

# Youth Vaping and Cessation Data



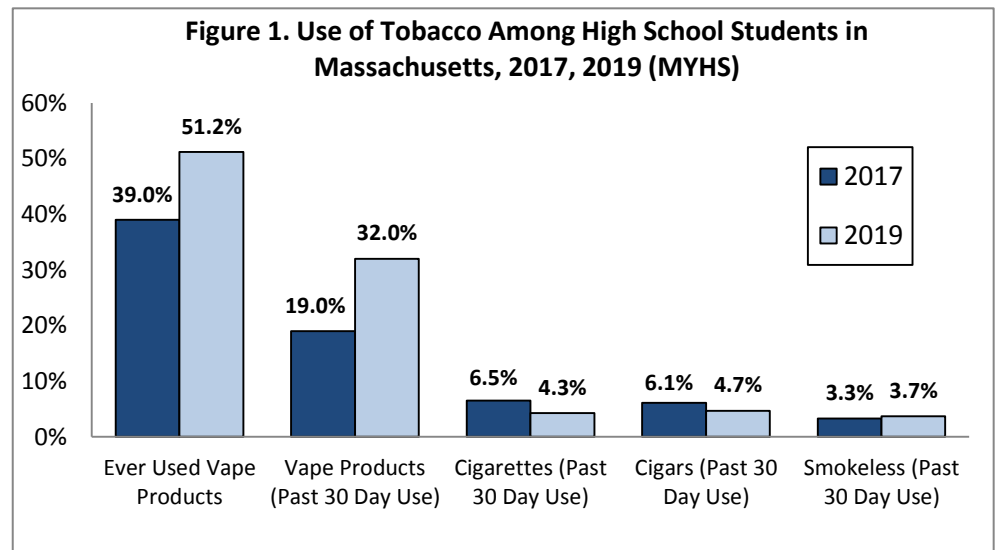
150 YEARS  
OF ADVANCING  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH

The use of conventional tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco has declined significantly over the past 20 years as a result of effective public health measures.<sup>1</sup> However, many youth are now using and becoming addicted to electronic vape products, which often contain nicotine and other chemicals that harm the developing adolescent brain. These chemicals are linked to other adverse health conditions, including serious lung injuries.<sup>2</sup>

## Vaping among Massachusetts high school students reached an historic high in early 2019

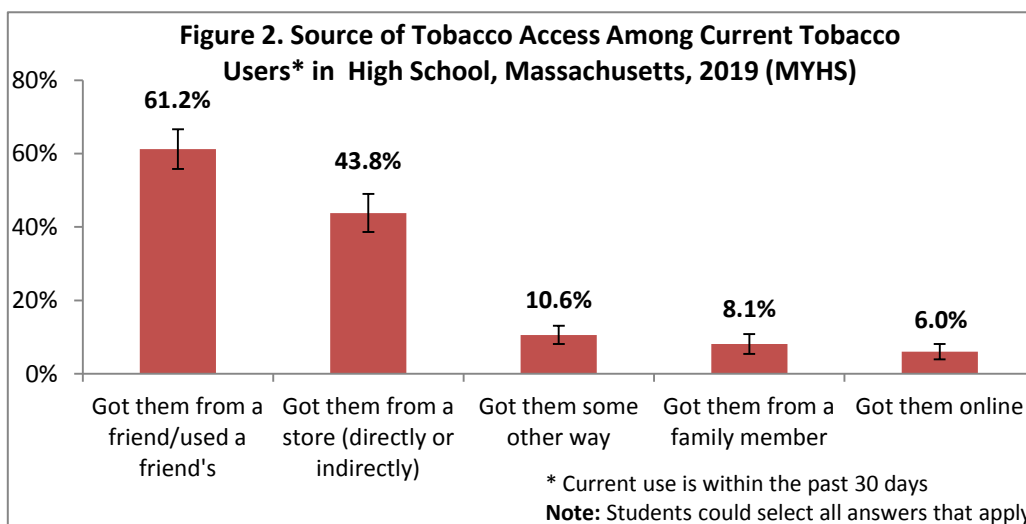
Data from the 2019 Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS)<sup>3</sup> show that in Spring of 2019, the **percent of high school (HS) students using vape products was at an all-time high (Figure 1):**

- In early 2019, **half** of HS students reported they had **ever used vape products in their lifetime**.
- In early 2019, **one-third** of HS students reported they had used vape products **in the past month** (past 30 days).
- By comparison, HS student use of **combustible tobacco products** such as cigarettes and cigars **was at a historic low**.



## In early 2019, local tobacco retail outlets were a main source of product access for high school students

In spring of 2019, local tobacco retail outlets such as corner stores, gas stations, and even adult-only establishments like vape shops were a major source of tobacco exposure and access for youth and young adults.



- Nearly **half** of HS students (44%) reported **obtaining their tobacco through their local retail outlet**, either directly (17% - from a store and 17% - from a vape shop) or indirectly (24% - gave someone money to buy for them) (Figure 2).

<sup>1</sup> *Youth Tobacco Use in Massachusetts: Survey Results from 1995 to 2017*. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health. March 2019. Available online at <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/04/03/MA-Youth-Tobacco-Report-2017.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General*. 2016. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health

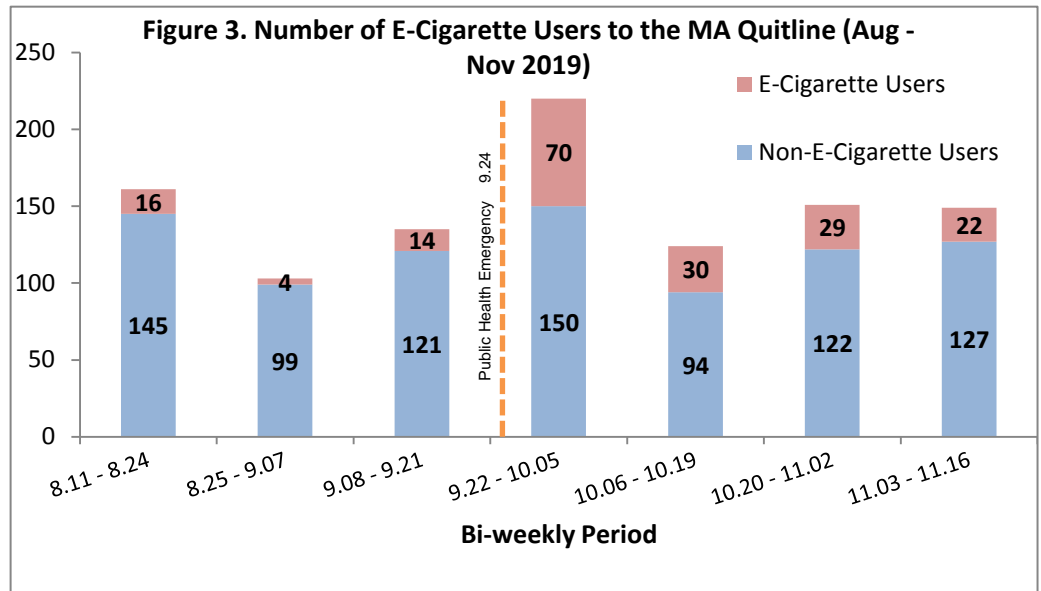
<sup>3</sup> The Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS) is a statewide representative survey administered by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). The MYHS is administered on odd years and usually during the spring semester. Please note that the 2019 MYHS data provided by the DPH Office of Population Health (OPH) for this document are PRELIMINARY and have not yet been finalized by OPH.

## What are recent trends in use of cessation resources provided by the Commonwealth?

### Quitline sees increase in e-cigarette users since the public health emergency order

The Massachusetts Quitline has seen an increase in e-cigarette users since the state's public health emergency order took effect September 24, 2019. The Quitline is a free and confidential service to help Massachusetts residents end their tobacco use. Participants receive free counseling sessions and if eligible, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Users may be referred by their health care provider or may enroll directly by phone or online. As part of the DPH public health response to the vaping illness, the Quitline was promoted as a resource for quitting vaping through Mass.gov and statewide public awareness campaigns.

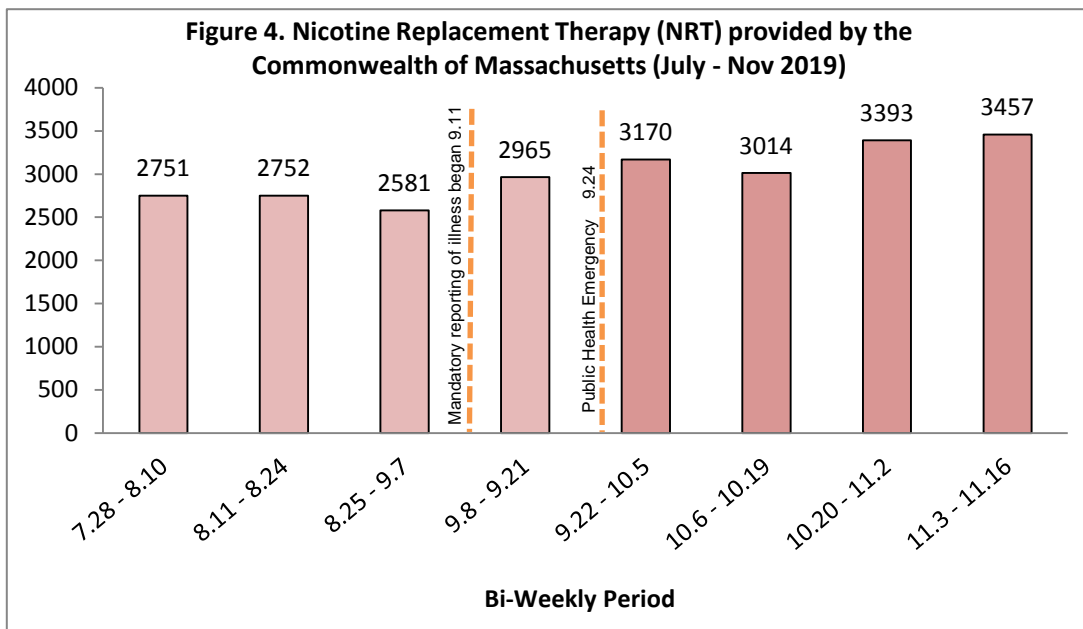
- During the week of the emergency order (Sept 22-28) and in the subsequent weeks, **the number of Quitline participants who were e-cigarette users increased significantly (Figure 3).**



The Quitline also reported an increase in younger participants. **More than 2X the proportion of younger participants (under age 25) were using the Quitline** from just **under 4%** in the 9 weeks prior to the emergency ban (July 28 – Sept 23) to **nearly 10%** in the 9 weeks after the ban (Sept 24 – Nov 9) (data not shown).

### Use of NRT provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts increases since the emergency order

On September 11, 2019, Commissioner Bharel declared possible cases of unexplained e-cigarette or vaping-associated pulmonary disease reportable to DPH. As part of the emergency order declared on September 24, pharmacists can now directly dispense over-the-counter FDA-approved NRT (e.g. patch, gum, lozenge, inhaler) without a prescription by a provider and individuals with MassHealth insurance can access NRT without paying a co-pay. Individuals over 18 can also access free NRT (patch, gum, lozenge) through the Quitline.



MassHealth pharmacy claims data and Quitline service data indicate an **increase in the use of NRT provided via MassHealth and the Quitline the week mandatory reporting began, and another increase the week of the emergency order that has been sustained into November (Figure 4).**

For more information, please visit our Department of Public Health website [mass.gov/dph](https://mass.gov/dph)