

Evaluation of Youth-Tobacco Awareness Class (Y-TAC)

Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance (HCADA)

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UNIVERSITY of
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Presentation Outline



Background: Vaping Prevalence and Health Issues

What is Y-TAC?

Purpose of this Study

Methodology: Quantitative and Qualitative

Results

Discussion/Recommendations

Conclusions

Background: Vaping Prevalence



TOBACCO PRODUCT USE AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



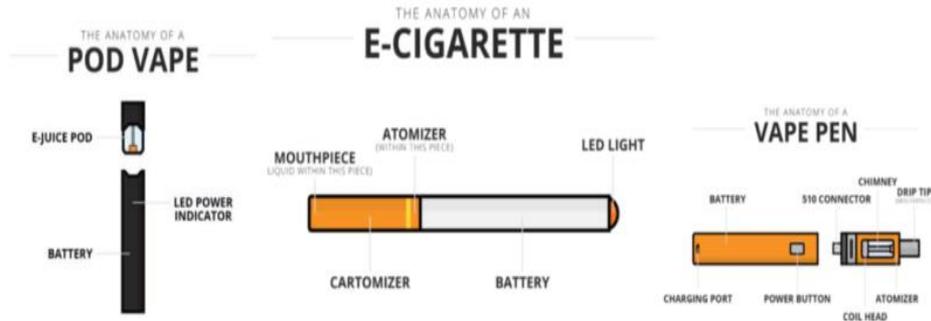
Learn more at bit.ly/NYTS-2019

Source: National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2019



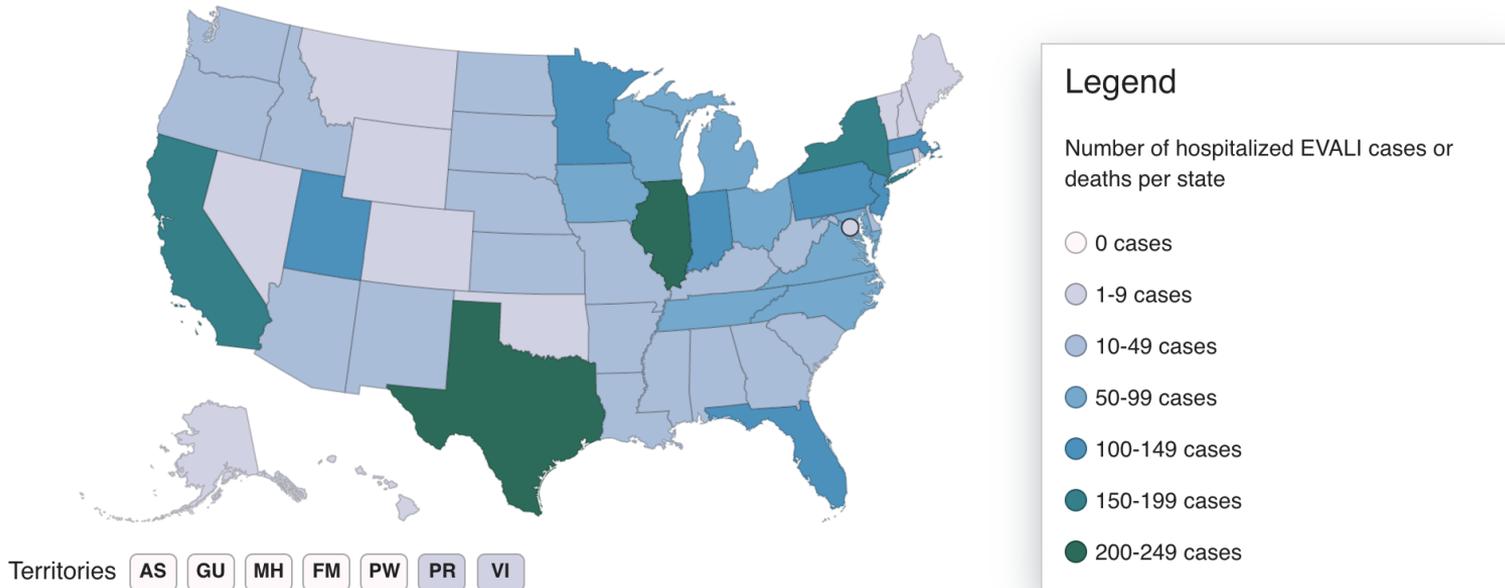
Background Information

- Battery operated devices that are used to inhale an aerosol that typically contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals ¹
- The prefrontal cortex is one of the last areas to mature in the adolescent brain ²
- Vaping could act as a catalyst for smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes in adolescence ³



E-cigarette, or Vaping, Product Use-Associated Lung Injury (EVALI)

Number of Hospitalized EVALI Cases or Deaths Reported to CDC as of February 18, 2020



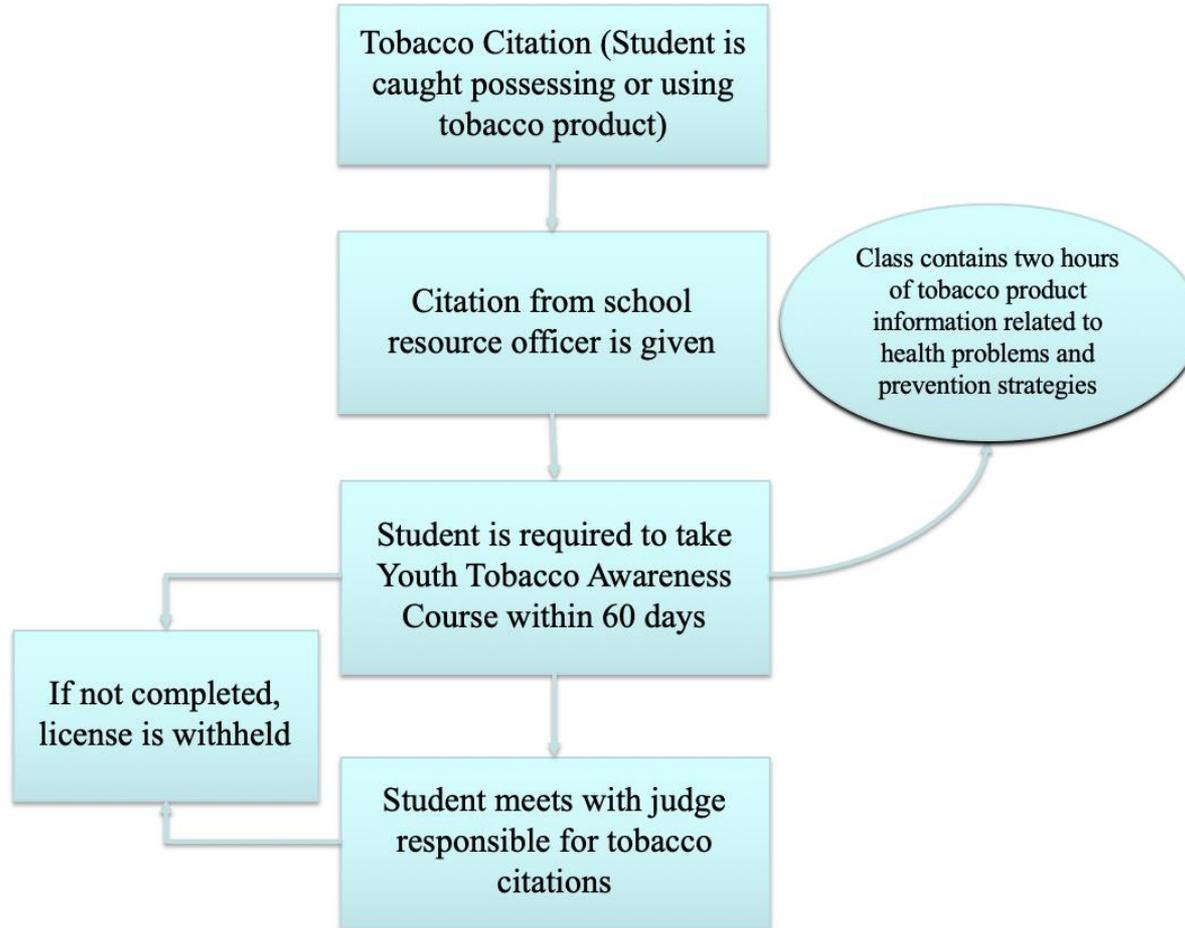
Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance



- Efforts began in 1989
- Focus on community-based alcohol, tobacco, and substance abuse education and prevention activities

Youth-Tobacco Awareness Class (Y-TAC)

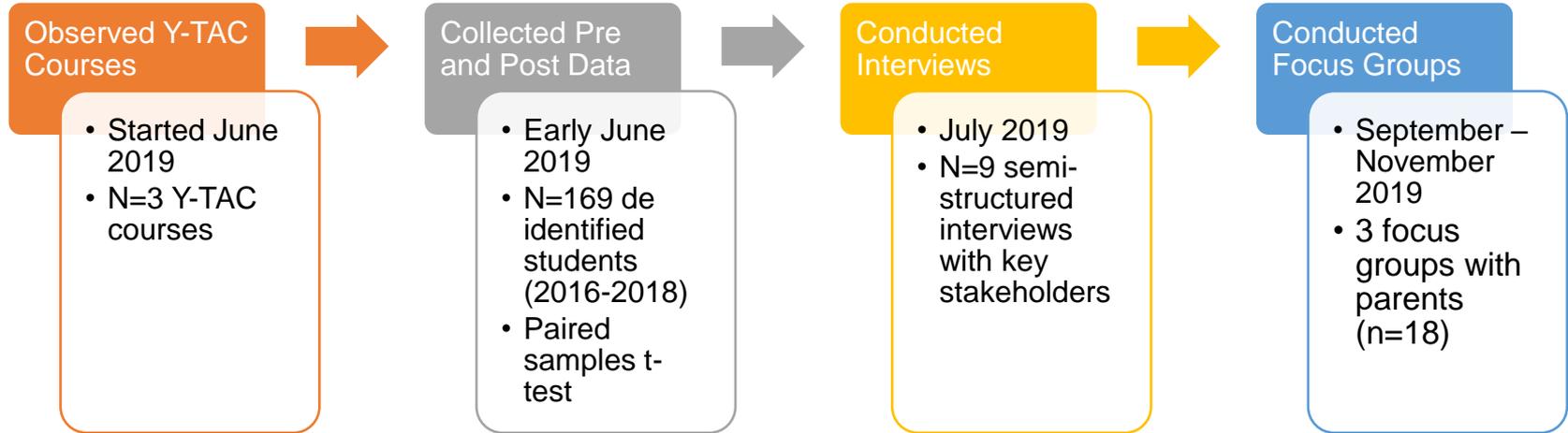
- Once a month at courthouse downtown
- Instructor and PowerPoint
- Class size ranges from 4-30 students
- Ages 9-18 (elementary, middle, and high school students)



Goals of Study

1. Examine the effectiveness of the awareness course through collected pre and post test data
2. Assess perceived effectiveness and attitudes of the awareness course as well as how electronic cigarettes are effecting adolescents in Hillsborough County by conducting interviews and a focus group
3. Describe ways to possibly modify the HCADA Youth Tobacco Awareness Course to improve outcomes

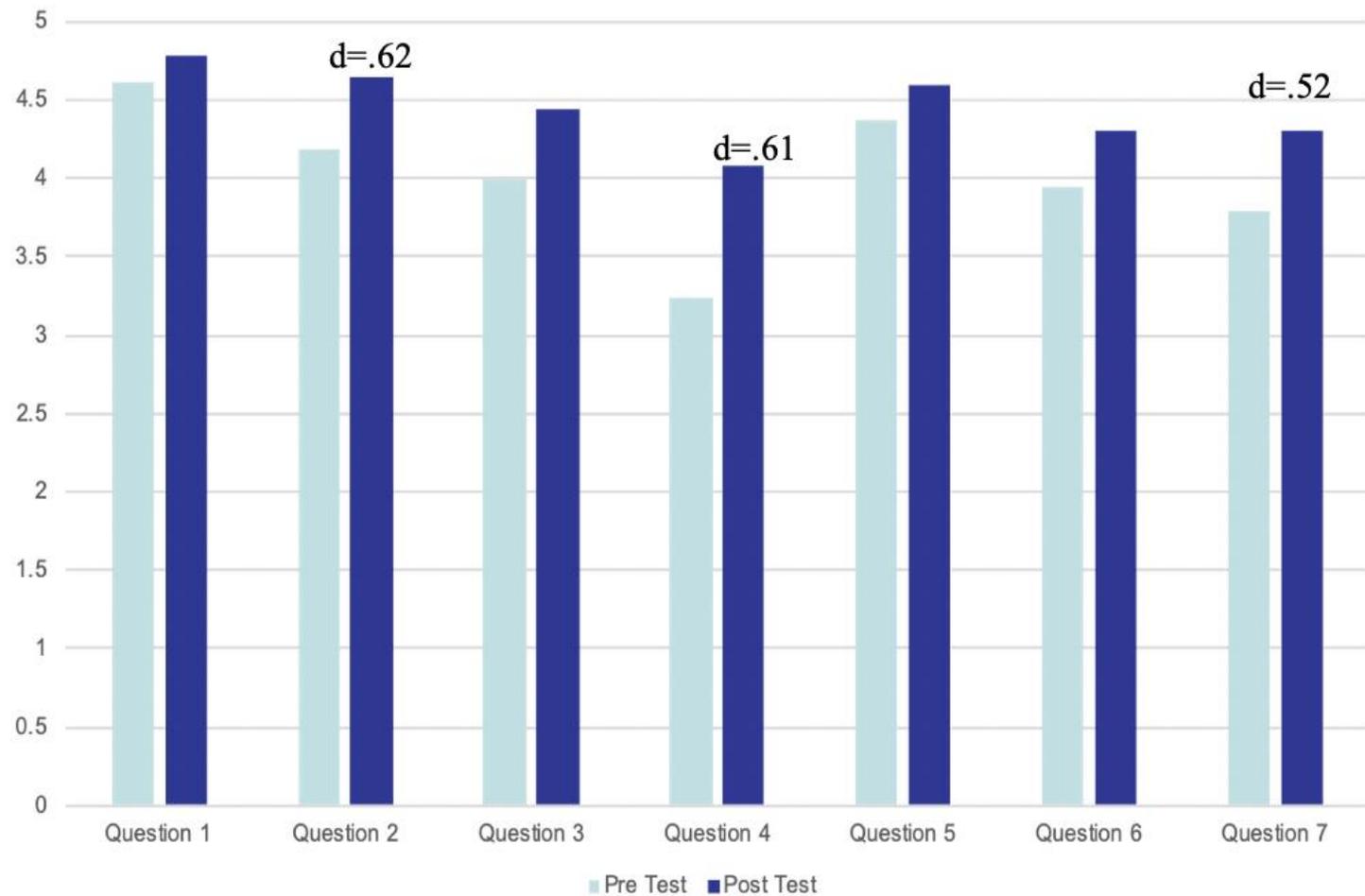
Methodology Timeline: Case Study Approach



Results



Pre and Post Test Score Means



Pre-Post Test Analysis

1. I am aware of at least one thing about the effects of tobacco.

2. 1 in 3 smokers will die from smoking-related causes such as heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, other lung diseases, and other cancers.

3. There are immediate benefits to stop using tobacco.

4. Tobacco advertisements make their products look cool, sexy, attractive, and/or fun.

5. Resources are available to help those who want to quit tobacco use.

6. I have thought about quitting tobacco use.

7. I have a desire to quit using tobacco.

- N = 169 de-identified students (2016-2018)
- Paired sample t-tests conducted

Semi-Structured Interviews

- **What are your experiences surrounding tobacco products in school and the community?**

“Marketing is a big problem. It is in a grey area for electronic cigarettes, and companies are taking advantage of this.” (HCADA)

“epidemic” (Parent)

- **Do you personally believe that the Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliances Youth Tobacco Awareness Course is effective for students?**

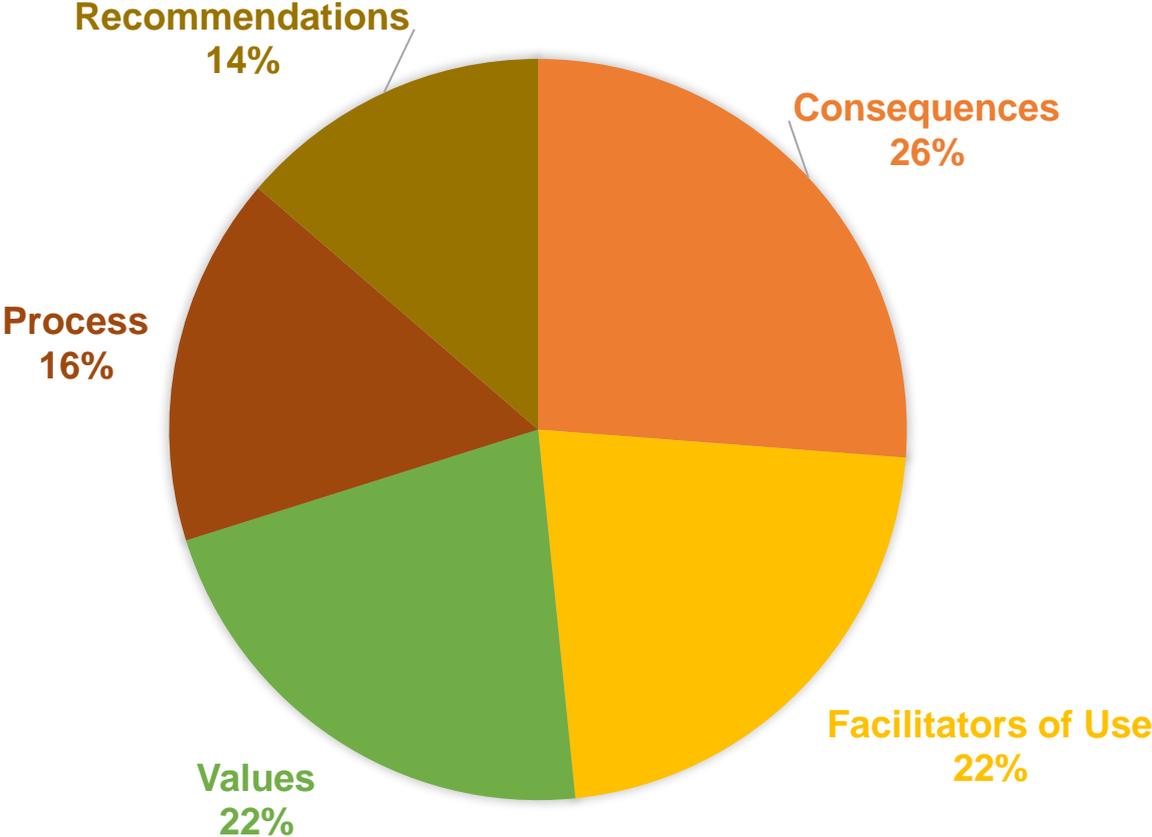
“Students seem to think twice about their actions after getting caught... as a collective whole it makes an impact in preventing tobacco product usage.” (TPD)

“a tremendous burden and inconvenience to the parents...it is zero consequence to the kids.” (Parent)

- **What do you think would be an appropriate consequence for a student using or possessing tobacco products in school?**

“a two-hour course may not be enough.” (HCSO)

Focus Groups- Major Themes



1. Values

- Concern for E-cigarette Use
 - “look at how many people that they say have been **hospitalized or killed.**”
 - “I’m like, I don’t know. But, **what are they smoking?** That’s a big concern.”
 - “E-cigarettes can have way **more things than just nicotine.**”
- Parent Involvement (Positive)
 - “So that's what scares me and **I want to like scare him**, scare the bejesus out of him so he don't do it. You know what I mean?”
 - You know, you have to have a good relationship with your kids. Like you can't be too strict...You know there **has to be a line of mutual respect.** Yeah, but you can't be too strict or too soft. You know? You gotta have like a happy medium.”
- Parent Involvement (Negative)
 - “He was like, cause I've always told him, I said, you'll get caught. You're going to get and when you do. I'm just going to look at it. **I'm not paying for nothing.**”

2. Consequences

- Guardian Enforced
 - “Mathew really got a lot of consequences on this. His **driving privileges were revoked**. He spent a month on restriction. **No electronics** whatsoever. “If you are awake, make sure you have the band or pick up a book.” He had to **work on the property to pay back the money** that it cost for this class and the \$30.00 fine.”
 - “What I did was **he is still grounded** since this happened and pretty much what I did on my part is **the phone comes to me when he is out of school**.
- School Enforced
 - “Why are the punishments different? Why did you get five days and mine got three?”
 - “Then I get a call from the principal, and he tells me their punishment, which is two days out of school suspension, and I was a little short with him for similar reasons and **I said I don’t think that’s a good idea. He’s going to miss assignments.** He’s going to miss - **can we do in-school suspension?** He said that this was our policy regarding this nature of this crime or whatever he said.”

3. Process

- Misinformation

- “He [The SRO] gave me two options, “Pay a half and go to class or just pay the full amount and you’re done.” **If it wasn’t for me calling to inquire** about the notice of hearing I got in the mail, **I would have never known about this class** because I mailed the citation in, which is on the back.”
- “**Nobody is on the same page** with the same information. It’s ridiculous.”
- “The **deputy tells me incorrect information** and now I’m supposed to **trust** that what you’re telling me is true. I know I’ve paid the money. We’re going to pay the money when we get to the class. His class will have been completed and **I’m just supposed to take your word over the phone** not to show up to court”
- “I called them [the court] and she said to me, ‘**No, what the deputy told you was incorrect**, you have to pay the \$30.00 and go to the class,’ and this is the next class, which is today. ‘As long as you do those two things, you don’t have to show up to court.’ I said, “Wait a minute...”

4. Facilitators of Use

- Accessibility
 - “There are 19, 20, 25-year-old kids that are selling it to these little ones, 14-16, because **they know where to get them**”
- Flavoring
 - “Cigarette packs now have that Surgeon General’s warning or whatever. That’s not on the vape thing, because it’s **fruity and it tastes good, and it’s fun.**”
- Peer Pressure
 - “I think it’s **who they hang out** with too. **Kids are a big influence** on the choices that kids make.”
- Trendy and Lack of Knowledge
 - “It’s just that **new trend** that’s available, they think **it’s cool** but they don’t know how severe it is.”

5. Recommendations

- Educational Resources

- For parents

- “I feel like you could start with a **pamphlet** that parents could research— I don’t even know all the language, to be honest, but where they could at least research that to see or attend it because the kids know.”

- For youth

- “Instead of the auditorium-type base classes, they don’t really take it seriously, put them in a small setting, let them talk and take it seriously”
 - “Maybe the repetition of hearing from different people in different ways.”
 - “Graphic and detailed. Don’t sugarcoat it.”

- Direct Exposure to Consequences

- “I think, at this age, **they just think that they’re indestructible**, and so, really, how do you get that across to them, to think eventually maybe as kids are being hospitalized with respiratory distress and things like that, but maybe bringing some of those kids in to **share their experience** at some point may help if they **regret** their decision after the fact.”

Discussion

What did we learn?

- Youth Tobacco Awareness Class is effective in changing youth attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge
- There is a need for better communication between schools, law enforcement, the court, HCADA, and parents
- Parents with youth cited for tobacco use in Hillsborough County need better guidance related to the citation process and vaping education

Study Limitations

- Key variables are missing
 - Instructor, school, student age, student gender, number of past offenses
- Obtaining IRB approval to interview Y-TAC students
 - Time and logistical constraints

Future Research

- Start tracking key variables
 - To improve Y-TAC implementation, tracking of key variables (instructor, school, age, gender, repeat offenders, etc.) is needed to better understand distribution and demographics of this issue
- Determine proper evaluation methods
 - Survey is a great start, but more can be done to ensure concepts are being grasped by students
- Gain student perspectives
 - Youth understand each other better
 - Can provide insight into what motivates use vs. no use

Practice Recommendations

- Y-TAC Program
 - Have students write a research paper
 - Write a letter to the judge
 - Harsher punishment for repeat offenders
 - Monthly educational seminars for parents
- Community
 - Increase prevention information in schools
 - Treat e-cigarettes as drug paraphernalia
 - Create consistent punishments across the county (i.e. number of days and type of punishment)
 - Provide parents with pamphlets to guide them through the citation process

Policy Implications

Decrease Accessibility

- Raise the legal age limit (Law got passed!)
- Place stronger restrictions on e-cigarette distributors
- Place larger fines and/or harsher punishments for underage tobacco use and possession laws

Conclusions: Take home message

- Community-based awareness/education classes, like the Y-TAC, are an effective first step to addressing youth drug use
- In order to make the citation process more efficient, synergy is needed among the key stakeholders
- When addressing youth issues, parental perspectives must be taken into consideration due to their major role

Acknowledgements

Hillsborough County Anti-Drug Alliance

Faculty Advisor Dr. Kathleen Moore

Peer Mentor Alexandra Albizu-Jacob

Amanda Sharp

Translational Research Institute



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