buy?

**Answer:** Yeah.

They're pretty open.

They don't card you.

It doesn't hurt to ask.

But now, in vape stores, they're starting to check IDs. They've become really strict about it.

[inaudible]

They sometimes have people standing at the door. Just when people walk in.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK.

Has anybody had trouble at a vape store? Like, anybody ask about how old you are, or get thrown out or...

**Answer:** That happened to me once. I was with a few friends. It was the one in Rockfield. We went there and they all had their IDs and not me, so he checked everyone's. They looked young, so he had to check everyone's. And because of that he checked mine, and then I ended up getting kicked out. I didn't show him mine. I was like -- I don't have it. So I just left.

[inaudible] . . . when I was 16. I didn't get kicked out though, because my cousin . . . [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** So what did happen?

**Answer:** Nothing. I learned about vapes. I was like -- what's this? When we first learned about vapes. [inaudible] . . . with somebody who knows what they're doing.

**Interviewer:** OK. So what about Target or Walmart? Is that a good place? Or...

**Answer:** No, you wouldn't [inaudible]

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** They don't sell e-cigs or anything?

**Answer:** No.

I mean . . . [inaudible]

They do the pens. That's it.

Like the little Blu pens. Or...

They don't . . . [inaudible]

[inaudible] . . . actual cigarettes, but it's not like real like modern or anything fancy.

It's not like this, on the picture.

Yeah.

[crosstalk]

And it's cheap. It's like $20. And it breaks after a week.

It breaks after a day. [laughs]

You have to be really gentle when you're trying to put it on a charger and stuff, like when you're trying to screw it on. So... I don't know. Mine lasted for a week. And then it stopped working.

**Interviewer:** OK. And being under age when you were underage was that hard at all to go to Walmart? Is that...

**Answer:** I didn't buy it myself. I went with my boyfriend, and I slipped it in there, and I walked away. So... [laughs]

**Interviewer:** Just like, in your cart or something, with a bunch of other stuff.

**Answer:** Yeah. Like when they carded him, I was walking around and looking at stuff so they wouldn't try to card me with him.

**Interviewer:** OK.

What about borrowing from a sibling?

**Answer:** Yeah. I have.

**Interviewer:** does anybody, first of all, have a sibling who's...

OK.

All of them. Meaning all of your sibling’s vape?

**Answer:** No. I meant the majority of them do, because they're always trying to quit cigarettes. So at the time when it was popular and everyone's getting into it, yes. I would just ask them. Can I try it? They would always brag about it. [inaudible] . . . try this, try that.

**Interviewer:** OK.

What about borrowing from a friend.

**Answer:** Yeah.

Yep.

Multiple times.

[inaudible]

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK. Because they're pretty expensive, aren't they?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So, are friends... I mean, is it something you pass around between friends? Or is it more, because it's so expensive, is it like -- no this is mine.

How does that work?

**Answer:** It all depends who you're with. Like you know your friends who are clumsy, you . . . [inaudible] Like I've had friends break... Exactly like my mod is like over 200 bucks. So after he's dropping it once... So yeah. [inaudible]

I think vape is more of a personal thing. Like...

[inaudible]

Yeah. Personal. It's not like a cigarette where you're just hand out.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. OK, and why is... What's the difference? Why is it more personal?

**Answer:** Because first, I wouldn't want somebody else to smoke out of my vape. So...

Are you talking about the tips?

Yeah. The tips.

Yeah, because that's disgusting. Some people are like...

They slobber.

Yeah. That's disgusting. And you don't know. Honestly, you don't know who brushes their teeth and who doesn't brush their teeth.

**Interviewer:** Until they use your vape. [laughs]

**Answer:** And even then, you probably wouldn't... Humans can't see germs. Well, obviously, some people, if they have stuff around their mouth, or you see it on there, you're like -- ew. But most germs you can't really detect them and you can't really tell, and there's a lot of things going around. If you pick up somebody else's saliva and they got something then you're fucked. So, I'd be careful. I don't share nothing with nobody.

You thought about it, like . . . [inaudible]

[crosstalk]

I've never thought about it like that.

I was like -- yeah, hand that to me, I don't care. Well I care now, but back then I was like -- OK, it's whatever. And honestly, I'm not just sharing with random strangers. It's like my friends. My friends that I drink off of. It's not that crazy to me.

Still I think it's better to just keep it to yourself.

You don't have to pass around your mouthpiece, you could just... Actual mod...

I think they have pieces, right? That...

Yeah, they have detachable tips.

Yeah.

-- where you can... I used to carry two tips. Like one for other people and one for me. I had red one, and the black one is for everybody else. So...

I don't think a lot of people think about that though.

I do.

I do.

I've seen people... I went to Harrisburg High School, and there used to be a group of people who would hang around Oro Park, and they would just share everything. Like, vapes, cigarettes, like whatever was out there would just be passed around this little circle, and no one really thinks about it. I think everyone's just like -- well, we're young and this is making us look cool. See, I don't think it made me look cool. Like, I was in that group, like we were passing it around or whatever. I didn't think it made me look cool. I like doing it. It was fun --

Yeah, I like seeing the smoke. I wouldn't know, but like...

-- I like to blow it out, and I like to do tricks with it and stuff.

You guys gone to a concert, you've seen a smoke machine, you know. That looks...

That's dope.

Yeah. [laughs]

-- I wasn't trying to be cool with it. I mean, people thought I was cool, because I had it, but I didn't care.

Yeah. I think it as like, vape, kind of sells itself. Because like when you're smoking it, it just looks cool. Like, it has a lot of effect. It's like hookah times two. Right?

Yeah.

So it's like it's better, and you kind of know. You kind of have to know how to inhale it. It's not . . . [inaudible] It's not the same. It's just like, if a regular person that just... If you're trying it for the first time, you're probably...

Like you're inhaling it. You're probably going to [inaudible]

-- You're going to choke or cough or something, because it's like there's a way of inhaling it, and so I think... Because I know that because I worked... I mentioned earlier, I worked at a beach. At a vape store. A lot of people come in there and they always choke on the first try. And they're younger kids too, and they just let them buy it like that.

**Interviewer:** That's what I was going to ask next. If they had any kind of policy about kids.

**Answer:** No not at all. It was on the boardwalk on the beach. It was . . . whatever. Just comes in, they just check if nobody's around.

That varies, too, though, because there are other places around the world, like El Salvador, or like places like outside of the United States, where when you're 18 you're allowed to go clubbing, you're allowed to drink, you're allowed to do certain things. And even little kids, there are some little kids... There's some bad parts of town, some good parts of town. So then, the bad parts, there are 9 year old kids smoking cigarettes and stuff like that, and I don't agree with that, but it's just how the world created it I guess. I don't know... Like some people it's like the way they grow up, if they see it, like monkey see monkey do. So if you're a little kid and you're seeing all of your family members, your parents, or somebody doing some, it's going to cause you to want to do that too. But at the vape store that my cousin worked at, they used to tell me all the time about how little kids would go in there; they would try to like, get some stuff. [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK. What about approaching a stranger and asking them to buy you either e-cigs... Giving them the money, but having them go into the store, since you're underage. Did anybody... Or was it such a... So much not a problem that you didn't even have to. Because it sounds like it was easy to just buy them yourself anyway.

**Answer:** Yeah. I think I wouldn't... At that time, I wouldn't trust anybody to... I wouldn't give them that much money to buy; they might just walk off with it.

[inaudible]

Actually done that, but I wasn't under age. I left my ID at home, and I went to the regular gas station that I normally go to, so I was like -- OK, maybe this person working there is going to recognize me and I'll just be like, yeah, whatever. But I went in and there was a new person working there and they were like -- oh, well I don't know how old you are and I can't tell. So I went outside and I asked somebody, they went in, they bought the cigarettes for me, came back out, gave it to me, that's it.

**Interviewer:** OK.

What about taking them from a parent or another adult? Did anybody's parents have e-cigs? Someone mentioned... Kind of back in the corner -- yeah.

**Answer:** My cousins. The majority of my cousins and... [inaudible] . . . because they were trying to quit smoking cigarettes, so they're using vapes, and I would just try theirs. Smoke theirs.

[inaudible] . . . I mean, he's an adult. He's the one who started selling these vapes and stuff. So I don't know if that counts.

**Interviewer:** OK. Sure it does. Your boss did you say?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** He sells vapes. So yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK. So how many of you worked in a vape store?

**Answer:** Oh, it wasn't a vape store that I worked in. He just sold them on the side.

**Interviewer:** Oh, OK.

**Answer:** It was... Yeah, there's different types of vapes. He sold THC cartridges. So... Yeah.

**Interviewer:** OK.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** So what about a fake ID? Would you need a fake ID to buy a vape if you were underage?

**Answer:** I don't think so.

[crosstalk]

[inaudible] . . . I bought them online.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. Oh that's a great... So has anybody else bought them online when you were underage?

**Answer:** My friend did. But I was there when he did it. But I didn't [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK. So it sounds like there's no point to even... You don't even have to go online; it's just so easy to do directly at the store that...

**Answer:** Online is cheaper though.

Yeah.

You go online . . . [inaudible]

You get more variety, and also it's cheaper and...

And sometimes there's free shipping.

Yep.

But . . . second hand...

That's true.

And also, the websites now, they want two things of your ID, and that's a lot. So...

Because they have the fake ones from China, and...

[inaudible]

Yeah...

You have to take a picture of your ID.

And it's tobacco.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** So how do you pick a retailer? Like, when you're deciding. It's underage, again, because what we're really interested in, in this group, and I think I was so distracted by the technology problems I kind of skipped over it in the beginning, but what we're really interested in is looking back at when you were in high school and underage and using vapes then. So back then, would it be... How would you pick where you were going to go to buy a vape?

**Answer:** Gas station.

**Interviewer:** OK. Just like the closest one... It doesn't...

**Answer:** Usually, when you're in high school, how you get hits of things is like when you're around friends and they have something, and they're like -- oh, I got this from this place and it was a good deal and it was at this price and it's affordable, and it's good. Then you're going to be like -- oh yeah. I'm going to go to this place and check it out. And get this and this. And sometimes they have more better things that suit you. So that's how things go around. That's how people get knowledge of good deals and stuff like that. So...

True.

And I try to go to the ones that my parents don't go to.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** My mom is like the FBI.

I go to the ones that my parents... Well I went to the ones that my parents go to, because usually that's the one where the people know me, so they're not going to ask me a lot of questions. I'm like -- oh, hey, what's that, what's this? Whatever, and I just slide it in. I don't know. I just did sneaky things in front of people's faces. And I never got called on it.

Majority of my friends were older. I started it when I was in high school after work, but like . . . were older, like when they all graduated . . . over 18 to purchase, I . . . money . . . [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK.

So were there any kinds of stores that were better than others?

**Answer:** You would typically buy them at vape stores, because ones at gas stations were really... Like, the juice would be nasty, and the mods would be crap.

**Interviewer:** OK. And does everybody kind of think that? That it's better at the vape store?

**Answer:** Yes.

Overpriced.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK.

A lot of you smoke cigarettes too, right? In addition? So how does that work? Like when you were underage getting cigarettes, would you also get an e-cig at the same time? How did you kind of balance the two?

**Answer:** I would smoke the e-cig so it wouldn't smell as bad going home. My mom would be like -- oh wow, you smell like fruity or something. [inaudible] . . . something at school because you smell something like pastry. It was trying to mask the other.

They have different flavors too. Like, if you... I don't know if you guys tried the Froot Loop flavor.

Oh yeah.

Yeah.

-- It's like, fruity, but...

But when you have foreign parents, they know the smell. They wouldn't be like -- it's fruity or anything. It'd be like -- yeah.

But sometimes it'd smell like -- the jolly rancher one -- that one just smells really good, so sometimes when people go inside your room or something, and they smell that, they're like -- oh, well that smells good; what's that smell?

I didn't find it very difficult to have to hide it from my parents. Well, at least not my mom. I was just -- it's just scented oil. And she... I even was like -- you want to try? She's like -- no, I don't do that. And I was just -- it's fine; it's just oil. And she believed it, so it wasn't a big deal of having to hide it or anything.

**Interviewer:** OK. So is anybody else... Were your parents more accepting of vapes than cigs?

**Answer:** No.

No.

For me, definitely.

They were like, it's not going to kill you, or whatever, it's not... I don't know. They were -- it's not going to kill you -- and I explained it to them, like really simply, like I didn't try to go into the different . . . and stuff, I was like -- it's not actual cigarettes. It's not going to do anything. It's mostly just water vapor. So I'm chilling. And they were like -- OK; don't do it in your house; don't do it in our face. And I was like -- OK.

I think for them, seeing a cigarette was so offensive. Like, what are you doing? Versus the vape, they'd just be like -- oh, OK. I guess that's fine.

[inaudible] More like . . .

**Interviewer:** How close... Did you live close to the places that you would go to buy vapes when you were under 18? Was it close to your house?

**Answer:** Yes.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** By your school. OK.

**Answer:** There was a tobacco shop. There was . . . [inaudible]

We would actually drive long distance to get that. We do it like once a month or two weeks. So if we need to refill the vapes, so we plan it and we go there. We make a trip there and come back.

**Interviewer:** OK. And did you purposely go far away?

**Answer:** So we buy a lot . . . so we buy a lot so we don't have to go back and forth.

**Interviewer:** Oh really. OK. Did anybody else stock up?

**Answer:** [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** What about the clerk, when you're buying vapes or e-cigs? Does the clerk make a difference? If they're young or old... Or... OK. So what do you look for in a clerk?

**Answer:** If they're younger . . . [inaudible] never ask you. If they're older they're going to ask you all the time. Older ones take their job more seriously I think.

I try to go to the ones who look the most stressed. Like if it's really busy in the store, whatever, they're not going to stop and ask you for your ID. They're trying to get people out of here or whatever. So I go look like that.

**Interviewer:** Have you ever been discouraged by a clerk when you try to buy e-cigs? Did they ever tell you "no, you're too young..."? I'm hearing mostly nos, I only heard one yes. Is there...

**Answer:** I hate when you go to buy cigarettes, or go to buy I don't know... cigarettes or tobacco related things. If they see that you're too young, they'll be like -- oh, you shouldn't do this. This is bad for you, or something like that. And I'm just like -- when you were younger, what did you do? Because everybody tries it. Everybody... I think anyways.

Yeah. If . . . because you're like -- I'm just trying . . . not a big deal, you don't have to give me . . . [inaudible]

And aren't stores and companies trying to make a profit?

Right.

Yeah.

Also, mind your own business.

[chatter]

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** So only a couple of people have been discouraged from buying the e-cigs when you were under age? Is that right? Did I get that right? I just want to make sure.

**Answer:** I never felt that way.

I got a pep talk.

**Interviewer:** OK. So a pep talk. So that was my other question. If... Does anybody else... Do you get a lecture? Or do they just say "you're underage you can't buy it."

**Answer:** I have an attitude with my face. So sometimes... I have... I don't know. I have . . . yeah.

[laughter]

-- so they won't really say anything to me, because I will flip out in a hot minute.

I'd be like [inaudible] females.

Like, yeah.

I know.

I haven't personally experienced that, but I've gone to a vape store with my friend while I was underage, and they tried to discourage her using me. They were kind of like -- look at your friend; she's not interested in buying any. I was kind of -- well, I already have one. So then they continued to lecture about how we're too young, but it didn't stop them from actually selling the product.

**Interviewer:** Oh, wow, so they lectured you, but they still sold it to you.

**Answer:** Yeah, it was kind of like -- you really shouldn't be doing that, but it's none of my business I guess.

[inaudible]

-- for my friend, without ID. And then...

Oh, what the fuck.

Where did that come from?

[laughter]

It's a black cat.

**Interviewer:** Did anybody bring a kitten?

**Answer:** We did. He was in our purse.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** While she looks for the cat, let's come back to the question.

So when you were buying e-cigs, and underage, what would have discouraged you if anything? What would the clerk have said? What kinds of things would have stopped you? If anything.

**Answer:** Price.

**Interviewer:** The price. OK. If it was more expensive. Because aren't e-cigs a lot more expensive than cigs?

**Answer:** Yeah. Sometimes they would try to give you a higher price before they sell it to you for the original price.

**Interviewer:** They try to give you a higher price because they know you're under age?

**Answer:** No. They just try to get the most money they can out of it but they don't really care who they sell it to. No.

**Interviewer:** They're just bargaining...

**Answer:** I did that. I was at Ocean City, so I did that. As much as you can, you got to profit. As much as you can you have to profit. So that's what the manager told us. We don't actually sell the exact price. Sell it more. Because they really want it. They don't have IDs so they really want it. So they're willing to spend more than it actually is. And then we just sell it to them, we're like -- this is cool, this, that, this, that -- and then they just buy it.

A lot of times I was like, skipping to go buy some. So if my teacher or like if an administrator had walked in, I would have left out. Like I wouldn't have bought anything. So that's the only thing that I think that could have discouraged me. Anything else, I could explain it away.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK. So... What else would have discouraged you? We've got the price; but what other things?

**Answer:** Relatives, if they saw me doing it.

**Interviewer:** Your relatives. So if your mother or somebody.

**Answer:** -- see doing that then that might discourage me.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** What if you knew that it was a crime? Like you could get arrested for buying a vape underage, as an underage person? Would that have stopped you? Or would that be just like a little riskier?

**Answer:** [crosstalk]

That's a red zone. Yeah.

To me personally, I didn't really care. Almost like -- well I'm under 18, and unless they're going to like, kill me, it's not going to really affect me extremely, especially with the job I was trying to go for, and . . . career . . . my future . . . if I wasn't [inaudible] What do you want me to do? I would have of course, shed the tears, and try and make it look like I was sorry about it, but [inaudible]

[laughter]

Also, I know my rights. I'm not... I don't have to present my ID, unless... I mean, if they card me, then OK I walk out the store. But I'm not going to get bagged. Like... There's things that could really prevent from...

What if it's the rule that says if you try, you will get arrested. They make it clear.

-- but what are they going to do? I would be like -- I forgot my ID. Are they going to follow me home? Are they going to stop me?

They're not going to sell it to you.

There's still ways around it though.

Yeah, that's what I'm saying.

I mean there's a lot of things that are illegal, but let's be honest, everyone gets their hands on them. So I don't think that... Also, with vapes, it be easy, because... With a cigarette, if that were the case, you'd have to put the cigarette out. And you probably smell like cigarette and... But with a vape, if you see a cop or something, you could literally just stop pressing the button and put it in your pocket. So it's a lot easier to just hide if you really needed to.

I would have vaped in front of a cop. I would have blown it into their face. I didn't care.

There's really no reason for them to be illegal. Like, or underage, like there's no reason why they would be... Because it's vape. It's some... Like the ones that don't have nicotine, then that should be fine.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** So were there days of the week that were better to buy when you were considering? Or is it just so easy that it doesn't matter? You go to the vape store; it doesn't matter if it's Tuesday or Friday night or Wednesday morning; it's just...

**Answer:** I don't think it matters.

[inaudible] me there's days. Because when I was under age . . . ask my friends though that acted like . . . asked them ahead of time, scheduled a day, and everything, a little bit more difficult.

**Interviewer:** OK. So you also have in front of you, another little stack of cards with pictures on them, and what we're really looking for is what... Like the slang words are that kids use to talk about the things that are in the pictures. And if you have any questions about what the picture actually is, sometimes it can be a little hard.

[shuffling and chatter][32:47-35:09]

**Interviewer:** So is everybody ready to go through the ones?

So what do you call this? This purple thing?

**Answer:** Vape. Mod.

Or just mod.

**Interviewer:** Vape. Mod... Or just mod. OK.

What about this?

**Answer:** Hookah pen.

**Interviewer:** A hookah pen. OK. And e-cig.

**Answer:** Some people just say pens.

Just pen.

**Interviewer:** Pens. OK. Anything else?

**Answer:** That's about it.

**Interviewer:** What about this?

**Answer:** A one hitter.

**Interviewer:** A one hitter?

**Answer:** Yeah, that's a one hitter.

**Interviewer:** OK. Is that [inaudible]

**Answer:** Is that the one hitter or the electronic cigarette.

**Interviewer:** That's an e-cig.

That's what I was thinking.

No but if you look at the end, the end is round. A one hitter goes in.

**Interviewer:** So a one hitter is like a pipe, right?

**Answer:** But it looks just like that. Like it literally [inaudible] It just has an opening . . . and it has a tiny little hole.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** So what about these things.

**Answer:** Oils. Juice.

E-juice.

**Interviewer:** Oil... E-juice.

**Answer:** I've heard someone call them "essentials" before.

Essentials?

Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Essentials?

**Answer:** [chatter]

Just juice.

**Interviewer:** OK. And this part? Battery. OK.

**Answer:** That's easy.

**Interviewer:** And that's it. Just battery.

What about this.

**Answer:** Atomizer.

Tank.

The tank. Atty.

**Interviewer:** Atty. Tank. Atomizer. Is that it?

**Answer:** [inaudible]

Atty. Tank . . .

**Interviewer:** Atty and tank are the same thing.

**Answer:** [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** Then what about this?

**Answer:** Coil.

C-cell.

**Interviewer:** Oh it's a coil.

**Answer:** Or c-cell I think.

No that's the coil. You change those.

Yeah, that's the atomizer inside that's like the c-cells.

OK.

**Interviewer:** C-cells? OK.

**Answer:** They're different compared to the . . . because that's a really long one. It fits a different type of atomizers, like they have smaller ones that fit the different tanks.

Those are typically in the smaller tanks.

**Interviewer:** And what about this one. Cartridge? OK. I heard tank again. Is that...

**Answer:** It's kind of like the same thing, but you have two different styles. So it'd be like a pen, you'd say a pen tank.

**Interviewer:** OK. Then what about brands? Are there certain brands that people like or don't like when it comes to e-cigs?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** What are the best brands?

**Answer:** Cigelli.

Like there's some mods that... [inaudible] and it all depends on tanks. Because you know, you have tanks and drippers, and batteries. It all depends on what you get personally. Like what your setup is. It's kind of like the same thing with cars, how everyone has different car has a different passion for stuff. It's like that. Like me personally, I would go with a small, like tank and then juice, I would go anywhere. I would have to try it first, if there's someplace that let you test it first.

**Interviewer:** OK. And was "smog" what you said too?

**Answer:** No, I said Cigelli.

**Interviewer:** Cigelli. OK. And why do you like Cigelli more than...

**Answer:** Because it's more popular brand. Their quality is pretty good.

**Interviewer:** OK. Are there any other brands?

**Answer:** Smok and Cigelli are the popular ones.

**Interviewer:** OK. And how important is it to the rest of you to get the brand that you like?

**Answer:** I didn't really care.

Yeah.

I just wanted the one that made the most smoke. I don't really focus on the brand. But I would ask my friends. They have different ones so I compare which ones. I try them myself, and just compare. Then I pick the one that's better.

**Interviewer:** So does anybody do tricks?

**Answer:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Do you like, follow people on Facebook or Instagram who do trick and stuff?

**Answer:** I've seen videos, but not, I don't follow them or...

Jellyfish. [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** And was that the name of a couple people who do...

**Answer:** No, the jellyfish is like a design they do with the smoke. Like some people are really good at vaping, that they can make cool things.

Yeah, the tornado. You seen the tornado?

Yeah the tornado's pretty cool. They blow the smoke on the table. They do [inaudible]

Because they spin it and stuff. So they spin it and just... It's kind of like a tornado.

**Interviewer:** What is it about the devices that you like? What features do you look for? What do you like about...

**Answer:** Design. Style. Size too. I guess ladies would like a smaller size I'd assume.

[chatter]

[inaudible] but you're kind of right though. Because... I lost my boy mod on the train. And I wasn't really tripping about that because I didn't even use it like that. I usually use my pen because it's easier to go on the go. Like you just slip it into your little pocket. Pull it out real quick. And then...

I like the box. The little box.

**Interviewer:** What do you like about the box?

**Answer:** There's ones -- I don't know the name or the brand name or whatever, it's like a box. So you just take the tank out, so it just looks like a box. So you can put it in your pocket or... That's just cool to me.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** OK. And how important is it to be able to hide it? To be able to look like something else or fit in your pocket? Or...

**Answer:** I don't think you really need to hide them. Honestly. They come and go. You use it when you feel like it, and then you put it away. Then you take it back out when you feel like doing it again.

It was really important for me to hid it. Especially when I got my second job. It was this real fancy building that I was working at. And vaping was really frowned upon. Of course it is, it's work. But I would go in the bathroom and I would vape, and it was cool because I didn't have to take a bag with me to the bathroom. I just slipped it up my sleeve or put it in my little pocket, and I just... So size... I like the tinier the better. But then I needed a hit as well.

**Interviewer:** OK. And then somebody mentioned design, too as a feature they like. What do you look for in design.

**Answer:** Aliens.

Aliens?

Like the little weird green dude? I have pictures all over the place.

**Interviewer:** OK. So they come with different pictures on them?

**Answer:** You have to buy the sticker to go on.

They come like, the Christmas or the color, like you might have a black mod and might get line of red that runs down at a certain angle. Or some that have printed, like stickers on them with different designs.

I didn't really have to worry about hiding it. Because my mom, she saw it before. Saw it in my car when she got in, it was right there. So I just... I kind of panicked, so I was like -- oh this is an old MP3 player. She believed me.

[laughter]

I was like, I'm fixing it for my friend. She was like, OK. Shut up and drive.

**Interviewer:** So it sounds like she knew; she just didn't want to talk about it.

**Answer:** Yeah. Maybe that. Or just who knows; I'll just take it.

I have this really cool pen that doubles as a -- the little things that you use for your phone -- the stylus. So like at the bottom of it was a stylus too. So I could use it to vape and to do that as well. My dad caught it one time charging, and he was like -- what is this? And I was like oh, it's just a stylus. And he was like -- prove it. I was like -- OK. Yeah. So that was... I like that one, and then I lost that one too. I'm always losing them.

My mom found mine, and she showed it to me and she tossed it away afterwards.

**Interviewer:** OK. And it's probably pretty expensive too.

**Answer:** Well it was like 75 bucks, so it wasn't that bad. But still.

That bad.

It was with a few flavors, and a pack of cigarettes too.

For 75 dollars, that's like...

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** We have to talk one at a time, because otherwise we won't be able to take notes, knowing who is saying what.

What else. When it comes to style. Are there particular people that you like who have vapes that look good to you? How do you know what style you want or like?

**Answer:** They have them in different colors. So like, your favorite color. That helps.

Some of them be [inaudible]

My best friend has one that you can pick different colors on it, so when she's inhaling, it changes colors.

Where?

The lights...

Yeah the lighting. It lights up as you're vaping. And you can change. It could be like purple, green, blue, red. So it's pretty cool.

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** And what about size? Is it true that girls tend to like the smaller ones? Is there any truth in that?

I know, but I'm just asking. He said something about with the size. That girls like smaller ones. Are there...

**Answer:** Balls. Um...

[laughter]

We like to have a variety I guess. I would put that in that term. So some females do have the smaller ones. But they also may have the bigger ones.

You have the big one.

But see having and wanting are two different things. I mean, I would have them all if I could. I'm just really bad at keeping up with mine. Like, not losing it. So right now, I've downsized, so I can keep that. Keep it safe and not lose it or whatever. It's easier for me to lose bigger things than smaller things, because they don't always fit in my pocket right.

**Interviewer:** What about flavors. Are there particular flavors that are more popular?

**Answer:** They have a large variety of flavors.

**Interviewer:** What are the most popular ones?

**Answer:** It depends on the person. If they like more dessert flavor or...

Everyone has their...

I like the fruity loop.

**Interviewer:** OK. Hang on a second. You like the...

**Answer:** Fruity loop.

[inaudible]

Yes. That's one's good too.

I guess it would all depend on like, the season. So if it was cold I'd more pastry like juice. And like summer more probably like fruity. Refreshing.

I like gingerbread.

There's one called milk and cookies that's really good.

Yeah, I've had that.

**Interviewer:** Do you see advertising for different flavors?

**Answer:** [inaudible] . . . TV or newspapers, but you go on social media. They'll always post this [inaudible] and stuff, so they try to track...

**Interviewer:** What do you think is popular about different flavors? Other than seasonal appropriateness.

**Answer:** The names. They catch your eye. And you're like -- oh, what's that?

**Interviewer:** I notice some of the names that she mentioned were alcoholic drinks. Like "sex on the beach" is a drink. Or a lot of them kind of lean to alcohol.

**Answer:** It's a hookah flavor too.

It's a hookah flavor as well.

**Interviewer:** OK. And especially if you're under age. Is that extra cool if it's alcoholic?

**Answer:** Yeah. And the name kinda...

It definitely draws your attention. You're just like -- I wonder what that tastes like? Like if you don't have experience with the alcoholic drinks, it kind of makes you wonder what that could taste like.

**Interviewer:** OK. What would you say are the reasons you started to vape? What were your reasons for wanting to vape?

**Answer:** Blowing vape.

**Interviewer:** Blowing it. So doing tricks?

**Answer:** Yeah.

It was popular.

And the taste.

**Interviewer:** Nobody did it to stop smoking?

**Answer:** Kinda.

I was doing both, so...

I kinda did. It was helping at some point. But then I just stopped both.

**Interviewer:** So if you do both, and you want to do something, how do you decide if you want to smoke a cigarette, or have a vape or an e-cig or...

**Answer:** [inaudible]

Yeah, I was going to say that.

[laughter]

Pass it around.

When you're inside. You bring out the vape. But when you're outside you know you have that cigarette. The effect is completely different. They were talking about nicotine flavors. I mean the whole point to them is to try and quit cigarettes. It's kind of a lighter, lower nicotine.

Then you want to smoke more.

[inaudible]

Yeah, kind of low key, right?

That's what I just said.

I never really had an addiction to cigarettes when I smoked cigarettes. I started vaping because I didn't really like the taste of cigarettes. I was like -- oh, cool, I'm going to do this instead. And I didn't... But...

Wait. So do they help people quit?

I didn't need to have help quitting. I wasn't smoking like that. I didn't like the taste; I didn't like the stink.

Yeah.

But I didn't care if other people were smoking. You know what I mean? So it was whatever. And then vaping came along, and there were all these different flavors and it actually tasted good. And I was like -- OK, cool, I want to do that.

Instead of smoking.

Instead of smoking, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Do you guys smoke cigarettes now? How many of you smoke cigarettes? 2, 3, 4, 5 maybe. Maybe just a glass of water, so, four.

And what are the downsides of vaping?

**Answer:** Not as strong.

[inaudible] mold in your lungs.

Most people don't know that, but it does. Like it builds up. Like if you do it too often, it builds up and it doesn't make enough time to get rid of what's there. Because when your body... It accepts something that's not supposed to be there, like alcohol. It gets rid of it eventually. Eventually you go to the bathroom or eventually you throw up or eventually you... But if you do it too often then it just keeps building up and building up and building up. Just like if you keep drinking and drinking and drinking, you're eventually going to end up going to the hospital with alcohol poisoning, because it kept building up and building up and building up and your body doesn't have enough time to get rid of it. So that's the downfall.

I've actually... When I first started vaping, there were a few times where the oil would like, spit out and burn me. And I actually know a few people who have had that issue.

And some of them explode if you use them too often. Like in the batteries and stuff. There's a video that went around on Facebook of this guy who was vaping and he used the vape and it blew up half of his face. Like his face is permanently damaged because he used a vape instead of smoking cigarettes.

**Interviewer:** OK, that's a down side.

**Answer:** That's mostly with the mechanical mods. The box mods are mostly regulated for the [inaudible]

[inaudible] . . . their voltage is like, you can't go above a certain thing. And also when your box mod overheats or whatever, it'll stop...

It'll cool down.

-- and also it dies so you have to charge it.

**Interviewer:** Is vaping bad for your health? I kind of heard the opinion over here, but do the rest of you have...

**Answer:** I stopped vaping now, because even without nicotine, whenever I vape, I get headaches.

**Interviewer:** OK. Anybody else?

**Answer:** I think it's really bad, because I remember when I used to smoke vapes, I kind of... I noticed a difference because when I first tried it, I was having a hard time smoking it. It was so harsh. I felt like it was burning my throat and like, my body and stuff. But when I got used to it... There's a way that you smoke it. So... And then I realized, I'm like -- I'm going to be taking all this toxic-ness in, so it was, I must be really damaging myself. So I was... Yeah I think I should stop. But then I do the hookah, so that doesn't help. [laughs]

**Interviewer:** So where did you learn about the health risks of vaping?

**Answer:** YouTube.

**Interviewer:** YouTube?

**Answer:** YouTube, and also like, I work as a mechanic, so in the PG base in vape juice, also has an additive that cars have of coolant, which makes it kind of sweet. [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** Anybody else?

**Answer:** I started looking into it, because I kept reading like all these crazy things found in [inaudible] and whatnot. Some little particles around...

See, you don't really know what they put in here. Honestly, you don't.

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Answer:** Like if you heard what happened about Newports? There's this video I saw about Newports that they're starting to create like a new disease out there, an uncurable disease like cancer, like for people who buy Newport cigarettes. There's real Newports, and there's fake Newports. And the ones... Real Newports, they show you the real box, and the box that has -- god knows what's in there, honestly. And it makes you think, honestly, you don't really know if they're just doing it with Newports. What if they're doing it with every cigarette out there, and you just don't know?

[inaudible]

**Interviewer:** So what kinds of things would discourage you from vaping? Especially when you were underage in high school. What do you think would have...

**Answer:** Just price.

**Interviewer:** Just the price.

**Answer:** Yeah.

Nothing.

Flavor's expensive.

Juice price, yeah.

Availability.

I don't think they really talked about it in school. You always hear just about cigarettes. But no one really mentions vaping. So I think maybe if they did, and they talked about it the same way that cigarettes are talked about, maybe a lot more kids would stay away from it. That's a big "maybe" but didn't stop anyone from going after cigarettes.

I don't think... I don't know about... I wasn't aware of it. Maybe that's why. But it wasn't as popular before. I mean when I was in high school... I graduated in 2013, so it was like, not that important, but... But it wasn't as popular, it was just -- OK. We didn't know about it. Obviously I didn't know about it until junior year or... So that wasn't a problem. Nobody really knew about it. So it wasn't an issue. Nobody was bringing it up.

**Interviewer:** But they told you...

But in school they said cigarettes were bad and that didn't really stop you from smoking cigarettes either.

**Answer:** But then again you have the thing about the fact that kids are going to do what kids do. And also, challenging authority is one of those things. When people tell you something's bad for you, it makes you want to do it more. It's just that rebel without a cause thing. If you...

Wait. Hold on. OK. People give me shit all the time for smoking cigarettes. And the main one that I hear "cigarettes give you cancer." And my response to that... I was at a gas station I was buying cigarettes. And they were like "you really shouldn't smoke cigarettes; you're a really beautiful lady; you should not be smoking cigarettes because it gives you cancer" and all these other things. But the sun gives you cancer. The sun can also give you cancer. Does that mean you're not going to walk outside?

[chatter]

I think what would really help is not just talking about it, but really seeing what it could do. Like, because most of the time you see people smoking cigarettes, and they just look like typical average people. But you know, it's not often that you see people walking around and they're like the living, breathing cause and effect of what happened from cigarettes, or from... Especially from vaping. Like, when do you ever see someone and they're like -- yeah I'm laying in this hospital bed because I vaped too much. Like, you just don't... It just don't happen.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** So what does happen? I mean, if you vape too much? What... What is the down side?

**Answer:** [inaudible] but that's about it.

Vape too much?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Answer:** Don't you get leukemia, like bone marrow cancer. I know that's for hookah, but I'm not sure for...

Isn't cancer a genetic thing also? Can't you get it like, if people in your family, like end up getting cancer, it's most likely you'll end up getting cancer too?

**Interviewer:** It could be.

[chatter]

**Interviewer:** So if there was a warning label -- you know how cigarettes have a little warning label. If there was a warning label on vapes...

**Answer:** It wouldn't matter.

**Interviewer:** But what would it say?

**Answer:** It would say "this causes cancer."

Same thing as cigarettes, but just like more specific to vapes. But I don't think it would discourage anyone. I think that they would just feel like -- OK, it's the same thing as cigarettes. I think that it would help to really have more campaigns and stuff where people see the actual affects of it. I feel like -- you know, everyone here, you just ask them, "so what happens if you vape too much," everyone's like -- nothing really, you just get a little light headed. That doesn't stop anyone.

With vape I think in a way is kind of better than cigarettes. Because some of the juice that you use, it's less nicotine. So there's levels. They have some that have no nicotine at all. So that hurts you less. If I was them, I would put -- if you use this product then it might help you get over cigarettes. I'm just thinking business, actually. So that would sell.

People that develop the allergies to the PG and the VG [inaudible]

**Interviewer:** OK. I think that's all the questions that I have for you tonight. So thank you so much for coming.

# Appendix B: Moderator’s Guide

**Appendix 5 - Moderator’s Guide**

Underage Access to ESDs

**Introduction**

Hello, my name is Amy Flowers and I really appreciate your taking the time to come out for this group tonight. We are going to be talking about your views about ESDs or electronic smoking devices back when you were in high school.

Let me tell you a little about the discussion group and how it works…

First off, I want to tell you I’m not here to sell you anything, this is a research project that is being conducted on behalf of the State of Maryland’s Center for ESD Prevention and Control to learn about how young people get ESD products while they are in high school.

The group is being video-taped. After the group, we’ll transcribe what was said, the staff at the Center will review the group, and eventually the tape will be destroyed.

Your name will not be used in any report, and you won’t be personally identified in any way. Only what was said will go into the report, not who said it. You won’t see yourself on TV, or read about the group discussion in the newspaper.

Focus groups are most interesting when a conversation starts and people interact with each other. You don’t have to just talk to me, you can also talk to each other. To make it work as a research exercise though, and not just a conversation, there are a few things we all need to keep in mind.

* Please talk one at a time, and in a voice at least as loud as mine is now.
* Please be respectful of everyone in the group.
* This group is completely voluntary and you are free to leave at any time if you are uncomfortable in the group or the content of the discussion.
* Please do not discuss statements made during the group outside the focus group.
* Avoid side conversations with your neighbors. Sometimes those whispered comments are the juiciest best information of all. Please make sure you make your comments to the whole group.
* If a couple of people talk at once it can be hard to hear later on the tape, so I might ask someone to repeat or go back if that happens.
* I need to hear from everyone in the room at some point, so I may call on you if you aren’t participating.
* At any time during the group, feel free to excuse yourself to use the restroom or get more food or beverages. The restrooms are located …..

In order to get to know each other a bit before we jump in to the subject at hand, I’d like for us to introduce ourselves**. Because we’re here to talk about ESDs, let’s introduce ourselves with our first name and where you were when you first vaped.**

**Strategies for Obtaining ESD**

**Card Sort:** The first thing we are going to do is sort the cards in front of you into three piles. When you look at the first card, ask yourself if it is something that you have done, would have done, or would never do. Make three piles out of the cards. If the card is something that you have done, put it in the first pile on your left. If it’s something that you would have done, put it in the second pile in the middle. If it’s something you would never do, put it on the right. So once again, it’s did do, would have done, never would.

(Moderator hands out sticky notes do mark each pile of cards, gathers the cards.)

Now let’s discuss each of the cards. (Moderator shows each card in sequence for discussion. Participants reveal their choices and rationale.)



| Card Content | Probes and Discussion Points |
| --- | --- |
| Got a friend or family member to buy me a vape or e-cig. | * What was your relationship to them? * How old were they at the time? * Where would you meet (e.g. in front of store)? |
| Approached a stranger and asked them to buy me a vape or e-cig. | * How did you select them? * What did you say? * How old were they? |
| Used a fake ID | * How did you obtain a fake ID? * From a peer or an older person? |
| Bought myself at a convenience store |  |
| Bought myself at a gas station |  |
| Bought myself at Target or Walmart |  |
| Borrowed from a friend | * How old was this friend? * If underage, how did they obtain it? |
| Borrowed from a sibling | * How old was your sibling? * If underage, how did they obtain it? |
| Took from my parent or other adult | * Was your parent or other adult aware you were taking their e-cigarettes or vape? * Did you ever get caught? * What were the consequences? |
| Shoplifted | * Where? * How? * Did you ever get caught? * What were the consequences? |

**Retailer Selection**

1. How do you pick a retailer?
2. What kinds of places were best to buy e-cigarettes or vapes when you were underage?
   1. Gas station?
   2. Convenience store?
   3. Large retailer like Walmart or Target?
   4. Grocery store?
3. What is the difference between buying at a tobacco store versus a general retailer like a gas station or Walmart?
4. Did you go to the same place over and over to purchase e-cigarettes?
5. How close to home was your normal place of purchase?
   1. How close to school?
   2. To work?
6. Was there anything about the clerk that made it easier or harder to buy the e-cigs?
7. Age of the clerk?
8. Gender?
9. Ethnicity/Race?
10. Friend, or someone you knew?
11. Weak, or someone who could be bullied?
12. Were you ever discouraged by a clerk or other adult from obtaining e-cigs?
13. What would have discouraged you from buying them?

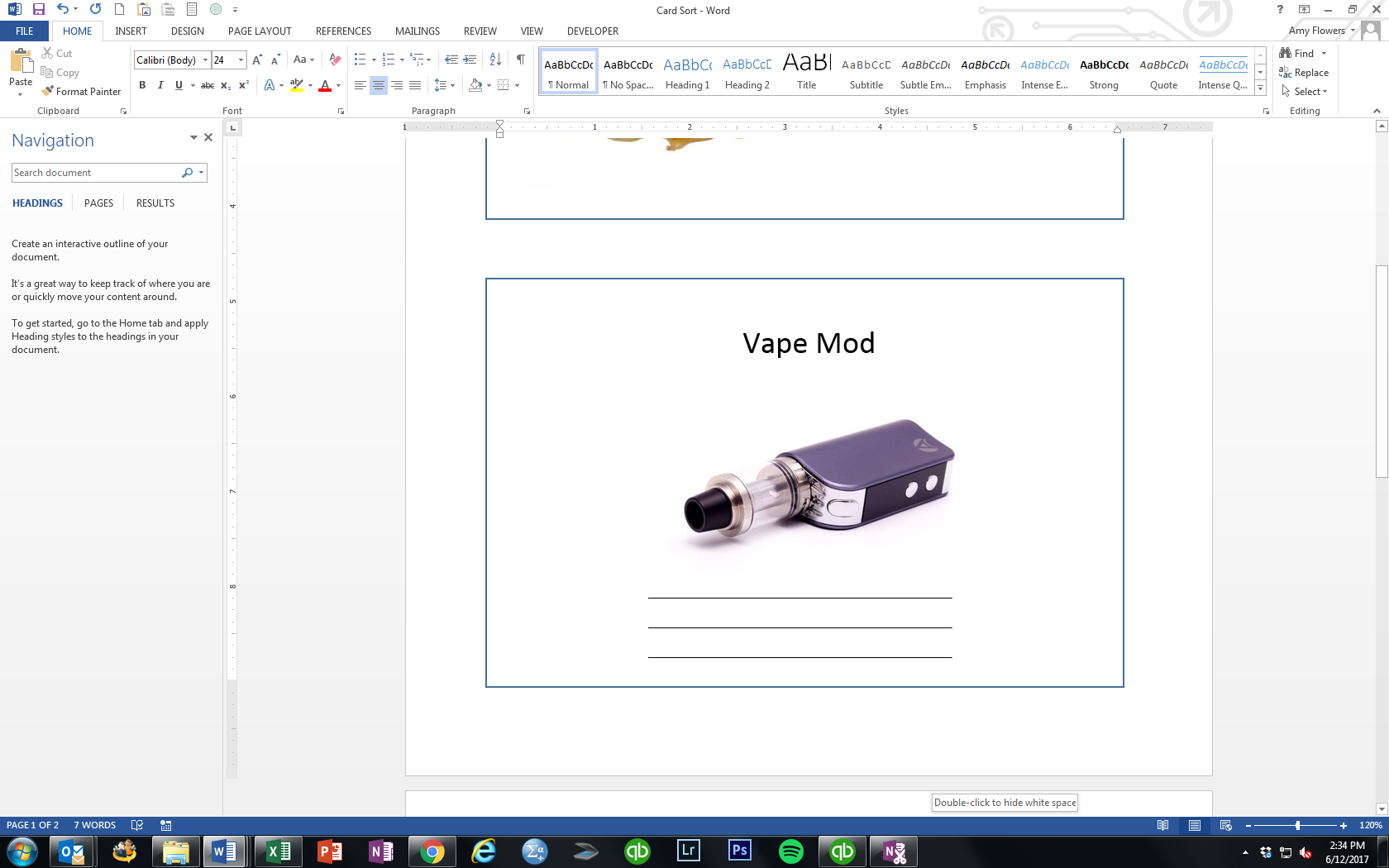
**Timing of Purchases**

1. What day of the week was easiest to buy e-cigarettes or vapes?
2. What time of day was easiest?
3. Were you usually alone or part of a group?

**Types of ESD Products**

**Free-Associations:** Next I’d like you to write down the first words that come to mind when you see the product or phrase on each of these cards. (Pass out brand-association cards with pictures of various ESD products. Moderator collects the cards before discussion.)

**What is this Called:** What is the name of this product? Have you heard it called any other names? How many of you are familiar with it? How many know it as “Vape Mod?



Now let's talk about your thoughts on these products.

1. What attracted you to the devices you liked?
2. How much did you like to customize your vapes?
3. What flavors were most popular? For what reasons?

**Reasons for Vaping**

1. What are the reasons you started to vape?
2. Did you see people doing tricks on social media? Did you do them yourself?
3. Do you smoke cigarettes now?

**Perceived Harm**

1. What are the downsides of vaping?
2. Is it bad for your health?
3. Where did you learn about the health risks?
4. How much did knowing about the health risks impact your vaping?

Thank you so much for participating today. Leslie will be coming around with a sign out sheet and your $75 incentive.

# Appendix C: Slang Words for ESD Products

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Vape Mod | | E-Pen | | E-Liquid | | E-Cigarette | |
| Vape | 33 | Vape Pen | 15 | Juice | 31 | E-Cig | 32 |
| Mod | 14 | Pen | 14 | Vape Juice | 15 | One Hitter | 6 |
| NGR | 11 | Vape | 13 | E-Juice | 5 | Cig | 4 |
| Box Mod | 7 | Hookah Pen | 9 | E-Liquid | 5 | E-Cigarette | 3 |
| No Response | 4 | E-Cig | 8 | Oil | 5 | Fug | 2 |
| Mod Box | 3 | E-Pen | 2 | Flavor | 3 | Vape | 2 |
| NGR Rig | 3 | Hookah | 2 | Liquid | 2 | Blu | 1 |
| e-cig | 2 | No Response | 2 | No Response | 2 | Cigalike | 1 |
| Vaporizer | 2 | Vaporizer | 2 | Vape Oil | 2 | Cigarette Pen | 1 |
| Cloud Chaser | 1 | Doink | 1 | Fluid | 1 | E-Ciggies | 1 |
| E Pen | 1 | Ego | 1 | Oil Change | 1 | E-Jack | 1 |
| G-Pen | 1 | Electronic Cigarette | 1 | Refill | 1 | Electrocig | 1 |
| Heater | 1 | Electronic Pipe | 1 | Sauce | 1 | Electronic Cig | 1 |
| Hookah NGR | 1 | NGR Pen | 1 | Sugar | 1 | Fag | 1 |
| Hooyah | 1 | One Hitter | 1 |  |  | Fake Cig | 1 |
| HP | 1 | Pen NGR | 1 |  |  | Hookah Pen | 1 |
| Juice Box | 1 | Pen Vape | 1 |  |  | No Response | 1 |
| Mech | 1 | Stick Vape | 1 |  |  | Pen | 1 |
| Mech Mod | 1 | Vape Stick | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| NGR Box | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| NGR Setup | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rig | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Smoke | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Smoke Pod | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stag | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Vape Box | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Vape Pen | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Coil | | Atomizer | | Clearomizer | | Cartomizer | |
| Coil | 18 | Tank | 31 | Tank | 20 | Battery | 30 |
| No Response | 14 | No Response | 7 | No Response | 10 | No Response | 6 |
| C-Cell | 3 | Atomizer | 5 | Cartridge | 5 | Coil | 4 |
| Atomizer | 2 | Atty | 2 | Mouthpiece | 2 | Mod | 3 |
| Cartridge | 2 | Cartridge | 2 | Pen Top | 2 | Vape Battery | 2 |
| Filter | 2 | Coil | 2 | Tip | 2 | Baby Battery | 1 |
| Wick | 2 | Capsule | 1 | Vape | 2 | C50 | 1 |
| Coil Head | 1 | Head | 1 | Clearomizer | 1 | Cartomizer | 1 |
| Idle | 1 | Head Piece | 1 | Disposable | 1 | Cartridge | 1 |
| Oil | 1 | Holder | 1 | Disposable E-Cig | 1 | Filter | 1 |
| Pen Coil | 1 | Juice Container | 1 | Gauge | 1 | Juice | 1 |
| Pen Top | 1 | Mod | 1 | Juice | 1 | Pen | 1 |
| Pen Wick | 1 | NGR Tank | 1 | Lid | 1 | Tank | 1 |
| Pipe | 1 | NGR Topper | 1 | Oil | 1 | Vuse Cartridge | 1 |
| RDS | 1 | Oil Cartridge | 1 | Oil Rig | 1 |  |  |
| Tank | 1 | Oil Tank | 1 | Pen | 1 |  |  |
| Tank Base | 1 | Rig | 1 | Pen Tank | 1 |  |  |
|  |  | Vape Juice Holder | 1 | Tip Vape | 1 |  |  |
|  |  | Vape Tank | 1 | Topper | 1 |  |  |
|  |  | Vape Tip | 1 | Valve | 1 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | Vape Juice Holder | 1 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | Vuse Vibe | 1 |  |  |