

CDC releases misleading numbers on e-cigarette use in youth

By Gil Ross — September 5, 2013



^[1]In what's bound to make exaggerated waves in mainstream media, the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released data on Thursday showing the percentage of U.S. middle and high school students who use electronic cigarettes, or e-cigs, more than doubled from 2011 to 2012.

The study also found that more than 76 percent of middle and high school students who used e-cigs in the past 30 days also smoked conventional cigarettes in the very same period.

Furthermore, 1 in 5 middle school students who reported ever using e-cigarettes say they have never tried conventional cigarettes. You can read more on the findings [here](#) ^[2].

Now that we've shown the numbers, let us be clear as to what they actually mean. The CDC's reporting here is without doubt, intentionally misleading. Three descriptors are examined when surveying about tobacco or drug use A) Ever use, B) Past 30 days use, and C) daily use. In the context of addictive products like nicotine, it is daily use that is correlated with youth continuing to use these products rather than just experimenting a few times. Conveniently, the CDC failed to report data on daily use of e-cigarettes by youth, presumably because daily use is so rare that it would not support their findings that smoke-free nicotine products are equally addicting and just as harmful as smoking, as well as target marketed to children.

With e-cigarettes increasingly helping addicted smokers kick the habit of smoking conventional cigarettes, it would be utterly wrong to allow experimentation by youth to cloud the judgement of policy makers and public health officials about the great health benefits experienced by those in genuine need of smoke-free, nicotine-delivery products.

The devotion to falsely impugning the benefits while exaggerating the risks--entirely hypothetical and alarmist--of e-cigarettes by Frieden's CDC and other 'public health' officials is beyond irresponsible. It is harmful and malicious, and the effect will be to kill more, rather than fewer smokers. I can only hope these people will revert soon to science-based education for the public, or be held to account.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2013/09/05/62202>

Links

[1] <http://acsh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/57447411.jpg>

[2] <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323893004579057080653155754.html>