

Panel 2 Summary: Youth and Vaping (Figure 3)



Pictured left to right: Christine Chambers, Lydia Zukewich, Zaina Edo, Nikolai Vladimirovich Yanick, Ryan Fahey, and Tea Rosic

The second panel discussion focused on youth vaping, and was moderated by Dr. Christine Chambers. The panelists included three youth with lived and/or living experience of vaping: Lydia Zukewich, Zaina Edo, and Nikolai Vladimirovich Yanick, as well as the project lead for the student-led Students Together Moving to Prevent Tobacco Use (STOMP) Project Ryan Fahey, and a child psychiatrist, Tea Rosic. The panelists discussed issues relating to the introduction of youth to vaping, why youth vape and factors related to vaping cessation. The panelists described how peers are a primary reason that youth are introduced to and initiate vaping. Other major factors included ease of access, use for entertainment, flavours, attractive devices, to alleviate boredom and manage stress.

When it comes to quitting vaping, although youth may feel effects on their health or performance, they do not have a source(s) for reliable information that supports vaping cessation. Peer groups can hinder the ability to quit vaping, as vaping is a social activity and thought to be safe compared to smoking. Also, youth need to have something to replace the social activity of vaping with friends. There is a lack of education in schools and there are challenges for clinicians to offer supports to those under the age of 18. Peer support, effective communication platforms, and engaging strategies were identified as possible ways to communicate information to youth, which can share potential health consequences and provide reasons to avoid becoming addicted and/or to motivate quitting. Youth indicated a need to have communication approaches be engaging versus being “talked at”. Youth also expressed an interest to be involved in the research and communication campaigns due to their growing concerns with the marketing of the devices and ease of access to vapes. A lack of access to information on the contents of vapes and the risks of vaping were cited as serious concerns from the panel members.



Figure 1. Youth and Vaping