

2020

## Marketing policies of E-Cigarettes

Albert Vu

*Dominican University of California*

<https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2020.PAS.07>

**Survey: Let us know how this paper benefits you.**

---

### Recommended Citation

Vu, Albert, "Marketing policies of E-Cigarettes" (2020). *Physician Assistant Studies | Student Articles*. 10.

<https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2020.PAS.07>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at Dominican Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Physician Assistant Studies | Student Articles by an authorized administrator of Dominican Scholar. For more information, please contact [michael.pujals@dominican.edu](mailto:michael.pujals@dominican.edu).

## **Marketing Policies of E-Cigarettes**

Albert Vu

MSPAS: Dominican University of California

PAL 5630: Rotation #5

Dr. Jacob Adkison

June 9, 2020

## Abstract

### Purpose of Review

There has been an increased use of e-cigarettes among adolescents with the CDC reporting that 27.5% of high school students have used e-cigarette in the past 30 days in 2019. This review will highlight marketing restrictions and the lack thereof allowing companies to target adolescents.

### Recent Findings

When evaluating the history of traditional combustion cigarette policies there was a steady increase of cigarette users in the 1900s which began to decline after 1964 when aggressive policies and education began to take place. E-cigarettes however are not bound by the same rules and regulations, through a research conducted by Stanford there was evidence that showed e-cigarette companies had similar marketing strategies of targeting children as tobacco companies prior to these various laws.

### Summary

Currently there is conflicting data about advertisement, as of 2014 there were 466 different e-cigarette brands and research only focused on one company. It is difficult to determine if advertisement is a major contributor to increased adolescent use.

**Keywords:** E-cigarette, combustion cigarette, JUUL

## Introduction

In recent years, there has been a decline in cigarette use in adolescents due to effective campaigns and laws, however as tobacco use declines there has been a increase in the use of e-cigarettes (Warner, 2013). E-cigarette companies like JUUL brand themselves as the safer alternative to traditional combustion cigarettes with the purpose of helping individuals kick the habit. However, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported 10.5% of middle school students and 27.5% of high school students have used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days (CDC,2020).

Figure 1 shows a constant decrease in cigarette use with the introduction of various public health laws that heavily restricted the way cigarettes can be presented and advertised to the public. Adolescents became less exposed to combustion cigarettes due to these policies, contributing to decreased adolescent cigarette usage over the years (Bonnie, 1970). The e-cigarette industry however is not held to the same policies making the distribution and advertisements of their products easier (Andrews, 2019).

An e-cigarette is a battery-operated device that emits doses of vaporized nicotine, or non-nicotine solutions for the user to inhale. It aims to provide a similar sensation to inhaling tobacco smoke, without producing smoke. Table 2 & 3 dataset depicts a decrease in use of cigarettes among the youth but an astounding increase in e-cigarette usage from 2011- 2018 with the most marginal increase in high school students (CDC,2019). This best practice study will review published studies and government data on marketing policies contributing to the increase of e-cigarette use among adolescents.

## Methods

### **Policies of Combustion Cigarettes**

Data was gathered from grey literature with information detailing how restriction in advertising reduced the use of traditional cigarettes but because they did not encompass e-cigarettes, companies were free to market to whomever they choose. The US Food and Drug Administration does not regulate electronic cigarette marketing unless it is advertised as a smoking cessation aid (Lauren, Glasser, Abudayyeh & et al 2018). Unlike cigarettes there are no laws that prevent e-cigarettes from being advertised on television and radios (Booker, 2019). There are no age restrictions whereas cigarettes can only be advertised in facilities for adults (21 and up) . Online advertising has allowed the tobacco industry to promote their products in a space that has broad reach and is largely unregulated (Andrews, 2019).

### **Cigarettes Decline**

Combustion cigarette use began declining after the first Surgeon General report in 1964 on the health hazards of cigarettes, policies were implemented along with effective campaigning resulting in a dramatic decline in cigarette users (Warner, 2013). Figure 1 demonstrates that with effective laws, education, and policies the United States was able to reverse the first 64 years of increased cigarette use in the early 1900s.

### **Targeting Children**

As this continues to decrease the tobacco companies realized that they needed to find a new market and in 1973 R.J. Reynold Tobacco company stated, "Realistically, if our company is to survive and prosper, over the long term, we must get our share of the youth market" (Schwartz, 1995). In 1988 Camel cigarettes launched Joe Camel, the iconic mascot of camel cigarettes (DiFranza, 1991). He was a cartoon character that portrayed a very cool, hypermasculine character , designed to attract younger buyers. For the next nine years, Joe

Camel was featured in marketing that included magazine and point-of-sale ads, billboards, direct mail and branded items such as hats and t-shirts.

In 1979, Camel only had 2.4% of the 14-17 year old market , by 1993 it went up to 13.3% , Joe Camel campaigns effectively worked and boosted RJR's sales through appealing to the youth (Cohen, 2000). Fortunately the R.J. Reynolds tobacco company decided to retire Joe Camel and part of the Master Settlement Act of 1998 made it illegal to use cartoons for tobacco advertisement (Warner, 2013).

### **Rise in Popularity of E-cigarettes**

One company, JUUL, has effectively used social media platforms like Instagram to promote the use of their products to adolescents using ads that appeal and resonate to a younger crowd by promoting the product as something new and exciting (CDC, 2017). JUUL is one of the biggest manufacturers of e-cigarette, their devices are known for their sleek minimalist design that looks exactly like a USB. JUUL's goal is to improve the lives of existing smokers by providing a better alternative to combustion cigarettes (Vallone, Bennett, Xiao, Pitzer & Hair, 2018). Though designed as a smoking sensation aid, a study conducted discovered that teens ages 15-17 years were 16 times more likely to be current e-cigarette users than the 25-34 year old group concluding that JUUL was creating more smokers than they were helping (Vallone, Bennett, Xia, Pitzer & Hair, 2018).

To understand the possible increase in JUUL use among adolescents, Stanford University released a study regarding the company's marketing campaigns (Jackler,Chau,Getachew & et al,2019). Some of the advertisements used by JUUL did not align well with their mission statement. Their ads were colorful, vibrant, and some were used to invite individuals to a party to sample the company's product. Reviewing the invitation there was no minimum age to

attend nor was there a nicotine warning label(Jackler,Chau,Getachew & et al,2019). In Figure 2, the graph shows a rise of e-cigarette use among the youth in correlation with the amount of money invested into advertisement (CDC, 2019). The data showed that as e-cigarette companies invested more into marketing their products, the consumption from adolescents increased.

### Results

Stanford's research revealed that the advertisement of cigarettes from yesteryear ran parallel to the advertisement of JUUL (Jackler,Chau,Getachew & et al,2019). There were many similarities to JUUL's ads in comparison to the ones R.J. Reynolds ran back in the 1900s that were known to target adolescents. A few key features of both company's content contained models who looked under 25 years of age, presented the product as a social norm among groups, and highlighted the use of the product as an activity everyone must do (Jackler,Chau,Getachew & et al,2019). The CDC states that in 2011 e-cigarette companies invested about 6.4 million dollars and by 2014 more than twenty times that amount at 115 million dollars was used on advertisements ( 2017). Outdated and nonexistent laws allowed JUUL to thrive; they were free to design and market their products on multiple platforms such as television, internet, and radio services. They are able to reach a wider audience without running into government repercussions. Before 1964 tobacco companies had the same benefits as JUUL there were very few laws that told tobacco companies what they could and couldn't do when it came to marketing and advertising their products. This lack of laws allowed tobacco companies to thrive, increasing their customer base each year until the first Surgeon General report of 1964 triggering aggressive campaigning against such companies.

### Discussion

In Stanford's study, researchers followed JUUL's advertisement campaign since their initial introduction into the e-cigarette market (Jackler,Chau,Getachew & et al,2019). However

there was a lack of information regarding the advertisement of other companies that also made these devices. In 2014 there were 466 different brands of e-cigarettes identified (Zhu, Sun, Bonnevie, Cummins, Gamst & et al, 2014). To determine if the increase of adolescent users is largely influenced by marketing tactics or just the sheer number of products out in the market is complicated. This research pertains to one specific brand making the information limited and difficult to justify that marketing is a huge proponent to increased youth e-cigarette usage.

### Conclusion

#### **Medical Implication of rising E-Cigarette use**

As America's adolescent population continues to use these products, Bhatta and Glantz longitudinal analysis revealed that e-cigarettes are an independent risk factor to respiratory diseases like COPD (2020). Table 4 outlines Nicotine, diacetyl, tin, nickel, and lead which are some of the known toxic particles that have been detected when using e-cigarettes. Once inhaled these particles can disrupt body physiology leading to addiction, mood disorder, decreasing bone marrow and hemoglobin. As of October 1, 2019 there have been 1,080 lung injuries reported to the CDC, 18 confirmed deaths in 15 states, and no single product or substance has been linked to all lung injury cases (CDC).

As providers it is our responsibility to educate our patients about the controversial use of e-cigarettes. It is important to specify that using an e-cigarette is a form of smoking, and asking "Do you smoke?" during a patient encounter may not help you identify patients and families who use e-cigarettes, instead say "In the past year, have you used a tobacco product, like cigarettes or e-cigarettes?" (vaping devices such as tanks, mods or JUUL). Devices can come without nicotine but as shown in Table 4, still contains other harmful particles. It is important to clarify that using an e-cigarette without nicotine is still considered smoking. Incorporate families into patient education teaching them how to recognize a e-cigarettes device because



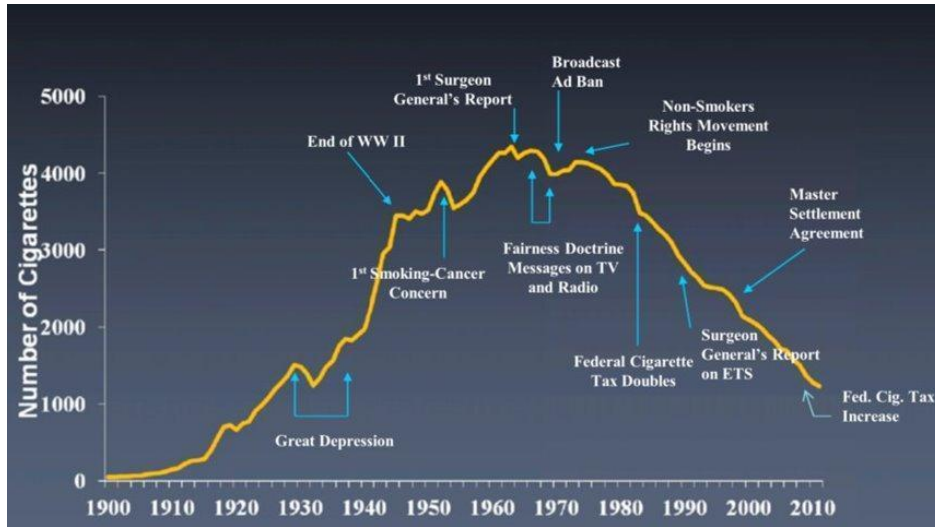
many do not look like the traditional combustion cigarette. E-liquid nicotine solutions used to refill e-cigarette cartridges can poison children and adults through ingestion or skin absorption. This can be an issue if a family member uses e-cigarettes with a toddler in the home. Calls to poison control centers related to e-cigarettes skyrocketed from 1 per month in 2010 to 215 per month in 2015: half of these calls involve children under 5 years old (CDC,2018). Less than half a teaspoon of liquid nicotine can be fatal to a toddler(CDC,2018).

Current smokers should not be recommended e-cigarettes for smoking cessation. If a patient is using e-cigarettes to try to quit smoking, suggest proven smoking cessation techniques, including Nicotine Replacement Therapy, lifestyle modification, and pharmacotherapy. We cannot just wait for policies to catch up to current issues, it is our job as a provider to educate and help lower e-cigarette use.

Appendix

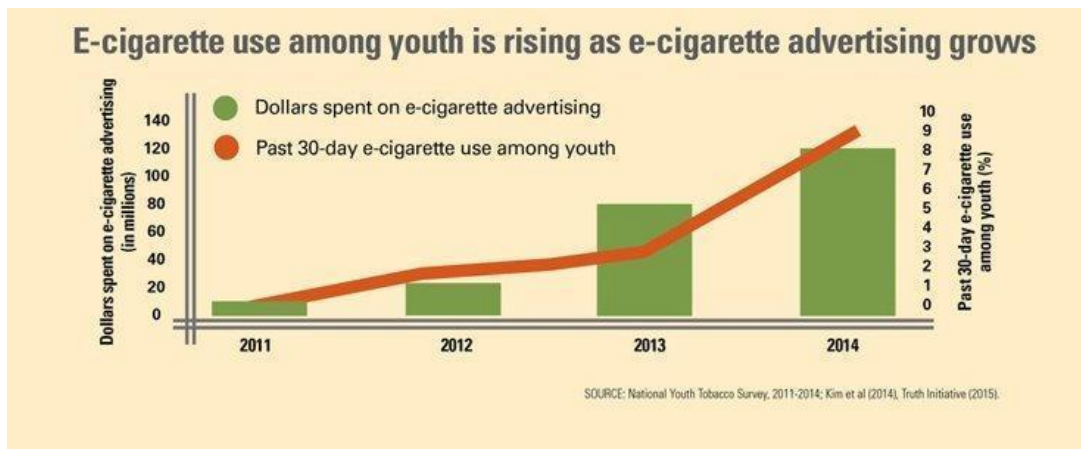
**Figure 1.** Individual anti smoking policies and their contribution to the decline of per capita consumption of cigarettes

Adapted with permission from Warner 2013, this figure depicts multiple anti smoking policies



and their contribution to the decline of per capita consumption of cigarettes in a period of over 110 years.

**Figure 2.** Increase advertisement in correlation with increase e-cigarette use among adolescents



Adapted with permission from Center for Disease Control and Prevention, this figure depicts the increase of e-cigarette use among the youth trending alongside the increase of dollar spent on e-cigarette advertisement from 2011-2014.

**Table 1.** Notable policies that helped decrease cigarette smoking among the U.S. population

Policies	Restrictions
Public Health Smoking Act of 1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Banned advertisement of cigarettes on TV and radio</li> </ul>
Master Settlement Agreement of 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Forbids cigarette manufacturers from directly or indirectly targeting youth</li> <li>● Imposed prohibitions or restrictions on advertising, marketing and promotional programs or activities</li> <li>● Bans or restricts cartoons, transit advertising, most forms of outdoor advertising, including billboards, product placement in media, branded merchandise, free product samples (except in adult-only facilities), and most sponsorships</li> </ul>
U.S. V. Phillip Morris of 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Banning of the term “low-tar” and “light” on cigarette packaging</li> </ul>
Family Smoking and Prevention Control Act of 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Granted the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate tobacco products and their marketing practices</li> <li>● Banned the use of vending machines and product sampling (except in adult-only facilities).</li> <li>● Restricted the sale of tobacco in retail establishments to face-to-face transactions</li> <li>● Expanded the existing limits on tobacco brand sponsorships and tobacco branding of non-tobacco items.</li> </ul>

Source: What do tobacco advertising restrictions look like today? (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/tobacco-industry-marketing/what-do-tobacco-advertising-restrictions-look-today>

Policies depicted in the chart show the progression of restriction of cigarettes in the United States.

**Table 2.** Past 30-day use among middle schoolers

Type	2011	2018
Cigarette	4.3%	1.8%
E-Cigarette	0.6%	4.9%

Source: History of the Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health | CDC. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm)

These figures show the decrease of cigarette use among middle schoolers in the past 30 days, while showing an increase of e-cigarette use from the years of 2011-2018.

**Table 3.** Past 30-day use among high schoolers

Type	2011	2018
Cigarette	15.8%	8.1%
E-Cigarette	1.5%	20.8%

Source: History of the Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health | CDC. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm)

These figures show the decrease of cigarette use among high schoolers in the past 30 days, while showing an increase of e-cigarette use from the years of 2011-2018.

**Table 4.** E-cigarette cartridges and their effect on the human body

Nicotine	Addiction, mood disorder, and lowering of impulse control
Diacetyl	Base flavoring a chemical linked to a serious lung disease
Benzene	Effects the bone marrow decreasing RBC
Heavy Metals (Nickel, Tin, & Lead)	Leads to Heavy metal poisoning w/multiple sxs

Source: Know the Risks of E-cigarettes for Young People: Know the Risks: E-cigarettes & Young People: U.S. Surgeon General's Report. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/knowtherisks.htm>

This table breaks down known substances inside one e-cigarette cartridge and their effects on the human body.

## References

1. About Electronic Cigarettes (E-Cigarettes). (2020, February 24). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html)
2. About Electronic Cigarettes (E-Cigarettes). (2020, February 24). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html)
3. Andrews, M. (2019, August 20). Cigarettes Can't Be Advertised On TV. Should Juul Ads Be Permitted? Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/08/20/752553108/cigarettes-cant-be-advertised-on-tv-should-juul-ads-be-permitted>
4. Bhatta, D. N., & Glantz, S. A. (2020). Association of E-Cigarette Use With Respiratory Disease Among Adults: A Longitudinal Analysis. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 58(2), 182–190. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2019.07.028
5. Booker, B. (2019, September 19). TV Broadcasters To Stop Taking E-Cigarette Ads. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/09/19/762410165/tv-broadcasters-to-stop-taking-e-cigarette-ads>.
6. Bonnie, R. J. (1970, January 1). Youth Smoking Prevention Policy: Lessons Learned and Continuing Challenges. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK37608/>
7. Danella Debel. "Governor Gavin Newsom Signs Executive Order to Confront Youth Vaping Epidemic ." *California Governor*, 16 Sept. 2019, [www.gov.ca.gov/2019/09/16/governor-gavin-newsom-signs-executive-order-to-confront-youth-vaping-epidemic/](http://www.gov.ca.gov/2019/09/16/governor-gavin-newsom-signs-executive-order-to-confront-youth-vaping-epidemic/).
8. DiFranza, J. R., Richards, J. W., Paulman, P. M., Wolf-Gillespie, N., Fletcher, C., Jaffe, R. D., & Murray, D. (1991, December 11). RJR Nabisco's cartoon camel promotes camel cigarettes to children. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1956102>
9. E-cigarette Ads and Youth. (2017, March 23). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/ecigarette-ads/index.html>
10. Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking. (2020, April 28). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/effects\\_cig\\_smoking/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm)
11. History of the Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health. (2019, November 15). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/history/index.htm)

12. Kalkhoran, S., & Glantz, S. A. (2016). E-cigarettes and smoking cessation in real-world and clinical settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, 4(2), 116–128. doi: 10.1016/s2213-2600(15)00521-4
13. Know the Risks: E-cigarettes & Young People: U.S. Surgeon General's Report. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/>
14. Lauren, Glasser, M, A., Abudayyeh, Haneen, L, J., ... Pearson. (2018, January 5). E-Cigarette Marketing and Communication: How E-Cigarette Companies Market E-Cigarettes and the Public Engages with E-cigarette Information. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/ntr/article-abstract/21/1/14/4791152?redirectedFrom=PDF>
15. Lauren, Glasser, M, A., Abudayyeh, Haneen, L, J., ... Pearson. (2018, January 5). E-Cigarette Marketing and Communication: How E-Cigarette Companies Market E-Cigarettes and the Public Engages with E-cigarette Information. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/ntr/article-abstract/21/1/14/4791152?redirectedFrom=PDF>
16. NCI Dictionary of Cancer Terms. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/electronic-cigarette>
17. Nedelman, Michael. "San Francisco Passes Ban on e-Cigarette Sales, a US First." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 26 June 2019, [www.cnn.com/2019/06/25/health/san-francisco-e-cigarette-ban-sales-bn/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2019/06/25/health/san-francisco-e-cigarette-ban-sales-bn/index.html).
18. (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://tobacco.stanford.edu/tobacco\\_main/index.php](http://tobacco.stanford.edu/tobacco_main/index.php)
19. Tobacco Control Policies and Their Impacts. Past, Present ... (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/full/10.1513/AnnalsATS.201307-244PS>
20. "Outbreak of Lung Injury Associated with E-Cigarette Use, or Vaping." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html).
21. Vallone, D. M., Bennett, M., Xiao, H., Pitzer, L., & Hair, E. C. (2018). Prevalence and correlates of JUUL use among a national sample of youth and young adults. *Tobacco Control*, 28(6), 603–609. doi: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2018-054693
22. Warner, K. E. (2013, September 3). Tobacco Control Policies and Their Impacts. Past, Present, and Future. Retrieved from [https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/full/10.1513/AnnalsATS.201307-244PS?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&rfr\\_id=ori:rid:crossref.org&rfr\\_dat=cr\\_pub=pubmed](https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/full/10.1513/AnnalsATS.201307-244PS?url_ver=Z39.88-2003&rfr_id=ori:rid:crossref.org&rfr_dat=cr_pub=pubmed)

23. Schwartz, John. "1973 CIGARETTE COMPANY MEMO PROPOSED NEW BRANDS FOR TEENS." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 4 Oct. 1995, [www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1995/10/04/1973-cigarette-company-memo-proposed-new-brands-for-teens/eaf66416-3939-4c5f-9fbf-1db1897673ab/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1995/10/04/1973-cigarette-company-memo-proposed-new-brands-for-teens/eaf66416-3939-4c5f-9fbf-1db1897673ab/).
24. Study: E-Cig Marketing Increases Chance Young Adults and Teens Will Start Vaping. (2019, October 28). Retrieved from <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/Study-E-Cig-Marketing-Increases-Chance-Young-Adults-and-Teens-Will-Start-Vaping.aspx>.
25. *U.S. V. Philip Morris USA, Inc., et al.*, No. 99-CV-02496GK (U.S. Dist. Ct., D.C.), Final Opinion, August 17, 2006, <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/doj/FinalOpinion.pdf>. See also, Cohen, J, "Playing to Win: Marketing and Public Policy at Odds over Joe Camel," *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 19(2):155-167, 2000.
26. Zhuang, Y.-L., Cummins, S. E., Sun, J. Y., & Zhu, S.-H. (2016). Long-term e-cigarette use and smoking cessation: a longitudinal study with the US population. *Tobacco Control*, 25(Suppl 1), i90–i95. doi: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2016-053096
27. Zhu, S.-H., Sun, J. Y., Bonnevie, E., Cummins, S. E., Gamst, A., Yin, L., & Lee, M. (2014, July 1). Four hundred and sixty brands of e-cigarettes and counting: implications for product regulation. Retrieved from [https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/23/suppl\\_3/iii3](https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/23/suppl_3/iii3)
28. 2016 Surgeon General's Report: E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults | CDC. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/e-cigarettes/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/e-cigarettes/index.htm)