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Title: *Expansion of an Anti-Vaping Coalition in Illinois Middle Schools: S.T.O.P. Initiative*

Abstract

Background: In 2018, CDC and FDA reported 3.6 million U.S. youth were past month e-cigarette users; therefore, there is a concern for adolescents being undereducated on the dangers of vaping. Objective: The coalition aimed to educate 5th-12th grade students on the negative social and health consequences of electronic delivery systems (ENDS) and juices through an interactive presentation. Methods: A study was conducted of 6th-8th grade students in the Southern Illinois area who participated in an interactive learning session providing education on the topic of vaping. If consent was obtained, students completed a survey prior to and following the completion of the session to assess baseline knowledge and track growth in understanding. This data was used to assess effectiveness of a possible solution to reduce potential gaps in knowledge among Illinois youth regarding the potential consequences of using electronic cigarettes. [Institutional Review Board approval was obtained on October 22, 2019]. Results: 1,122 6th-8th grade students from Southern Illinois participated in this study. The overall post-survey scores were 11% higher than the pre-survey scores when analyzing students' knowledge on the topic of vaping. Limitations were based off of lack of reliability of answers due to using a younger audience as the test subject and varying time constraints, that potentially limited access to survey answers in select groups. Conclusion: For 6th-8th grade students, the intervention of an interactive presentation with an associated BINGO game served as a positive resource for providing education on the topic of e-cigarettes and potential consequences