

# E-cigarettes encourage teen smoking! No, they don't in fact.

By ACSH Staff — March 7, 2014



Yesterday's *JAMA Pediatrics* had an article co-written by well-

known anti-e-cigarette crusader, UCSF's Stanton Glantz, who has in the past shown a propensity for twisting data to suit his pre-determined agenda. Well, here he goes again.

Blandly titled [Electronic Cigarettes and Conventional Cigarette Use Among US Adolescents: A Cross-sectional Study](#) [1], he (and his co-author, a UCSF colleague, Dr. Lauren M. Dutra) have re-analyzed data from the latest National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), seeking some link between smoking, i.e. of combustible tobacco cigarettes, and vaping (using e-cigarettes, or ENDS, electronic nicotine delivery systems perhaps a better term, since as we reported this week, young people may not readily identify the personal vaporizers they use with the term e-cigarette).

The results echo the report issued by the [CDC last September](#) [2], although, like the current study, that alert was sliced and diced to suit the agenda there. Glantz and the UCSF group continue to vigorously issue statements warning cigarette smokers and everyone else not to use ENDS, ostensibly based on surveys such as this one.

What was actually found in both reports (obviously, using the same dataset) was an association between self-reported vaping and smoking. But even this article's title will subvert the authors' clear purpose, of trying to show that vaping leads to smoking: it's a cross-sectional study! What this means, and what Glantz hoped, and was rewarded in his hope, was that the public, the media, and regulators would not understand that no cause-and-effect relationship between vaping and smoking can possibly be elicited from such a study: it's a snapshot of behavior, not an ongoing follow-up.

Moreover, the fact that smoking and vaping are linked, or associated, is far from a surprise: in fact, most of those young people found to have used e-cigarettes were previously using other nicotine-delivery products, either cigarettes or smokeless tobacco, so a logical conclusion could easily have been that many young smokers are using ENDS to quit smoking NOT as a gateway into smoking, but as a means out of it. And everyone agrees that vaping is far less hazardous than smoking, so that would be a good thing.

But that possibility is not in Glantz universe of thought. In fact, his conclusion that *the use of e-cigarettes...may encourage conventional cigarette use among U.S. adolescents* is nowhere supported in the data presented in the article! **In fact, the authors entire discussion is an intentionally complete distortion of statistics.** If you consider e-cigarettes the exposure and tobacco use the outcome, in order to justify such an assertion, one would have to show that e-cigarette use *preceded* tobacco use. There is no mention of this anywhere in the document. Since there is no follow-up analysis, showing that e-cigarette use in 2011 was associated with higher tobacco use (new users) in 2012, ***there is no basis for their assertion that use of e-cigarettes is leading to conventional cigarette use.***

ACSH s Dr. Gil Ross, who has been paying close attention to the web of deceit and manipulation choreographed by Glantz, Frieden's CDC, and other officials, had this comment: It is quite obvious that the authors I mean Glantz of course wrote their discussion before they put the data together for the actual study. They *and JAMA, far from blameless in this destructive charade* well knew both that their conclusions were in no way based on the data they presented, and that the gullible media would swallow it up whole, aided and abetted by the breathless press release issued by UCSF s press department, although likely written as well by Glantz himself. And of course no one bothered to mention this important FACT: teen cigarette smoking is down significantly, even as experimentation with and knowledge of ENDS rises.

One notable exception to the media circus, an important and courageous one, is the N.Y.Times coverage by Sabrina Tavernise. As devoted readers know, we have often been discouraged by the Times coverage of issues we also cover. Please read [her article on the Glantz study here](#) [3], from which I will supply only a few key points:

*But other experts said the data did not support that interpretation. They said that just because e-cigarettes are being used by youths who smoke more and have a harder time quitting does not mean that the devices themselves are the cause of those problems. It is just as possible, they said, that young people who use the devices were heavier smokers to begin with, or would have become heavy smokers anyway. The data in this study do not allow many of the broad conclusions that it draws, said Thomas J. Glynn, a researcher at the American Cancer Society. David Abrams, executive director of the Schroeder Institute for Tobacco Research and Policy Studies at the Legacy Foundation, an antismoking research group, said the study s data do not support [their] conclusion. The study did have a bright spot: Youths who used e-cigarettes were more likely to plan to quit smoking. Dr. Abrams highlighted that finding !*

I should note that both the American Cancer Society and the Legacy Foundation are on record in strong opposition to e-cigarettes for reasons of their own that I cannot fathom so these experts opinions as to the actual validity of the Glantz report holds even more weight. I long for the day

when such scientific mischief will be held accountable!

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[1] <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1840772&resultClick=3>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2013/09/62202/>

[3] [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/07/health/young-users-of-e-cigarettes-less-likely-to-quit-smoking-study-finds.html?emc=edit\\_tnt\\_20140306&nid=60534081&tntemail0=y&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/07/health/young-users-of-e-cigarettes-less-likely-to-quit-smoking-study-finds.html?emc=edit_tnt_20140306&nid=60534081&tntemail0=y&_r=0)