



2023 Verkada Teen Vaping Survey

The Epidemic Clouding the Classroom



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Verkada's 2023 Teen Vaping Survey presents a comprehensive examination of teen vaping, bringing together perspectives and insights from parents, high school teachers and vaping and non-vaping teenagers alike. We delve into the key drivers behind its appeal to teenagers, its impact on classroom dynamics and what's working (and not) in the responses to curb the behavior.

Recognizing the need for more comprehensive data on student vaping, we aim to shed light on the extent of this issue. With the advent of new resources and innovative tools that detect and gather data on vaping incidents, school districts are now better equipped to understand and tackle this problem.

The goal of this study is to provide valuable insights to inform effective strategies to curb teen vaping. We hope this survey report prompts thoughtful discussions and collaborative efforts among those who have the ability to address this epidemic – from educators and administrators to parents and public health experts.

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Methodology

To better understand the state of teenage vaping and its impact in schools, Verkada partnered with Harris Poll to survey 2,650 Americans, including parents¹, teachers² and vaping³ and non-vaping teens⁴. These survey findings, paired with aggregated insights from over 20,000 US vape-detecting devices deployed by Verkada customers, provide a view into what's happening on school campuses across the U.S. The findings, which are detailed in this report, shine a light on the challenges of students today.

Audience Definitions

1 Parents: have a child or children ages 14-18. 2 Teachers: employed as a teacher in a public or private high school. 3 Vaping teens: ages 14-18; attend a public or private high school; and vape daily, weekly, monthly or less frequently. 4 Non-vaping teens: ages 14-18; attend a public or private high school; and have never vaped, or have vaped before but have since stopped.



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Key Findings

1. Popularity amongst teens is on the rise. Verkada's Vape Activity Index shows a 20% increase in vaping activity in the 2022-2023 academic year from the academic year prior. More than 4 in 5 teachers (84%) and students (82%) surveyed believe there has been an increase in teenage vaping usage over the past 24 months

2. Teens know it's a problem, especially those who vape. Nearly all teenagers who vape (96%) view teen vaping as a problem, with 61% of vaping teens considering themselves to be addicted and 54% wanting to quit vaping altogether.

3. Vaping hurts teen health and academic performance. Vaping teens are 52% more likely to feel negative about their physical health and two times more likely to feel depressed. Additionally, around half of teachers report that these students struggle to stay motivated (53%) and focused (51%), and nearly 9 in 10 agreeing that vaping in school is disruptive to the learning environment.



4. The school bathroom is the #1 hotspot. Nearly all teens surveyed report that bathrooms are where vaping occurs most frequently on campus (90% of non-vaping teens vs. 70% of vaping teens). Also, more than half of teachers (55%) have noticed that vaping students ask to use the bathroom more frequently than those who don't.

5. Teachers and teens agree that additional security and technology would be most effective in curbing vaping in school. Three-quarters of vaping teens (77%) believe it's easy to get away with vaping at school, but school leadership is underutilizing technology that they say would help them address the problem.



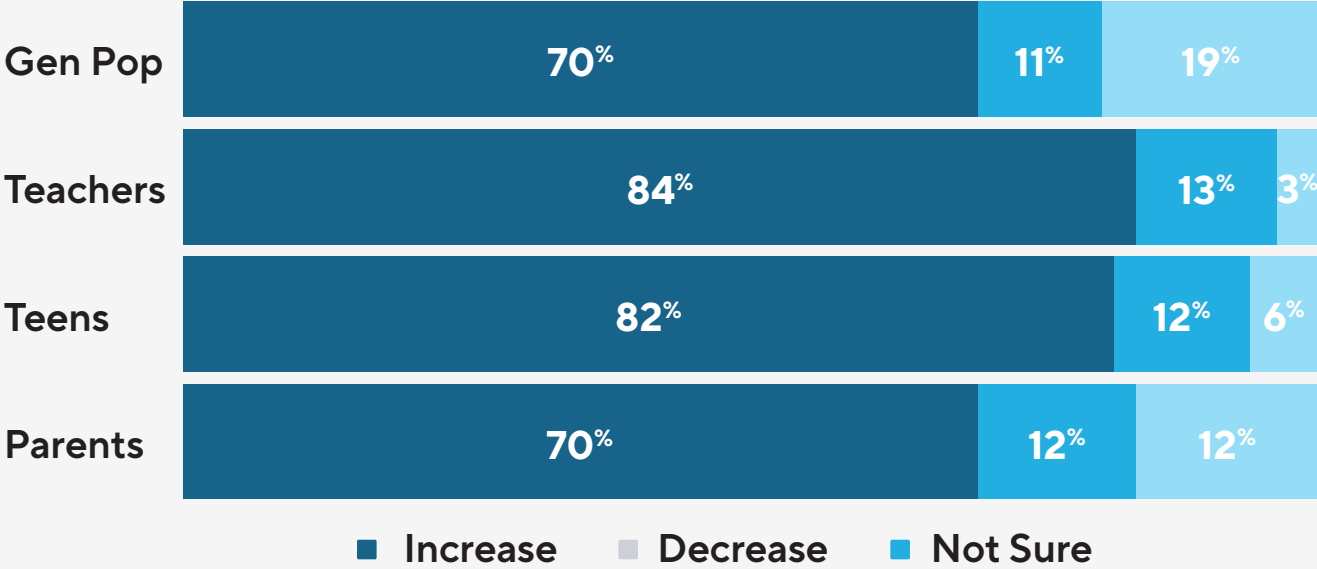
What do these insights tell us? Even with the growing popularity of vaping, there is a clear consensus that it is a significant issue — even among teens who vape. The adverse effects of vaping now extend beyond physical and mental health; classroom disruptions are becoming more prevalent and, as a result, making learning more difficult for all students (even those who don't vape). If schools and parents do not change how they combat this epidemic, these challenges will persist and potentially grow in severity.

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The number of vaping teens is on the rise.

Teachers and teens themselves can see that usage has risen over the past 24 months. Teens want to quit, but they can't.

Over the past two years, do you believe there has been an increase or decrease in the number of teens who vape?



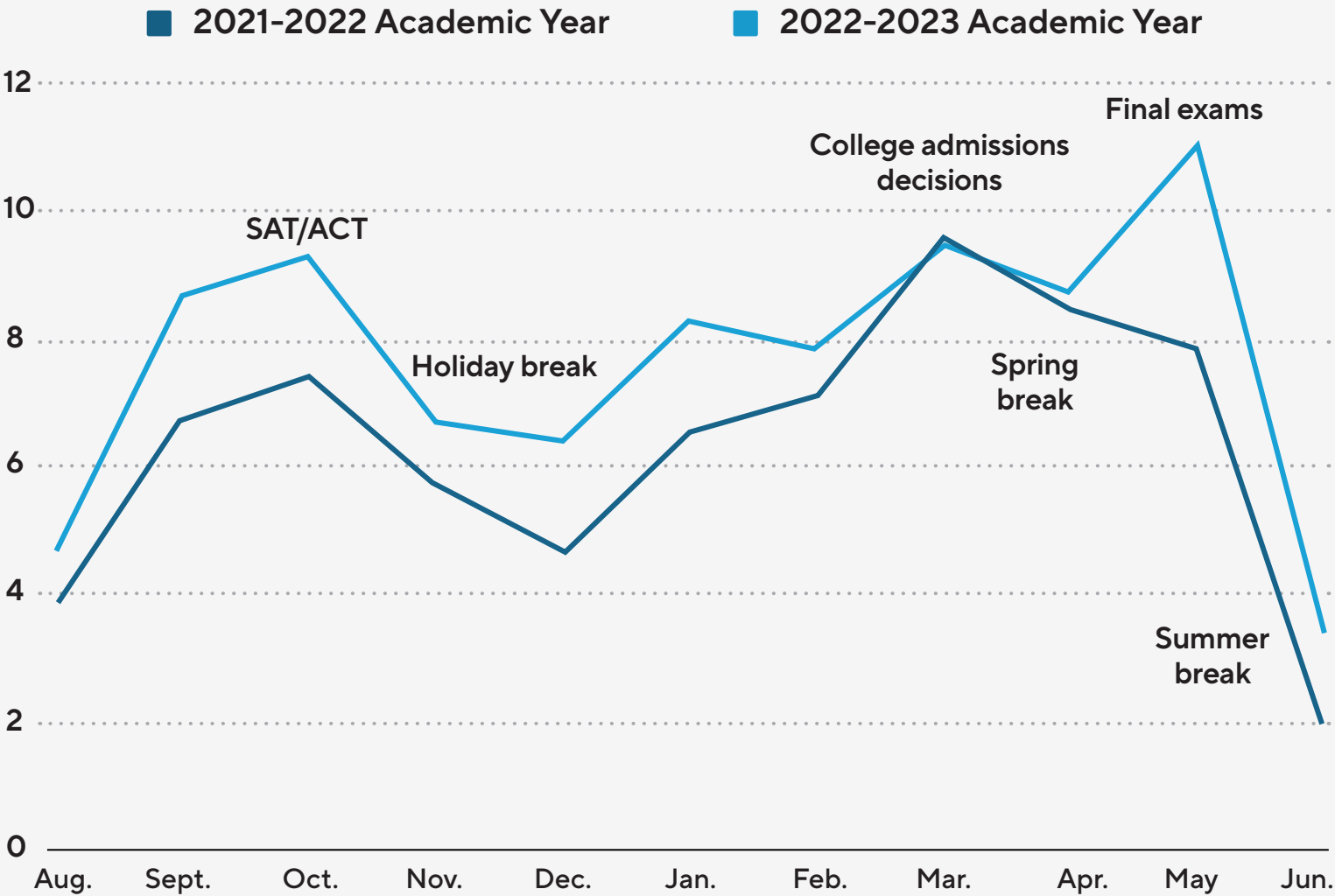
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It's not just perception; it's reality.

Verkada's Vape Activity Index* shows this upward trend year-over-year and when vaping spikes throughout the academic year. Vaping activity rose 20% in the 2022-2023 academic year from the academic year prior. Schools report that vaping often trends up during key moments throughout the year when students often experience stress, including the start of the school year, college admissions decisions, final exams and SATs.



Verkada Vape Activity Index



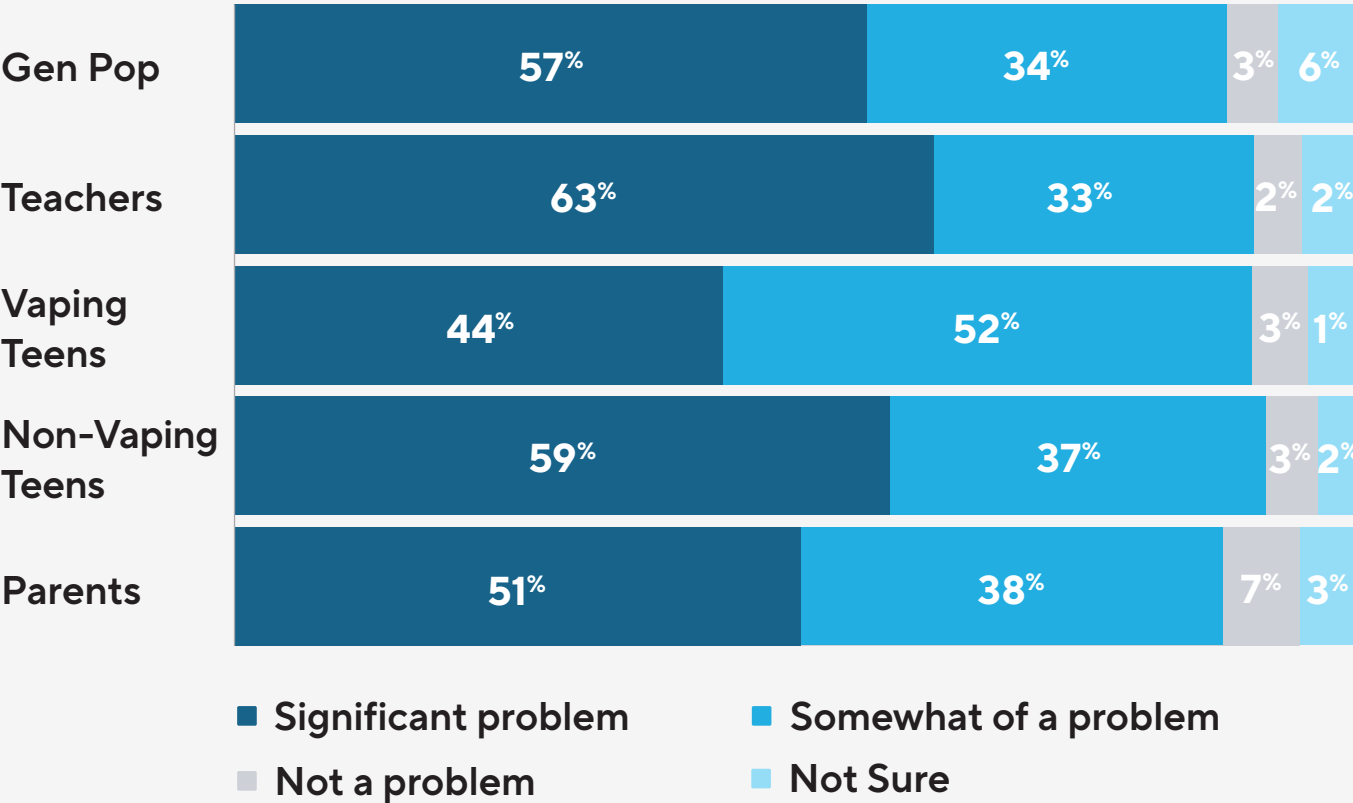
*The Verkada Vape Activity Index aggregates vape events from over 20,000 active environmental sensors in the U.S. to provide a single view of vape activity.

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Nearly everyone recognizes this is a problem, especially teens who are vaping.

Parents are significantly less likely than teachers to see vaping as a significant problem — likely because they are more removed from seeing the impact than teachers and non-vaping teens.

To what extent, if at all, do you consider vaping to be a problem among teenagers (ages 14-18)?



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Vaping teens aren't able to stop — even though they know it's harmful.

54% of vaping teens agree they can't get through the school day without vaping

61% of vaping teens say they are addicted.



72% of vaping teens say they worry about the health effects of vaping.

81% of vaping teens who want to quit worry about the health effects.

61% of vaping teens don't want to quit despite the health effects.

But the majority of them
want to quit.

54%
54% of vaping teens
want to stop.

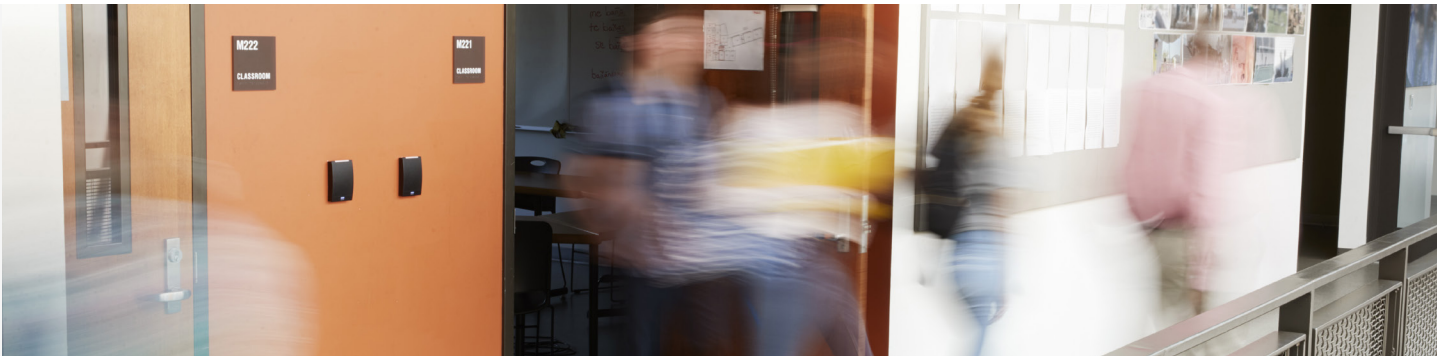
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Vaping not only takes a toll on the mental and physical health of teens, but it disrupts the school environment and hurts academic performance for vapers and non-vapers alike.

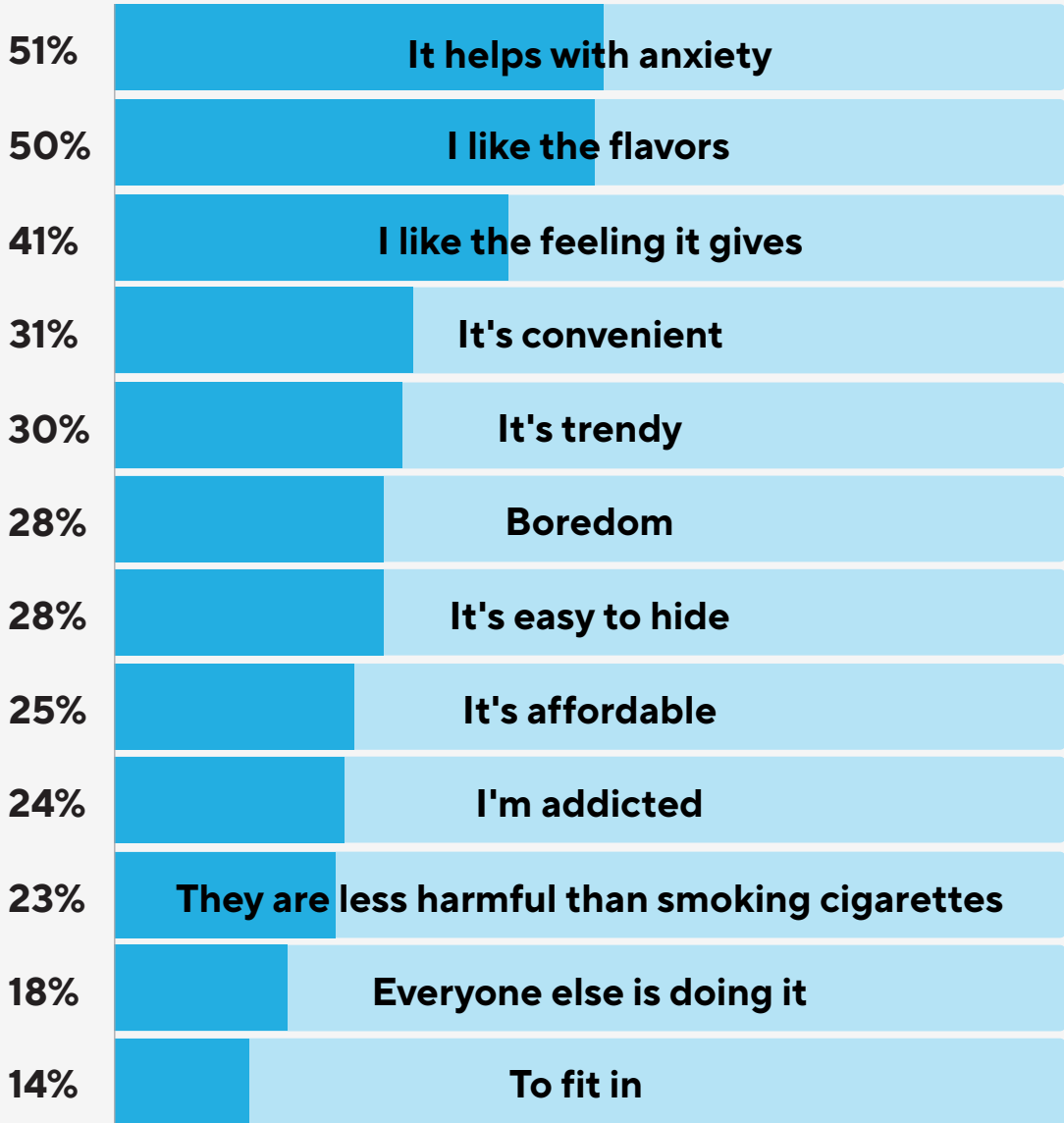


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Vaping teens have poorer mental and physical health than non-vaping teens.



Which of the following reasons describes why you vape?

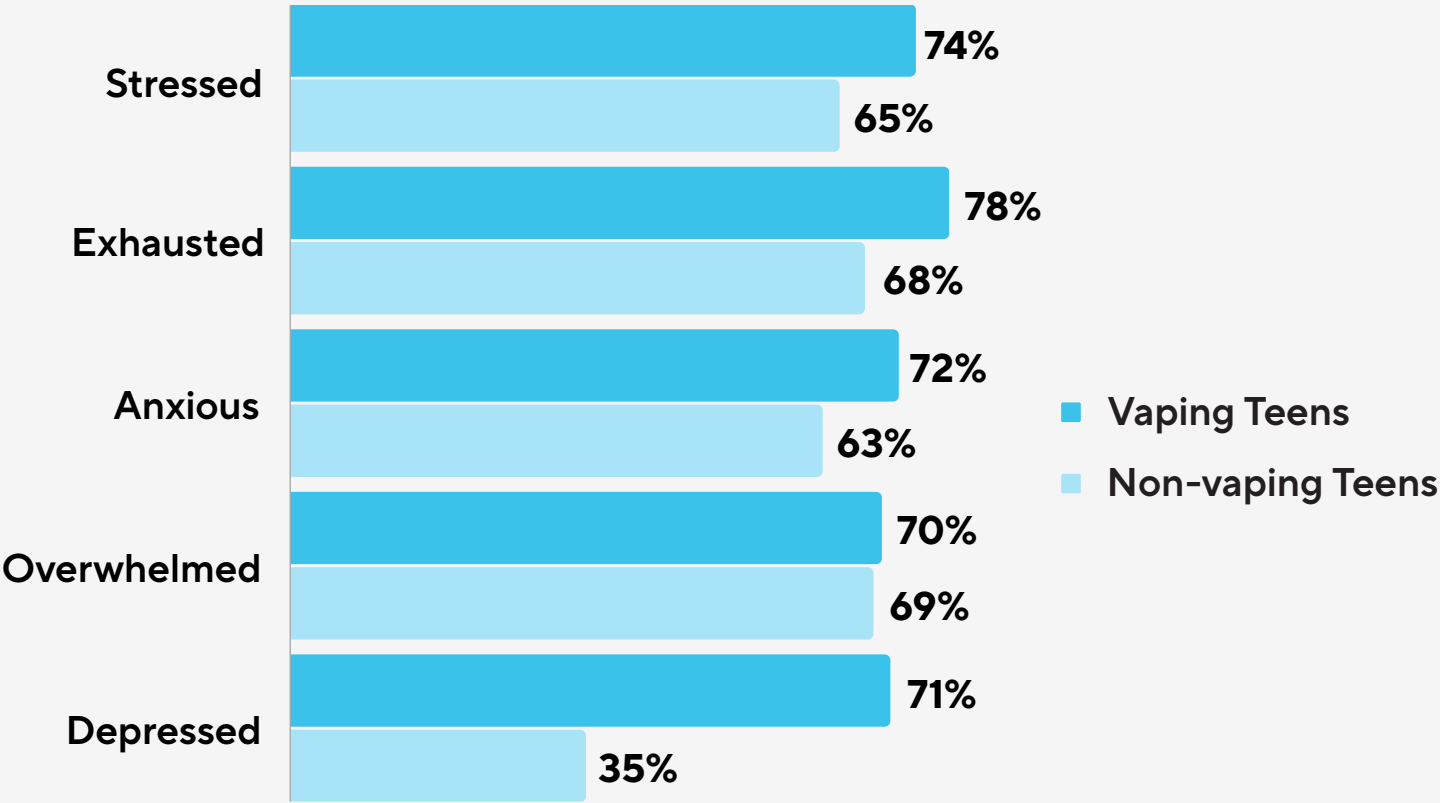


Base Respondents: vaping teens

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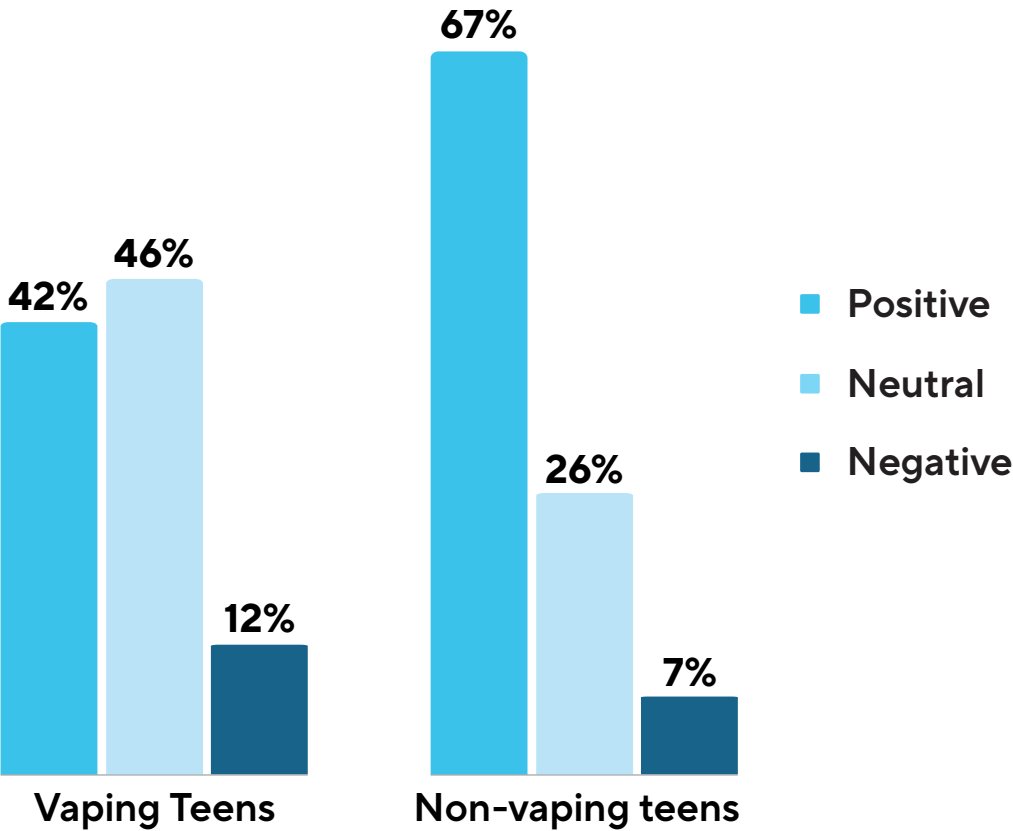
Twice as many vaping teens have felt depressed in the last month (vs. non-vaping teens).

Over the past month, I often/sometimes feel...



Non-vaping teens are more likely to feel positive about their physical health (67% vs. 42%).

Overall, how do you feel about your physical health?



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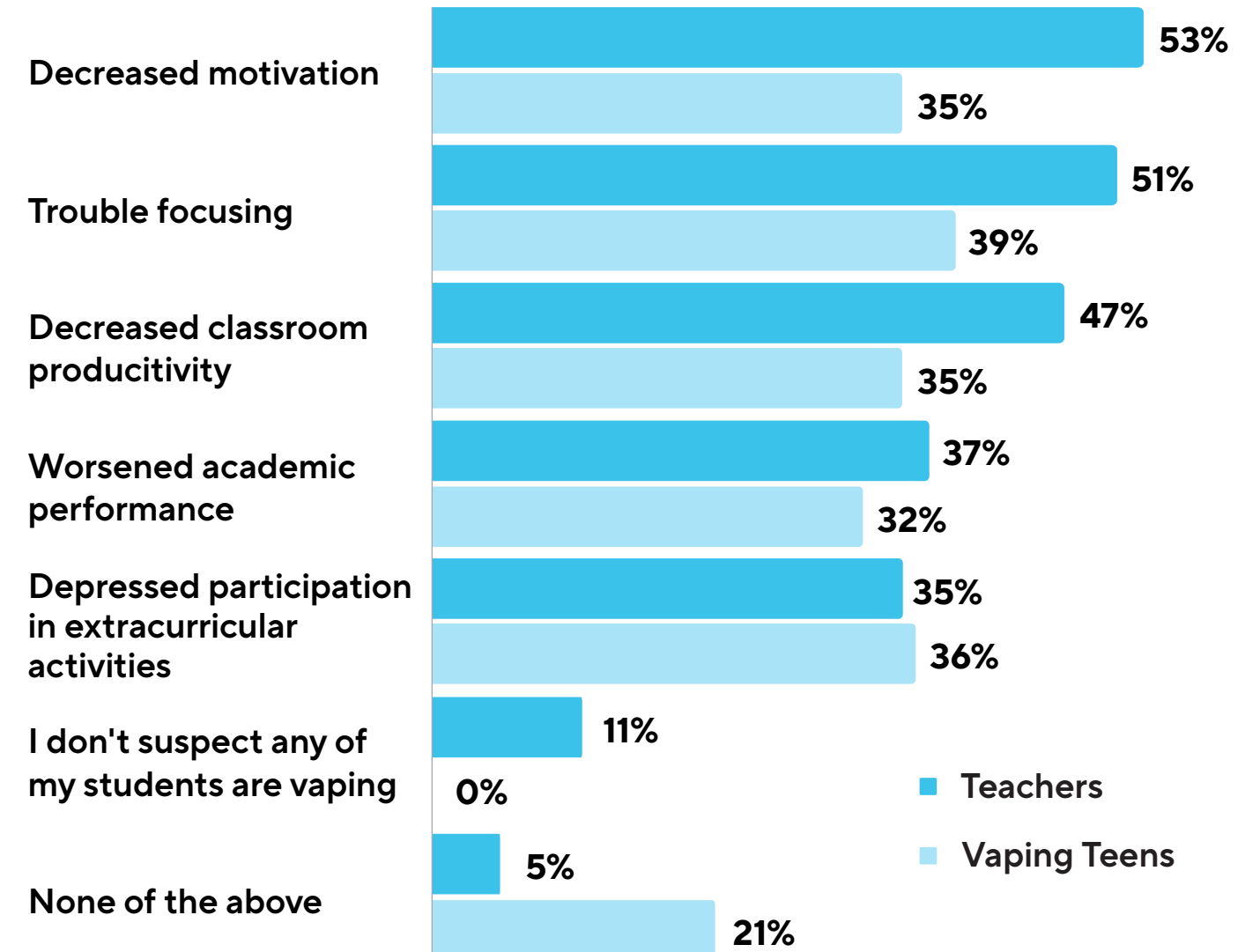
Teachers report seeing decreased motivation, attention spans and overall classroom productivity among vaping students.

Vaping teens see it too: 8 in 10 acknowledge that they notice students who vape exhibiting at least one of these behaviors.

79% of vaping teens notice at least one of these behaviors.



Do you notice any of the following behaviors among students who vape?

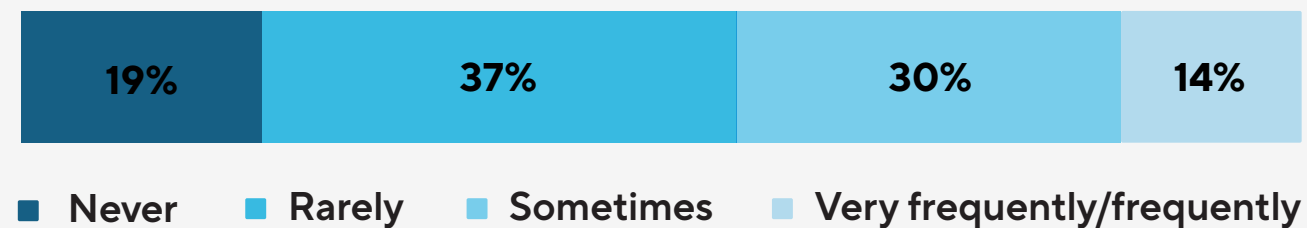


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This impacts everyone in the classroom.

More than 4 in 10 teachers deal with classroom disruptions due to vaping. Teachers see the link between the disruptions from vaping and lower overall student performance – and students do, too.

How often do teachers deal with classroom disruptions due to vaping?



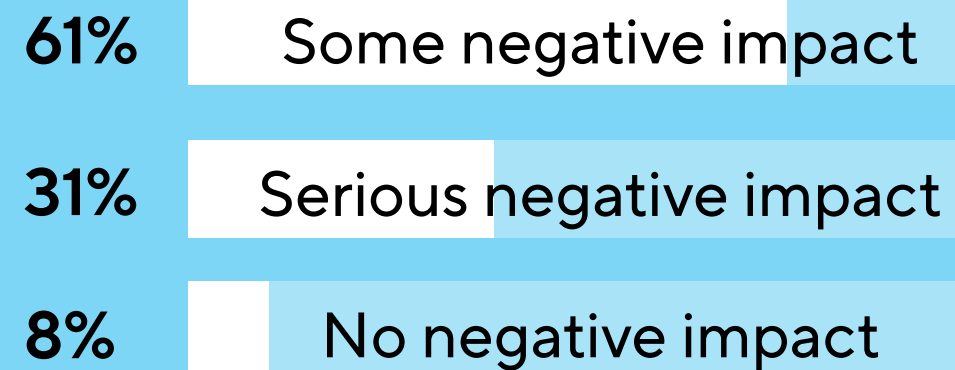
52% more than half of non-vaping teens agree that their learning potential is lessened due to classroom disruptions caused by vaping.

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And teachers see the link between the disruptions from vaping and lower overall student performance.



Do classroom disruptions due to vaping impact overall student academic performance?



Base Respondents: teachers

92% of teachers say classroom disruptions due to vaping have at least some negative impact on overall student academic performance.

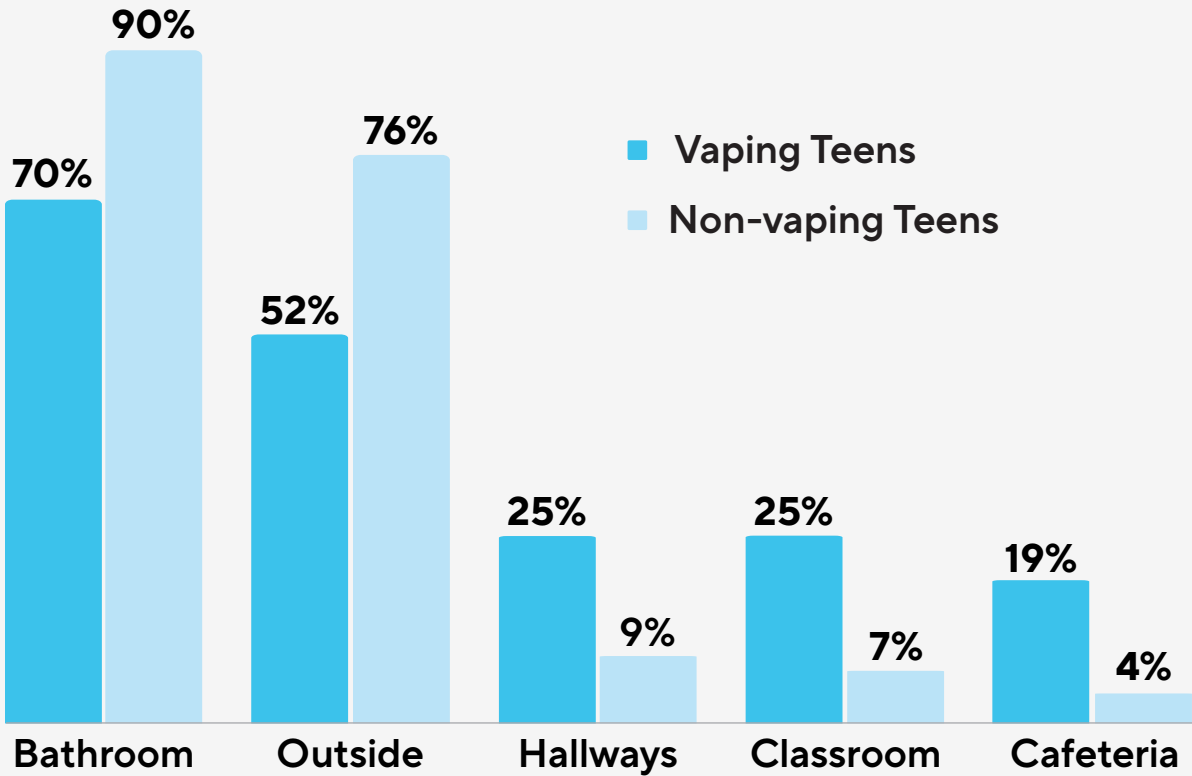
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Taking back control of the bathroom is critical to tackling the vaping epidemic.

The bathroom is by far the top venue for students to vape.



Where in school do people most often congregate to vape?



55%

55% of the teachers noticed a rise in bathroom requests from students who vape.

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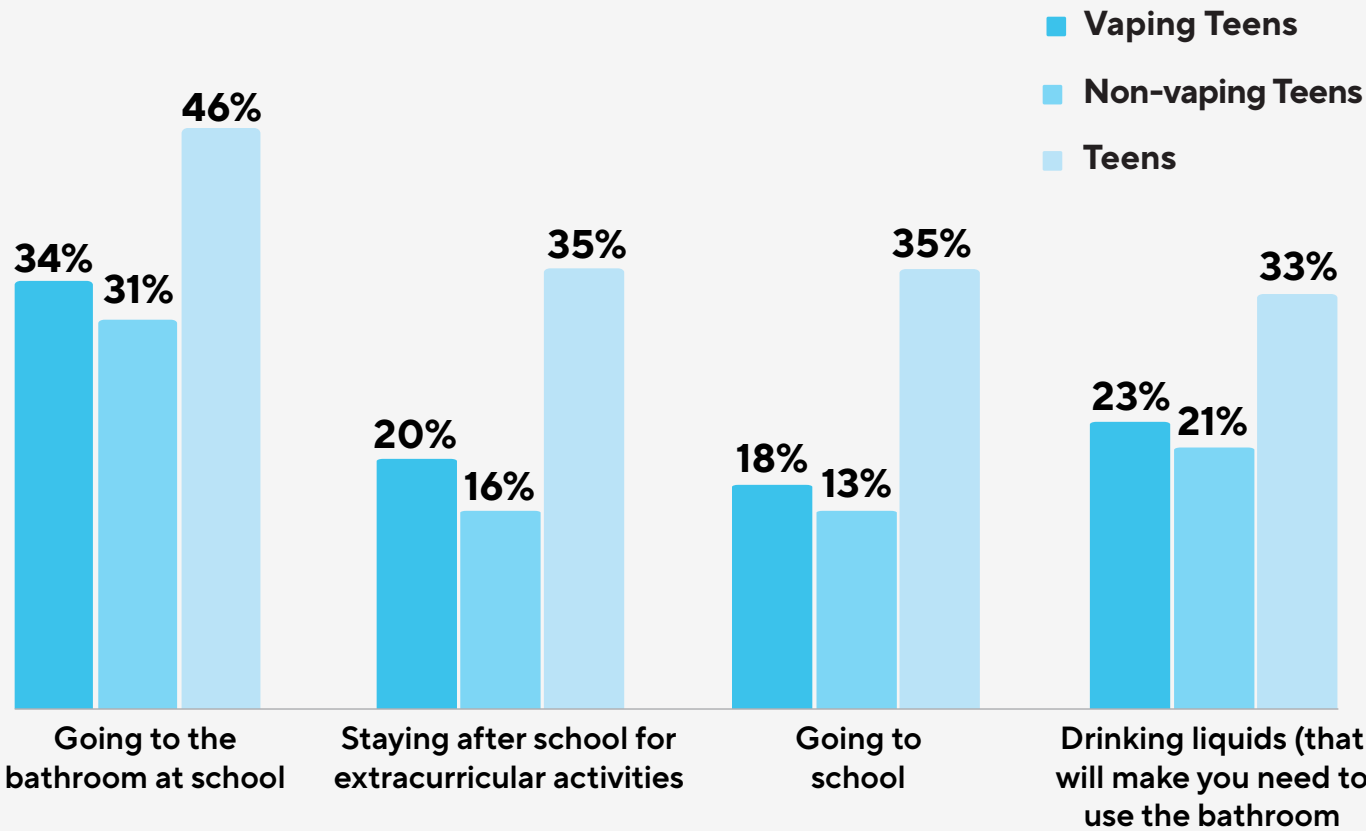
Teens are avoiding the bathroom for that reason, especially vaping teens.

Why? They're concerned about being around people who are vaping. **A third of teens have avoided going to the bathroom because of vaping** — and for vaping teens who want to quit, the number jumps to nearly two-thirds. They're even going as far as opting out of being at school entirely: vaping teens say they've avoided staying after school or even going to school at all because they were concerned about being around people who were vaping.

61% of vaping teens who want to quit have avoided going to the bathroom because they are concerned about being around people who are vaping.



Have you ever avoided doing any of the following because you were concerned about being around people who are vaping? (% Yes)

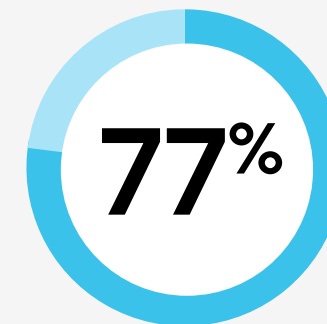


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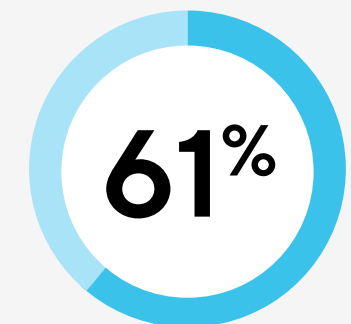
Students suggest that efforts from educators and parents to limit vaping in school aren't going well. Teachers argue that increased security and technology are the best tools to help them tackle it.



Vaping teens know that they can get away with vaping at school.



agree it is easy to vape at school without being noticed.



agree it is easy to vape at school without repercussions.



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Parents, teachers and even students see technology as part of the solution.



76%

Teachers

73%

Parents

71%

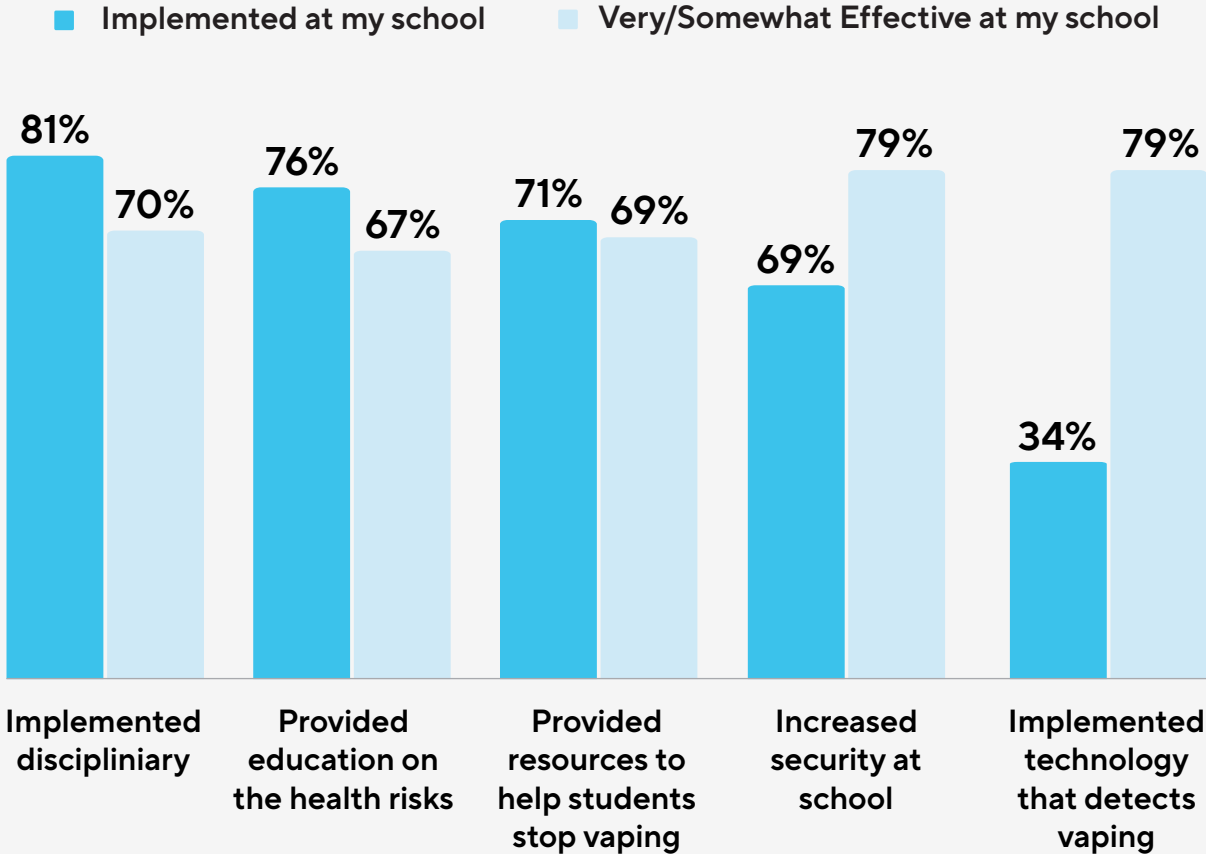
Teens

Agree that technology should be implemented in schools to detect vaping.

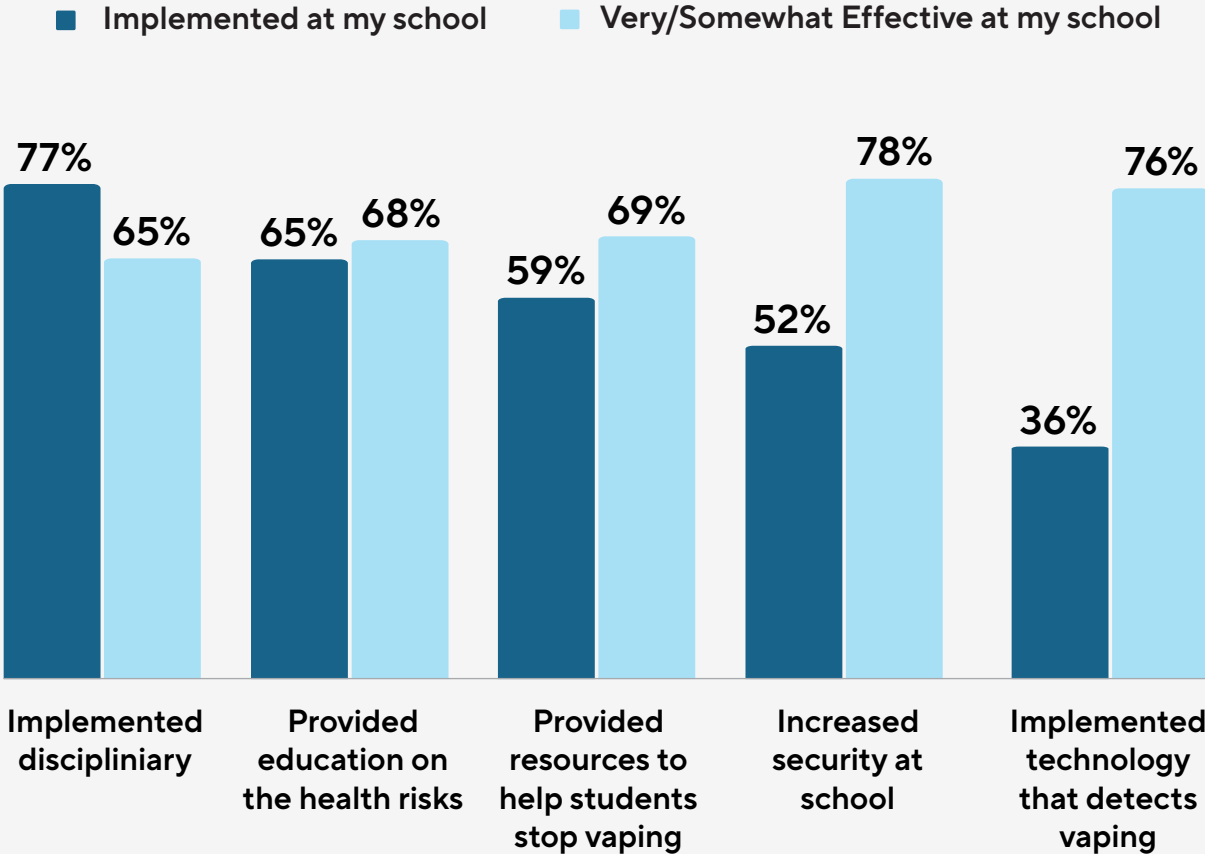
But right now, there’s a gap between what solutions work and what schools are doing.

💡 Teachers and teens agree that increasing security and implementing technology are the most effective ways to limit and reduce vaping among students, even though schools are not doing either nearly enough.

Teachers



Teens



Conclusion

Today's teenagers are coming to age in a time of constant change faster than anyone — parents, teachers, school administrators and even students themselves — can feasibly keep up with.

Vaping originated as a safer alternative to traditional cigarettes, but we now know just how harmful they can be, especially in the hands of teenagers. While early intervention — via educational programs — can help dissuade many teenagers from the onset, new, proactive measures and tools, such as [environmental sensors](#), can help combat teenage vaping through detection and swift intervention. Left alone, the prognosis for teens and teachers is foreboding.