Trends in tobacco and nicotine use in the United States

The two charts that follow are annotated to show salient features of the most recent data on youth smoking in the United States. The first is from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, published June 20171.

Figure 1: changes in patterns of youth nicotine use United States 2011-16

The second is from the 2016 University of Michigan Monitoring the Future survey, which has a time series dating back to 1975 for 12th grade smoking2.

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The third shows that the use of e-cigarettes is far less problematic than the headline numbers might suggest. Though e-cigarette use rose sharply, from 2011-15 then fell back in 2016, much of this was occasional or experimental use. Also, students reported that most of their use did not involve nicotine liquids.

Importantly, adult smoking has fallen at a rapid rate over the period vaping has risen.

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