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**Action on Smoking & Health (Alberta)**  
**Coalition québécoise pour le contrôle du tabac**  
**Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco**  
**Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

*\* SEE BELOW FOR LOCAL HUMAN INTEREST STORIES*

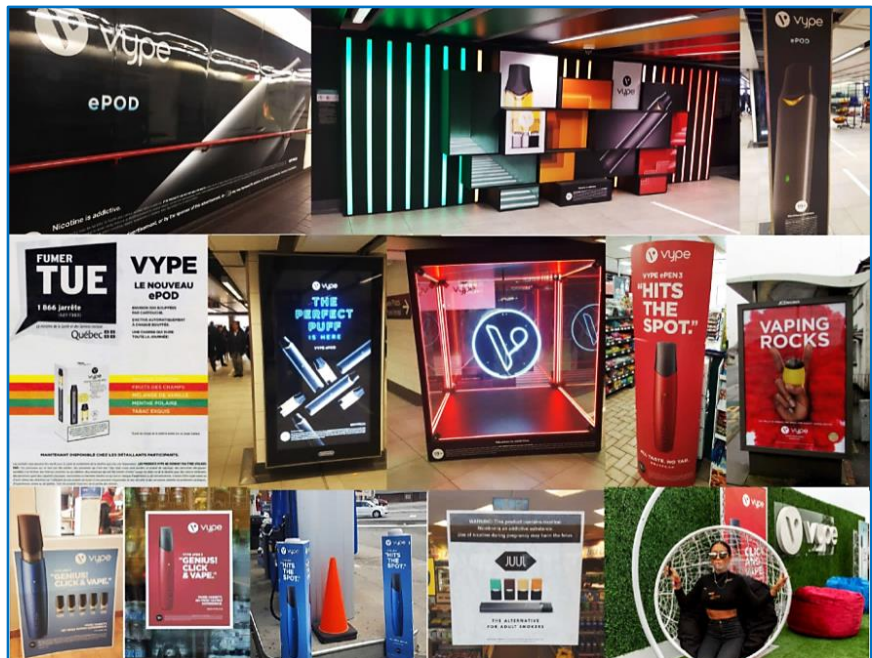
**CANADIANS SUPPORT URGENT GOVERNMENT ACTION  
TO ADDRESS YOUTH VAPING: LEGER POLL**  
**86% believe that advertising restrictions for vaping products  
should mirror those for tobacco products**

**Montreal, Ottawa, Edmonton, Toronto, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2019** – A new [national Léger poll](#) reveals that large majorities of Canadians support urgent action by the federal government to significantly restrict vaping product advertising to help curb increasing youth consumption of nicotine vaping products. [Recent revelations](#) have confirmed that Canada’s youth are following the same trends seen south of the border, where both the [FDA chief](#) and the [Surgeon General](#) have qualified the rise in youth vaping as “an epidemic”. Research has found that vaping [increases the risk of future smoking by as much as 400%](#). According to a new pan-Canadian Léger poll:

- ➔ **7 out of 10 (69%)** support **urgent intervention** by the government to fight young people’s use of vaping products.
- ➔ **8 out of 10 (82%)** support a **ban on Internet and television advertising** for vaping products with nicotine.
- ➔ **86%** believe that the government **should apply the same advertising restrictions** to vaping products with nicotine **as it does to tobacco products**.

The results strongly support [recent calls by health groups](#) for quick federal action to address what recent research has shown to be rapid increases in youth vaping across Canada.

With the adoption of **Bill S-5** on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018, the federal government opened the floodgates to widespread and aggressive marketing by vaping product manufacturers, including Big Tobacco. Advertisements have appeared on **TV**, on [outside billboards](#) and at [point of sale](#), on [subway walls](#), on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#), as well as massive [in-your-face artistic installations](#) and [street events](#).



### **Legislative vs regulatory action**

While **Health Minister Ginette Petitpas-Taylor** has come to recognize the urgent problem of youth vaping and nicotine addiction, the government's regulatory response has been limited to the launch of two consultations - one aiming to limit youth exposure to advertising and the other to regulate various attributes of vaping products including flavors, design and nicotine content. Health groups consider this approach wholly inadequate, pointing to the drawn-out regulatory process that could take years before any new measure is implemented<sup>1</sup>. The groups are reiterating their call for *immediate legislative action*, to be taken before the summer break. *"Passing a bill can take as little as a few weeks if there is political will, while adopting regulations could take years. Tens of thousands more kids will become addicted to nicotine by the time new regulations will come into effect,"* explains **Neil Collishaw, Research Director for Physicians for a Smoke-free Canada (PSC)**.

*"The general public appears to be just as outraged by the government's slow pace as we are. Seven out of 10 Canadians agree that the government needs to intervene in an urgent manner with concrete measures in order to fight this rampant, flagrant and reckless marketing that is resulting in the addiction of our kids."*

### **Bold measures needed**

Regulatory measures under consideration, as stated in **Health Canada's Notice of Intent to regulate**, would still permit nicotine e-cigarette ads on TV, on the Internet and in social settings like bars, in addition to sales over the Internet. *"The proposed measures are clearly insufficient. Everyone knows that kids are better at navigating the Internet than their parents! And allowing Internet sales makes it easier to set up illegal distribution networks as well as online sharing of brand elements and other promotional images,"* says **Michael Perley, Executive director on Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco**. *"86% of Canadians agree that the same advertising restrictions that apply to tobacco products should apply to vaping products: this includes 77% of smokers."*

*"It's already hard to believe that our government is allowing the sale of easily-concealed, trendy devices resembling USB keys with pods that can deliver more nicotine than a pack of cigarettes, and that are incredibly popular amongst teenagers. The least parliamentarians can do is to take responsibility for this debacle and stop making it easy for the nicotine industry to continue to addict our kids. The longer these predatory marketing campaigns are allowed, the more kids will get addicted,"* adds **Flory Doucas, co-director of the Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control**. *"It's very disturbing to see the lack of urgency displayed so far by the Health Minister, who seems to see no problem in kicking this can well beyond the fall election at great cost to the health of our nation's children and youth."*

**Les Hagen, Executive Director of Action on Smoking & Health**, adds: *"Every day, scores of young people are risking nicotine addiction and subsequent tobacco use. The government must move immediately to ban the blatant predatory marketing that it authorized last year while it continues to draft regulations for more complex measures that address **product design**, nicotine content and **flavours**. A vast majority of Canadians want advertising and marketing restrictions on vaping products aligned with those on tobacco products."*

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<sup>1</sup> According to **Health Canada's** "Forward Regulatory Plan: 2019 to 2021", a regulatory proposal is expected to be published in the Canada Gazette Part I for public comment period "in winter 2020". <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/about-health-canada/legislation-guidelines/acts-regulations/forward-regulatory-plan/plan/vaping-advertising-restrictions.html>

**CONTACTS:****National:**

- **Neil Collishaw (Ottawa)**, Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada: 613-297-3590

**Provincial:**

- **Flory Doucas (Montreal)**, Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control: 514-515-6780
- **Les Hagen (Edmonton)**, Action on Smoking & Health: 780-919-5546
- **Michael (Toronto)**, Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco: 416-349-2992 or 416-709-9075 (cell)

**Local witnesses to the youth vaping phenomenon:**

- **Jennifer Kennedy (Powell River, BC)**, vice-principal of Brooks High School: Ms. Kennedy's efforts to educate youth about the risks of nicotine vaping is made more difficult by the fact that advertising is allowed; vaping has skyrocketed at the school and the kids struggle with addiction is obvious. Contact: 604-483-3171.
- **Keith Axelson (Terrace, BC)**, principal at Caledonia Senior High School: Mr. Axelson sharp increases in student vaping. There used to be a crowd of 20-25 smoking close to school grounds, and that has not increased to 50-70 students smoking and vaping (mostly vaping). He now has to deal with more discreet devices (USB-type), catching vapers in bathrooms, confiscating devices, disciplinary action, etc. He feels that kids are being misled by ads and other information on the Internet, that they are seduced by alluring flavours and that it's too easy to get them as they can be sold online. Contact: [Keith.Axelson@cmsd.bc.ca](mailto:Keith.Axelson@cmsd.bc.ca)
- **Julie Gaalaas (Camrose, AB)**, respiratory therapist, mother of two teenage daughters and local champion to reduce tobacco use: Ms Gaalaas was shocked to learn that both of her daughters were addicted to vaping products, which they continue to struggle with. Although she has discussed the harms of tobacco use with her daughters on numerous occasions over the years, the topic of vaping never came up until it was too late. Now she is working to educate other parents and policy makers regarding the growing phenomenon of youth vaping, but has to do this in a context that allows marketing seen by youth. Contact: 780-678-9142 or [gaalaasjulie@icloud.com](mailto:gaalaasjulie@icloud.com)
- **Constable Joshua Maeda (Edmonton, AB)**, constable and school resource officer for the Edmonton Police Service who works at an Edmonton high school: Constable Maeda is very concerned about the rise in teen vaping and is often asked to intervene with students who are caught vaping at school, including taking disciplinary actions such as issuing fines and school suspensions. Youth vaping has become one of the leading causes of student suspensions in Edmonton high schools and the problem only seems to be getting worse, especially with the introduction of kiddie-vapes like Juul and Vype. Contact: 780-984-4103 or [3410@edmontonpolice.ca](mailto:3410@edmontonpolice.ca)