

Vaping among Students in Grades 7 to 12 within the Health Unit Region

Last updated: April 24th, 2024

Summary

In the 2022/2023 school year the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) was involved in an oversample of the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). This oversample included 14 elementary schools (361 students across grades 7 and 8) and 6 secondary schools (374 students in grades 9-12) in the Health Unit district. This totaled 735 student responses.

Across the Health Unit district, 20.4% (95% CI= 13.9-28.9) of students used a vaping device in the previous 12 months, this was not significantly different from other northern health units (17.4%, 95% CI = 13.2-22.6) or Ontario (13.4%, 95% CI=12.1-14.8). Table 1 compares the percentage of students who initiated vaping in grade 12 or before, and percentage of students who have used a vaping device in grade 12 or before and vaped in the previous 12 months.

Table 2 compares the percentage of students who have used a vaping device in the previous 12 months, initiated vaping in grade 12 or before, or who have used a vaping device in grade 12 or before and vaped in the previous 12 months by sex assigned at birth. Statistical significance was only observed between sexes at the provincial level across the three vaping usage variables (Table 2). Specifically, across the three vaping usage measures, female students were reported at a higher percentage.

Table 3 displays percentages of students for initiation of vaping and cannabis use, along with the percentage of students who have smoked tobacco and used a vaping device. There is a statistical difference between the percentage of students in the Health Unit region who have smoked tobacco and used a vaping device when compared to Ontario (5.0%, 95% CI=3.3-7.6 ; 2.45%, 95% CI=2-3%, respectively).

Table 4 displays similar information as Table 3 but delineates by sex assigned at birth. There are distinct differences between sexes at the provincial level for initiating vaping and cannabis use in grade 12 or before provincially. Specifically, female students have reported a statistically higher percentage of using cannabis and vaping devices in the previous 12 months when compared to males, 20.8% vs. 12.6% (Table 4). Further, a higher percentage of females have initiated vaping and or cannabis use in grade 12 or before within the Health Unit region when compared to Ontario (38.9% vs 20.8%). This was found to be statistically significant (Table 4).

Table 1: Percentages of students who initiated vaping, and used a vaping device within the previous 12 months for Ontario (On), Northern health units excluding the Health Unit (North), and the Health Unit region (Health Unit)

Variable	Region	Percent	95% CI
Percent of students that used a vaping device in the last 12 months	Health unit	20.4	13.9-28.9
	North	17.4	13.2-22.6
	On	13.4	12.1-14.8
Used a vaping device in grade 12 or before	Health unit	36.1	31.3-41.2
	North	28.5	22.1-35.9
	On	25.0	23.3-26.9
Percent of students who have used a vaping device in grade 12 or before, and in the last 12 months	Health unit	56.3	40.5-70.8
	North	60.6	52.6-68.1
	On	53.5	50.1-56.8

*Flag, indicates that the coefficient of variation exceeds 33.33% and should be interpreted with caution and the measure is not reportable to the public

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Table 2: Percentages of students by sex who initiated vaping, and used a vaping device within the previous 12 months for Ontario (On), Northern health units excluding the Health Unit (North), and the Health Unit region (Health Unit)

Variable	Region	Sex	Percent	95%CI
Used a vaping device in grade 12 or before	On	M	20.3	17.7-23.1
	On	F	30.1	28-32.3
	North	M	25.7	18.3-34.9
	North	F	31.2	23.8-39.7
	Health unit	M	33.6	22.7-46.6
	Health unit	F	38.8	29.7-48.7
Percent of students who have used a vaping device in grade 12 or before, and in the last 12 months	On	M	46.1	41.2-51.1
	On	F	58.8	55.2-62.2
	North	M	55.2	33.3-75.2
	North	F	65.1	52.8-75.6
	Health unit	M	57.6	34.7-77.7
	Health unit	F	55.0	37.1-71.7
Used a vaping device in the previous 12 months	On	M	9.4	7.8-11.2
	On	F	17.7	16.1-19.5
	North	M	14.5	7.8-25.2
	North	F	20.3	15-26.8
	Health unit	M	19.4*	9-36.8
	Health unit	F	21.5	16.7-27.1

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Table 3: Percentage of students by who have ever used of vaping and ever smoked cannabis in grade 12 or before, and percentage of students who smoked tobacco and used a vaping device. Note: substance usage doesn't necessarily indicate simultaneous use.

Variable	Region	Percent	95%CI
Have tried cannabis and a vaping device, grade 12 or before	On	16.6	15-18.3
	North	20.5	14.9-27.3
	Health unit	22.7	18-28.1
Smoked tobacco and used vaping device previous 12 months⁺	On	2.4	2-3
	North	3.9*	1.8-8.4
	Health unit	5.0	3.3-7.6

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+Tobacco use excludes those who have smoked a few puffs to a whole cigarette.

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Table 4: Percentage of students by sex assigned at birth who have ever used of vaping and ever smoked cannabis in grade 12 or before, and percentage of students who smoked tobacco and used a vaping device. Note: substance usage doesn't necessarily indicate simultaneous use.

Variable	Region	Gender	Percent	95%CI
Smoked tobacco and used vaping device in the previous 12 months⁺	On	M	2.0	1.4-2.9
	On	F	2.9	2.3-3.7
	North	M	2.6*	0.8-8
	North	F	5.1*	2.4-10.6
	Health Unit	M	4.4	2.3-8.5
	Health Unit	F	5.7	3.5-9.1
Have tried cannabis and a vaping device, grade 12 or before	On	M	12.6	10.6-15
	On	F	20.8	19-22.9
	North	M	16.3	10.2-24.8
	North	F	24.3	17.1-33.4
	Health Unit	M	19.0	11.4-30
	Health Unit	F	38.9	29.9-48.7

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+Tobacco use excludes those who have smoked a few puffs to a whole cigarette.

Data source: 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).


Data guide: [2023OSDUHS Protocol and Data User Guide Final Feb2024.pdf](#)


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