Examining Appeal of and Reasons for E-Cigarette Use among Kentucky Youth

Courtney C. Martin[2], Mary Ellen Mallory[2], Gabrielle Cochran[1], Melinda J. Ickes, PhD[2]

1 Department of Health, Behavior & Society, College of Public Health, University of Kentucky
2 Department of Kinesiology and Health Promotion, College of Education, University of Kentucky

PREVENT

Background

- **12.5%** of Americans reported smoking cigarettes according to the CDC in 2020.[1]
- **14.1%** of high school students in the US reported e-cigarette use in the past 30 days.[2]
- While the cigarette use has declined remarkably over the years, it has been met with high rates of e-cigarette use.

Teens More Likely to Use E-Cigarettes Than Cigarettes
Percent of teenagers who said they used e-cigarettes/cigarettes in the past month (2018)

Cigarettes / E-cigarettes (vaping)*

- 8th grade: 2.2% / 6.1%
- 10th grade: 4.2% / 16.1%
- 12th grade: 7.6% / 20.9%

* containing nicotine
Survey of 44,482 students
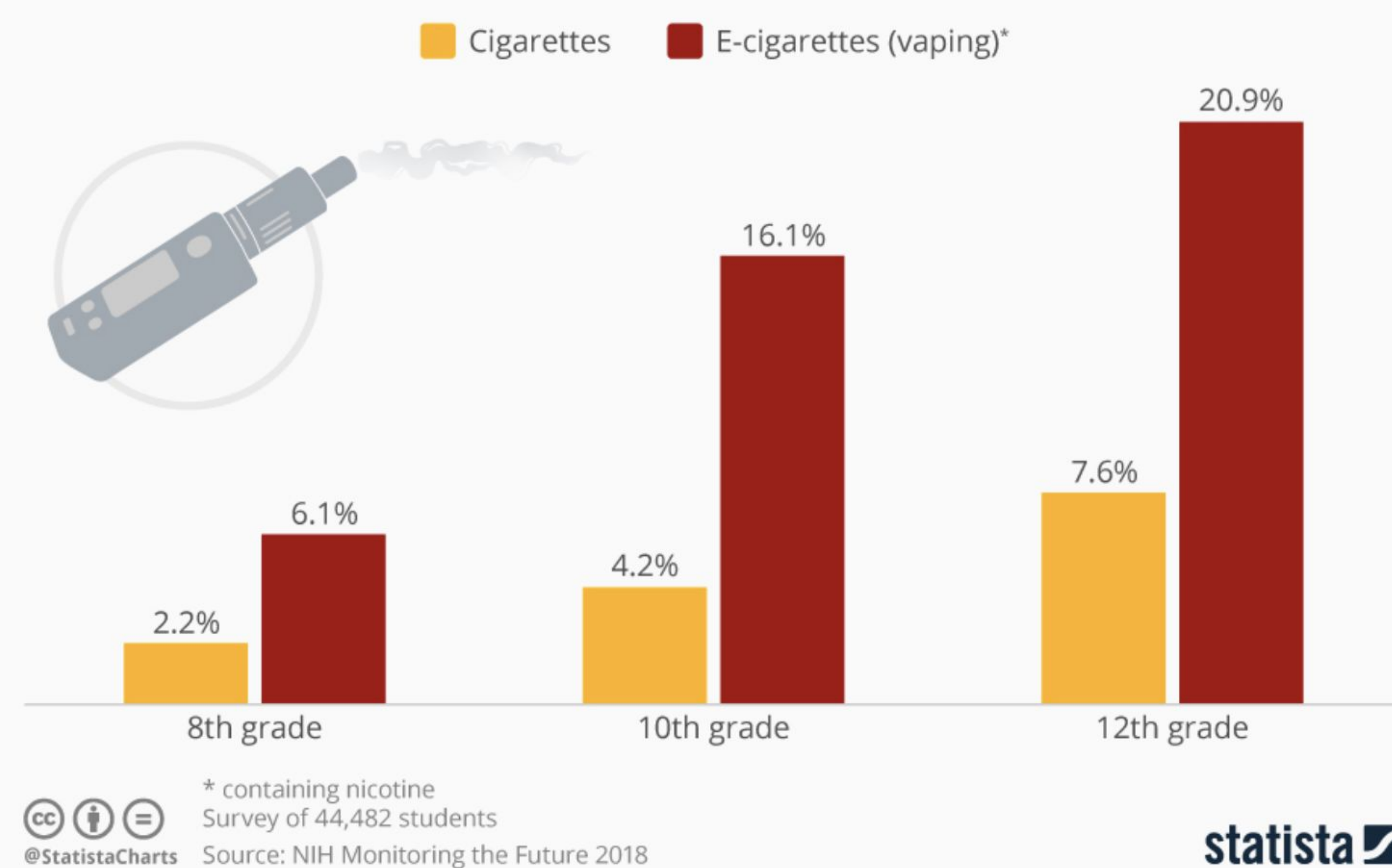@StatistaCharts Source: NIH Monitoring the Future 2018
statista

Fig 1. KY E-Cigarettes vs. Cigarettes among Youth[3]

The Industry

- The Tobacco Industry uses numerous marketing strategies to specifically **target youth** and works intentionally to secure lifelong customers.
- **Flavors**, for example, in 2021, 81% of students who reported e-cigarette use reported using a flavored product.[4]
- "*The ability to attract new smokers and develop them into a young adult franchise is key to brand development,*" Tobacco Free Kids.[5]

Methods

- Students from schools participating in an e-cigarette prevention program during the 2022-2023 school year were invited to participate in a baseline survey to determine knowledge prior to implementation.
- Responses were collected via anonymous, online Qualtrics survey.
- Cross-sectional data were extracted from the baseline survey and analyzed for this poster.
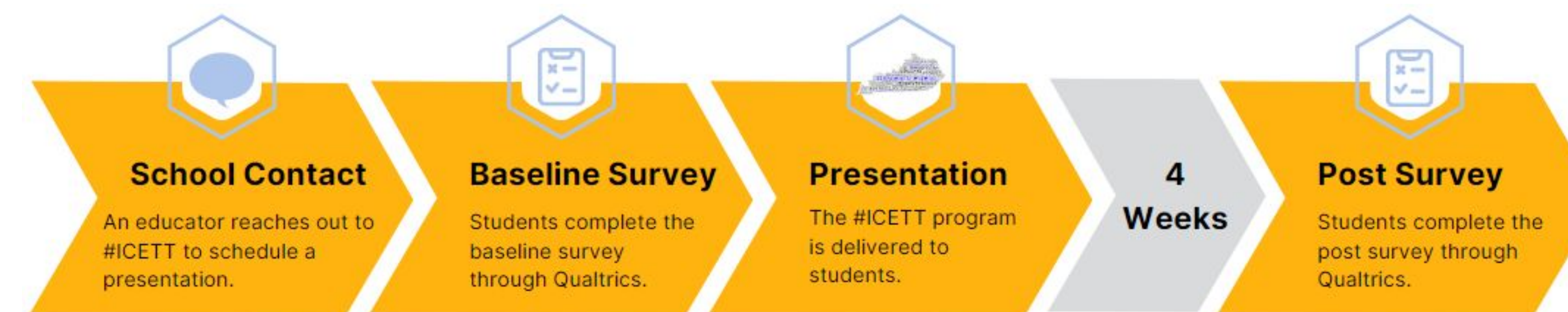

School Contact — An educator reaches out to #ICETT to schedule a presentation.
Baseline Survey — Students complete the baseline survey through Qualtrics.
Presentation — The #ICETT program is delivered to students.
4 Weeks
Post Survey — Students complete the post survey through Qualtrics.

Fig 2: #iCANendthetrend Survey Timeline

Measures

Rank the following 1-5, with 1 meaning no influence and 5 meaning maximum influence. **Between 1-5, how much influence does each of the following have on your choice to use e-cigarettes?**

Curiosity	Safe to Use
To quit cigarettes	Social Image (Fit In)
Family member uses	Choices of Flavors
Friend uses	Peer Influence
Social media influence	Stress Relief

Results

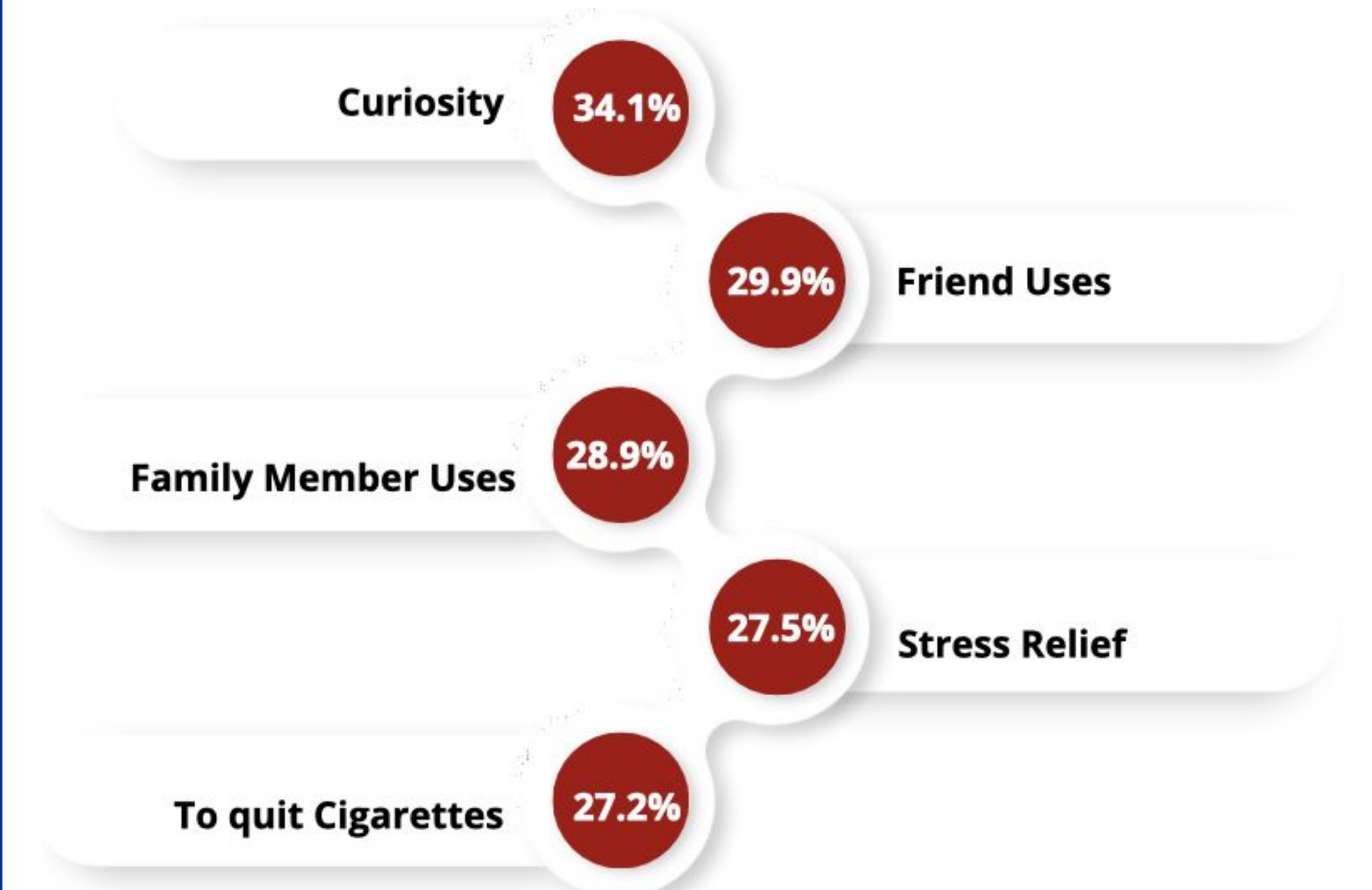4,493 students participated. Of which, 1,755 were HS and 2,738 were MS.

- Curiosity: 34.1%
- Friend Uses: 29.9%
- Family Member Uses: 28.9%
- Stress Relief: 27.5%
- To quit Cigarettes: 27.2%

Fig 3: Percent of Middle and High School Students reporting some Influence of X Factor.

*Some influenced was defined as a response of 2-5

Implications/Future Directions

- Factors potentially influencing use were widely varied and there was not one factor that was overwhelmingly influential.
- Understanding reasons for initiation is key to the development of future programming.
- Given the changing landscape of e-cigarettes, continued data collection is needed.
- Tailored, culturally relevant approaches must reflect youth perspective.

References