

Vexed over vaping: Kids are top concern amid Canadian uncertainty about effects of e-cigarettes

Strong support for legislation passed to ban sale to minors, restrict marketing and flavours

September 17, 2018 – Are e-cigarettes a smoking cessation aid or an instrument to hook younger consumers on nicotine?

The core question surrounding the act of 'vaping' or smoking e-cigarettes yields little consensus among Canadians.

Indeed, a new Angus Reid Institute study finds that while almost half of the general public (46%) and a firm majority of regular smokers of traditional cigarettes (57%) say switching from smoking to vaping is a good move for one's health, only a handful overall (14%) say that vaping is doing more good than harm in Canada.

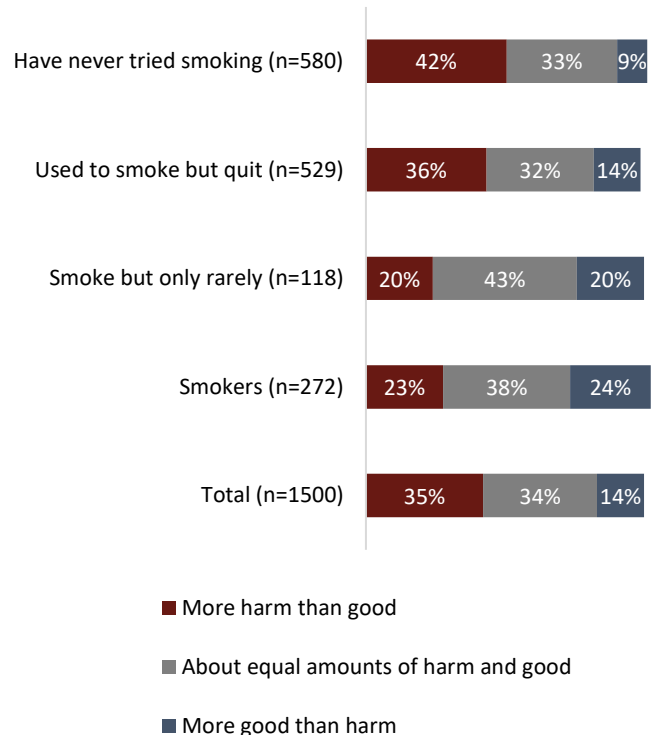
Further, those who have never smoked are more than four times as likely to say they see more harm from vaping than good. One leading concern appears to be keeping these products out of the hands of minors.

Regardless of their own personal vaping or smoking behaviour, Canadians show strong support for new government regulations banning the sale of vaping products to those under the age of 18 (86% support this), while more than six-in-ten say that flavours that may entice younger consumers, such as bubble gum or fruit, should be restricted.

More Key Findings:

- Current smokers are considerably more positive about the good that vaping will do compared to non-smokers, but are still divided overall
- Four-in-ten occasional (40%) and regular (45%) smokers say they have vaped. Only 3 per cent of Canadians who have never smoked traditional cigarettes say they have tried vaping

In your view, would you say that vaping does:



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from August 15 - 20, 2018 among a representative randomized sample of 1500 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Associate: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

- More than half of Canadians (56%) say that it bothers them when others vape in their vicinity. This compares to 72 per cent who say this about smoking, and just one-quarter (23%) who are bothered by drinking

INDEX:

- **Vaping in Canada**
 - **How widespread is vaping?**
 - **And what about traditional smoking?**
 - **Younger people and traditional smokers more likely to have vaped**
- **Widespread support for new legislation aimed at protecting minors**
- **Concern that vaping will do more harm than good**
 - **Half say vaping is bothersome**

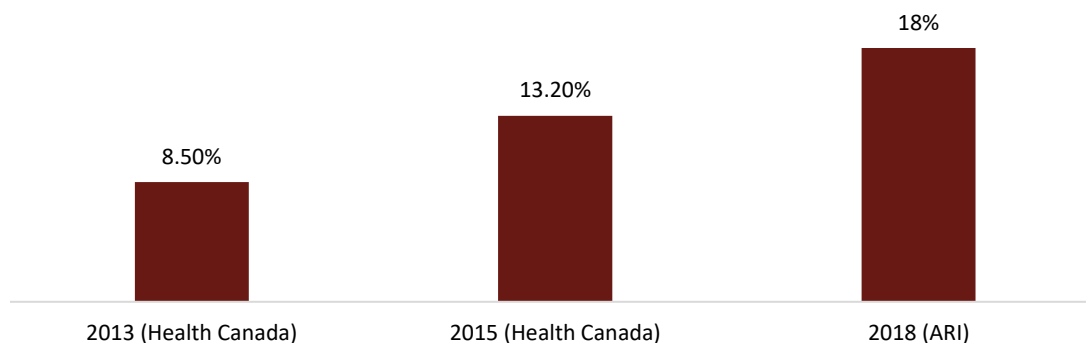
Vaping in Canada

How widespread is vaping?

Vaping is a relatively new phenomenon in both practice and the policy arena. This is perhaps best evidenced by the government passing legislation in May of this year to regulate the product. Attention has grown on this issue with the [announcement](#) that the largest vaping product in the United States launched in Canada at the end of August. Alongside new products and legislation, use of these devices, which simulate smoking by heating liquid inside the device to produce vapour, continues to grow in Canada.

In 2013, when asked by [Health Canada](#), 8.5 per cent of Canadians said they had tried vaping, commonly referred to also as 'e-cigarettes'. In 2015, this number had grown to 13.2 per cent. The Angus Reid Institute finds that in 2018, that 18 per cent of Canadians now say they have vaped:

Percentage of Canadians who say they have tried 'vaping' or 'e-cigarettes'

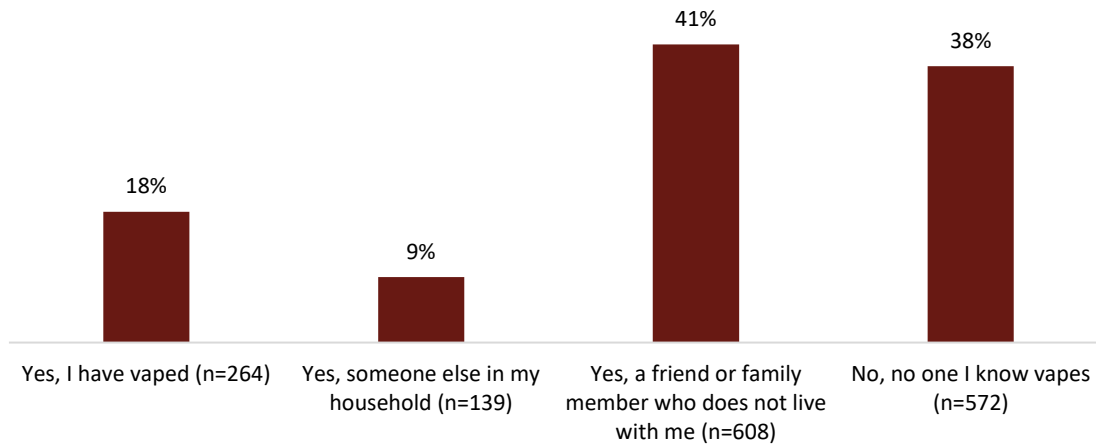


In terms of the familiarity of the Canadian population with vaping, four-in-ten Canadians say that they have no exposure to vaping within their social circle. The rest have either vaped, share a household with a vaper, or have a friend of family member who vapes:

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Associate: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

Have you or anyone else you know ever vaped?

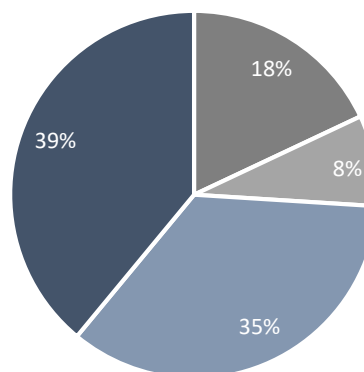


And what about traditional smoking?

Smoking in Canada is certainly not what it used to be. In 1965, half of the population over the age of 15 said they were smokers. This number has dropped precipitously since then, with Health Canada reporting in 2016 that 17 per cent of Canadians over the age of 12 could be considered smokers. Note, the Angus Reid Institute provides estimates of smoking based on a population over the age of 18, and uses four categories instead of six, so numbers can vary from StatsCan estimates.

Among adults, 18 per cent of Canadians say they smoke regularly. Another 8 per cent say they smoke, but rarely, and it is not a part of their routine.

Canada's smoking universe



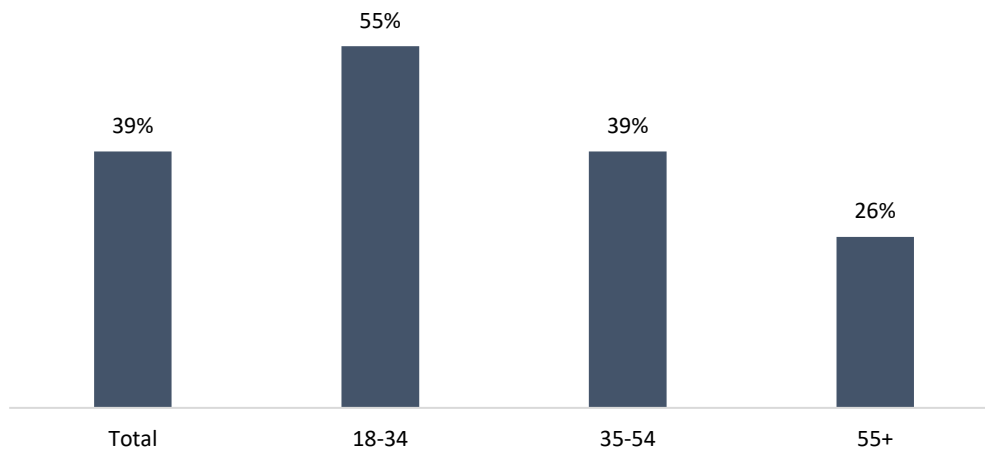
■ Smokers ■ Smoke but only rarely ■ Used to smoke but quit ■ Have never tried smoking

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Associate: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

In a trend that will likely be viewed positively by health workers and policy makers, the number of Canadians who say they have never tried smoking rises as age declines:

Percentage of Canadians who say "I have never smoked"

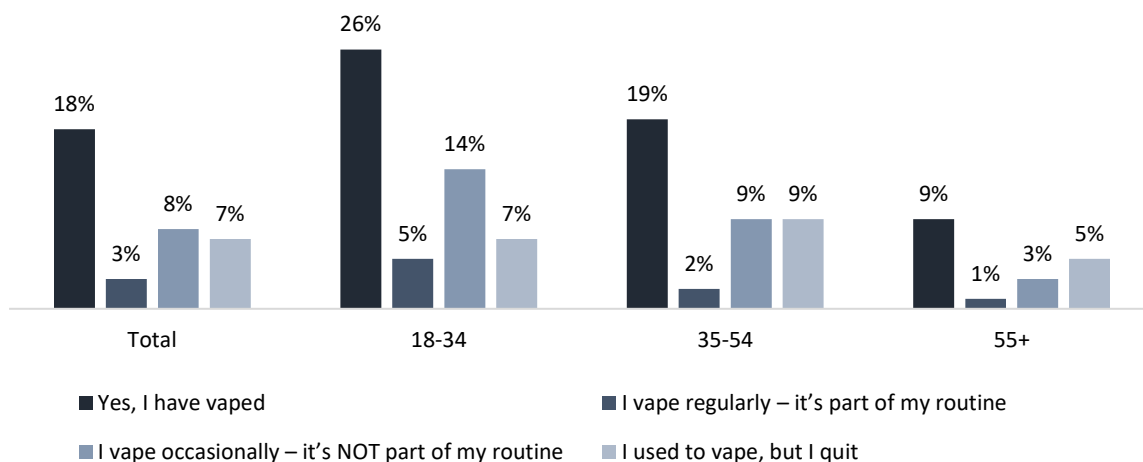


Younger people and traditional smokers more likely to have vaped

Vaping prevalence has a long way to go to catch up to smoking – something policymakers hope is not in the nation's future. According to Statistics Canada, more than half of Canadians have tried smoking in their life, about [54 per cent](#).

Age appears to play a significant factor in vaping. One-quarter of Canadians (26%) between the ages of 18 and 34 say they have vaped, while one-in-five (19%) continue to do so. Comparatively fewer among older generations have tried or are currently vaping:

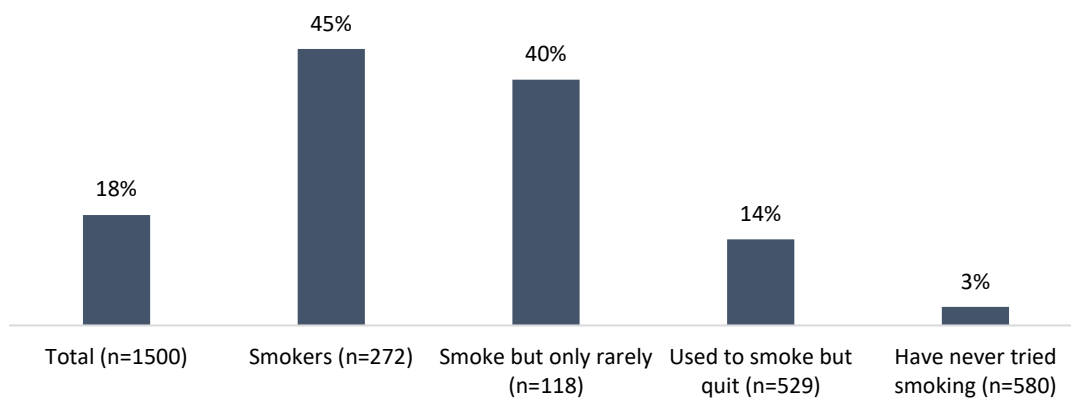
Vaping in Canada Total who have vaped, 18% of gen pop, n= 264



One strong correlation is between traditional smokers and vaping. The activity of vaping is itself is most often advertised as a smoking cessation mechanism. Industry leader JUUL Labs has noted that its goal for Canada is to offer an alternative to “combustible cigarettes” for five million Canadian smokers.

Among those who currently smoke, 45 per cent say they have vaped. Further, four-in-ten occasional smokers (40%) say the same. Only three per cent of Canadians who have never smoked traditional tobacco products say they have tried vaping:

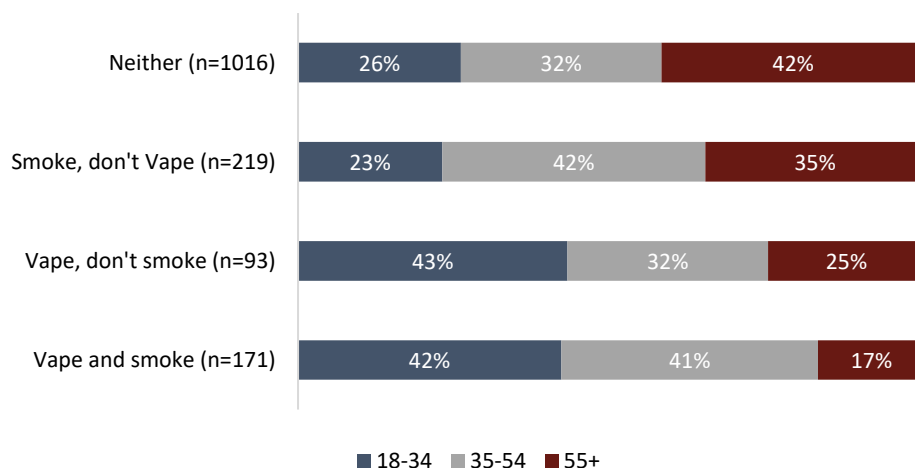
Percentage of each population who say they have vaped:



Looking at this another way, by which activities Canadians are currently partaking in – smoking or vaping - those who engage in both are unlikely to be over the age of 55 – just 17 per cent are. Members of this group are equally as likely to be in the 18 to 34 (42%) or 35 to 54 (41%) age group.

Meanwhile, Millennials are twice as likely to vape only, but not smoke than the opposite:

Currently vaping, smoking, or neither, by age group

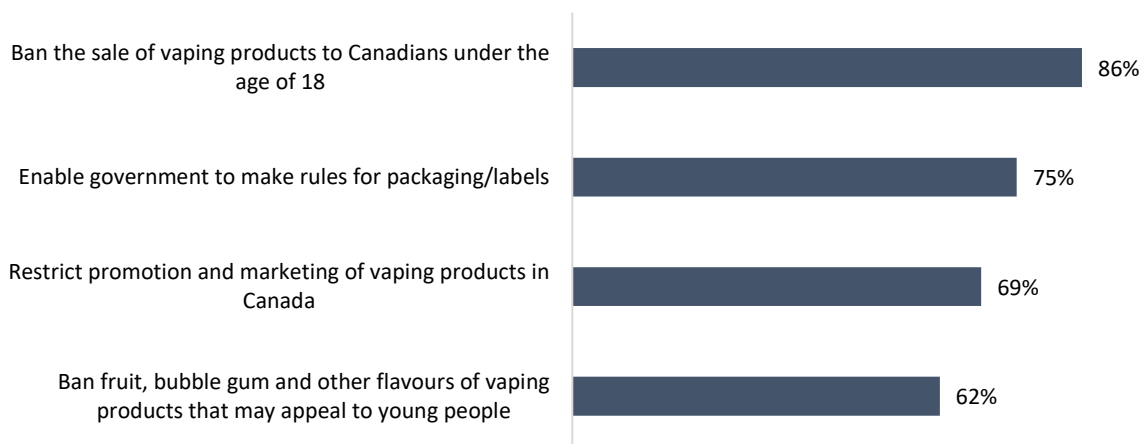


Widespread support for new legislation aimed at protecting minors

It has been illegal to sell cigarettes to children under the age of 16 in Canada for [more than 100 years](#). In 1993, that age requirement was increased by two years, such that legal minors were now prohibited from purchasing these products. But what about vaping? The trend has largely unfolded in public view over the [past 15 years](#), leaving grey areas and uncertainty about youth consumption of products for which little health research existed.

In May, in response to the growing use of vaping products in Canada, the government passed Bill S5, amending the Tobacco Act to encompass electronic cigarettes. The Canadian public is largely supportive. At least six-in-ten support each of the major elements of the legislation, and nearly nine-in-ten (86%) support banning use for minors:

Percentage of Canadians who support each:



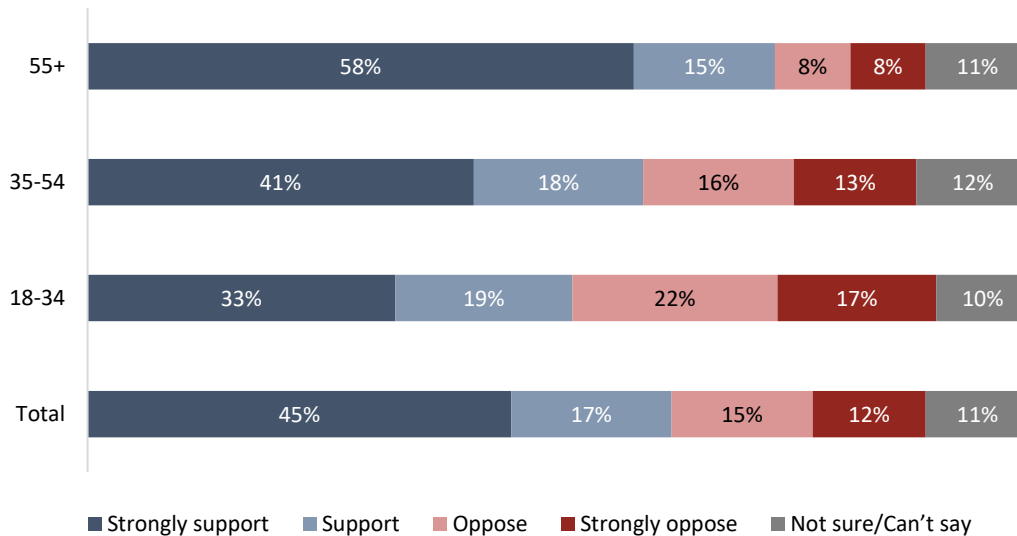
Banning use among minors is overwhelmingly supported by Canadians across all demographics. Whether they have or have not vaped, whether they have or have not smoked, and regardless of age or gender, more than eight-in-ten say this is the right move. They are not however, in unison on one particular regulation: banning certain flavours that may appeal to young people.

Mounting research suggests that both in [Canada](#) and the [United States](#), youths who vape are more likely to become traditional smokers later in life. Older Canadians are largely on board with efforts to reduce flavour choice if it means fewer young people vaping. Opposition rises, however, as age declines. Four-in-ten Millennials (39%) say that they oppose this measure:

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Associate: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

Support or oppose: "Ban fruit, bubble gum and other flavours of vaping products that may appeal to young people"



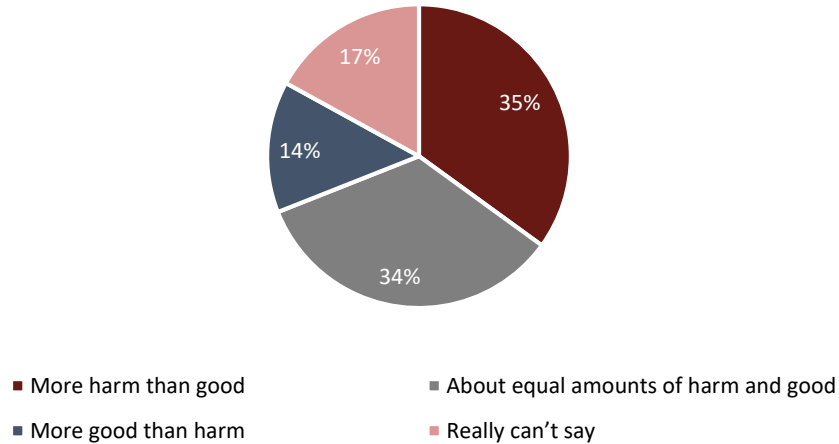
Concern that vaping will do more harm than good

Part of the support for legislative measures is explained by uncertainty over the health consequences of vaping. While companies selling e-cigarettes make the case that they will ultimately have a positive effect on society by moving would-be smokers off of combustible cigarettes and on to e-cigarettes with fewer chemicals and adverse impacts, Canadians are not entirely sold on that line of reasoning.

This, perhaps because the impacts of vaping may not be known for many years. Emerging research suggests that even certain vaping products without nicotine may be toxic. Groups such as the Boys and Girls club have also voiced concern about the impact this will have on children and teenagers who may become addicted at a young age.

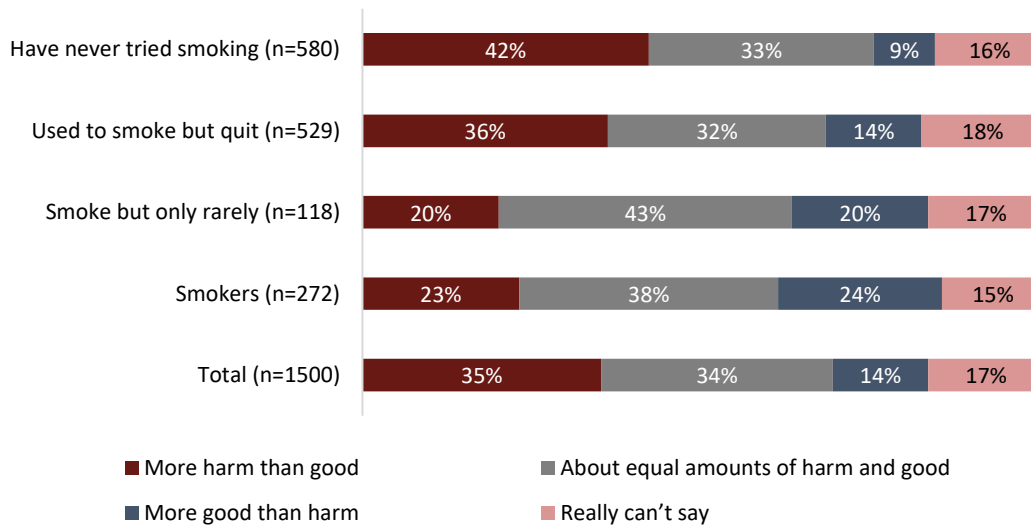
When asked whether they believe that vaping is doing more good than harm in Canada, few believe that it is. One-in-three are more inclined to say it is causing more harm, or having little impact overall.

In your view, would you say that vaping does:



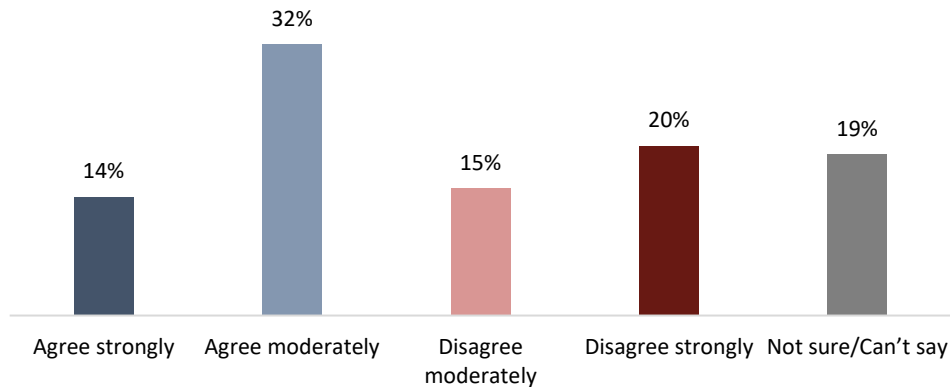
Smokers however, are considerably more positive about the impact of this new trend than those who have never smoked, but even among this subgroup, most remain largely uncertain. One-quarter lean either way, while four-in-ten (38%) say equal amounts of harm and good are being done:

In your view, would you say that vaping does:



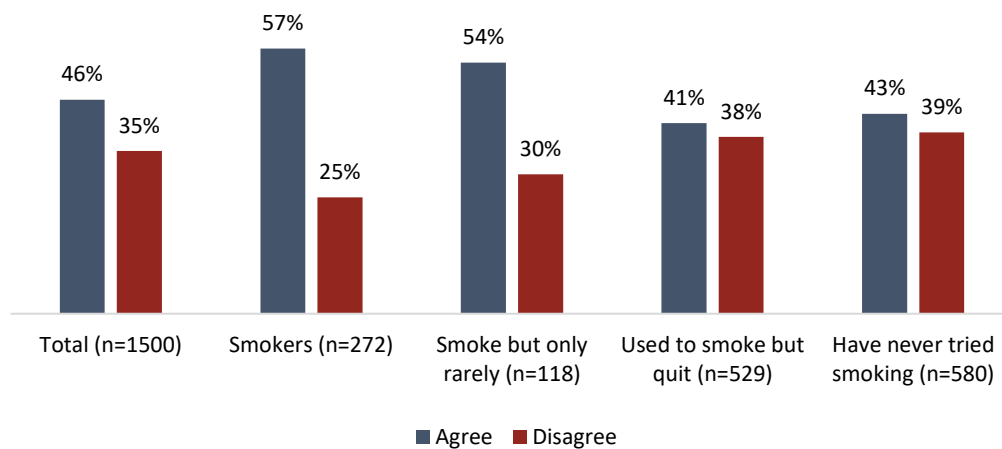
That said, while close to half of Canadians agree it's a better thing for current smokers to switch to vaping – for the sake of their health – there is still considerable uncertainty:

Agree or disagree: "Switching from smoking to vaping is a good move for your health"



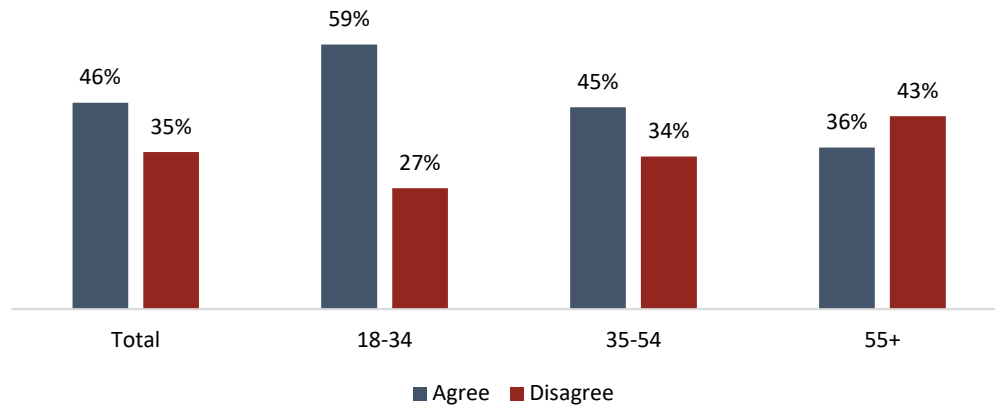
The benefit of switching from combustible cigarettes to electronic vapour products is most recognized by current smokers. Regular smokers are more than twice as likely to agree than disagree that this is a good move, while non-smokers remain divided:

Agree or disagree: "Switching from smoking to vaping is a good move for your health"



Positive sentiment is significantly more likely to be held by younger Canadians. By more than a two-to-one ratio those aged 18 to 34 say switching is a good move, while a plurality of those over 55 disagree:

Agree or disagree: "Switching from smoking to vaping is a good move for your health"

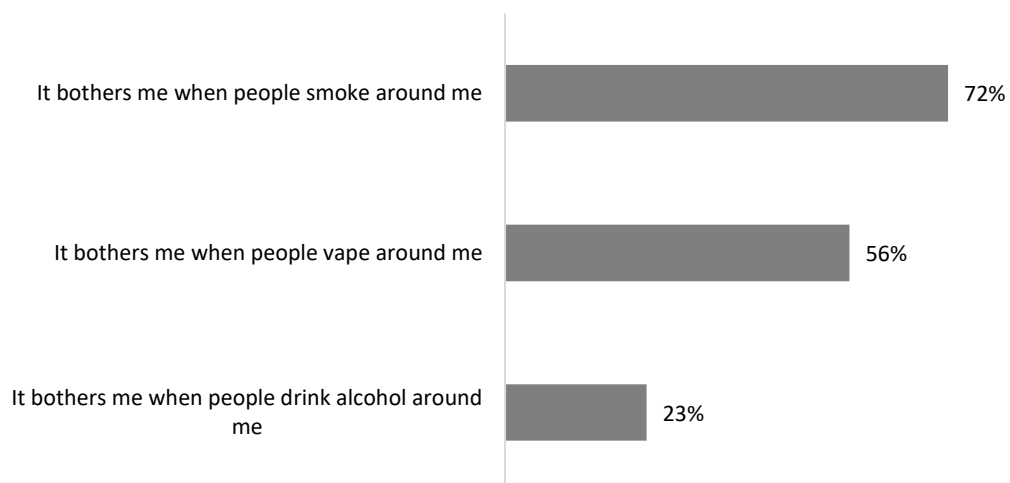


Half say vaping is bothersome

Long time smokers have faced many changes over the decades. Indeed, the legal history of smoking is littered with regulatory adjustments as opinion and knowledge about second-hand smoke evolved. Younger Canadians may likely find it hard to comprehend a world where cigarettes were acceptable on planes, let alone in restaurants. Seven-in-ten Canadians in 2018 say that it bothers them when people smoke around them, something that was much more commonplace in the 20th century. But how does vaping compare?

More than half of Canadians say they also don't like it when people around them vape. Research is still emerging regarding the health effects of second-hand vapour. Studies have found evidence to both confirm and reject the idea that indoor air quality is hampered by vaping.

Percentage of Canadians who agree with each statement:

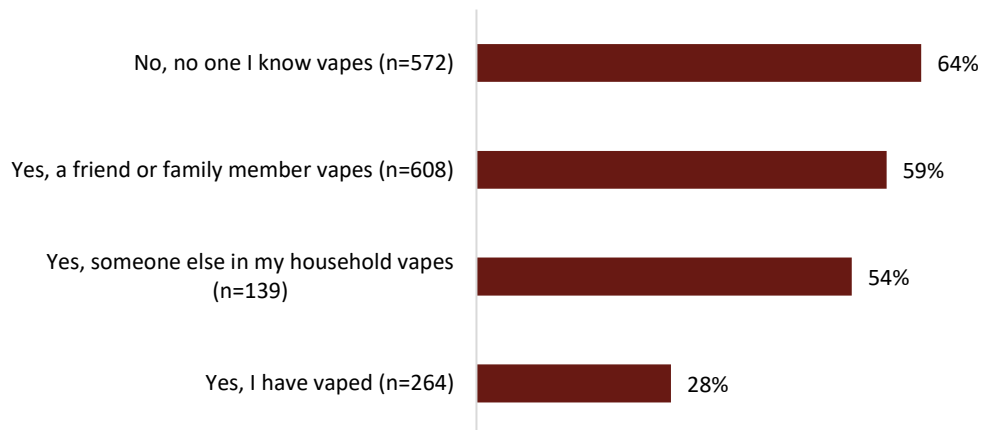


CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, Executive Director: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Associate: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

Vaping draws the ire of more than half of all Canadians who do not partake in the activity themselves. Six-in-ten (64%) among those who say they have no one in their life who vapes report being bothered by people vaping around them. More than half of those who say someone in their household vapes are also bothered by it:

Percentage of Canadians who say: "It bothers me when people vape around me", by exposure to vaping



*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).
For detailed results by experience with vaping and smoking, [click here](#).

Currently vaping, smoking, or neither, by age group			
	Age		
	18-34 (n=424)	35-54 (n=518)	55+ (n=558)
Neither (n=1016)	26%	32%	42%
Smoke, don't vape (n=219)	23%	42%	35%
Vape, don't smoke (n=93)	43%	32%	25%
Vape and smoke (n=171)	42%	41%	17%