


Is it all smoke without fire?



Welsh Primary School Children's Perceptions of Electronic Cigarettes

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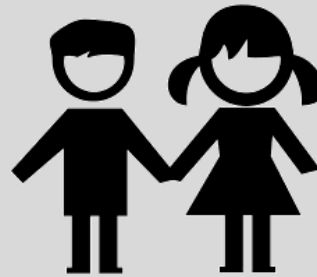
Zara Quigg, Jane Harris, Charlotte Bigland, Rebecca Bates, Hannah
Timpson, Ivan Gee, Julie Bishop, Ashley Gould and Alisha Davies

Background



~ 2.8 million adult
e-cigarette users
in GB

(ASH, 2016a)



2331 adolescent
e-cigarette users
(aged 11-18)
in GB

(ASH, 2016b)



Regular use rare
amongst young
never smokers

(Bauld et al, 2017)

Background

Increasing popularity and rapid growth of e-cigarettes has raised concerns about impact on children and young people:

- potential gateway to tobacco smoking for young never-smokers
- increased experimentation leading to a renormalisation of smoking
- potential health consequences of e-cigarette use

Little known about young children's perceptions of e-cigarettes



understanding what children think is important

Study Aims

To provide insight into Welsh primary school children's (ages 7-11) awareness of electronic cigarettes relative to tobacco smoking, their beliefs about vaping and smoking and understanding of the risks and benefits



Sample



498 children
from
8 primary schools
purposively
selected for
maximum
variation



Girl



52.2%
(n=258)

Boy



47.8%
(n=236)

Age 7



33.3%
(n=165)

Age 9



37.4%
(n=185)

Age 11



29.3%
(n=145)

Total numbers vary between gender and year due to missing data

Mixed Methods

Draw & Write

(N = 498)

Class based / small group activity in which children completed 2 inquiries about smoking and vaping

Questionnaire

(N = 498)

Class based / small group activity

Peer Discussions

(n = 96)

Four children (2 boys / 2 girls) from each class took part in a semi-structured peer discussion

Inquiry 2. Think about a situation where someone is using an electronic cigarette. Think about who this person might be and why they are using an electronic cigarette. Think about what it would smell like if you were standing beside them. Describe using words and drawings:

Who is this person (boy/girl, age)?

How do they feel?

Why are they using an electronic cigarette?













What does using an electronic cigarette do to their body?

What do you see and smell?

2a. What is this person doing?

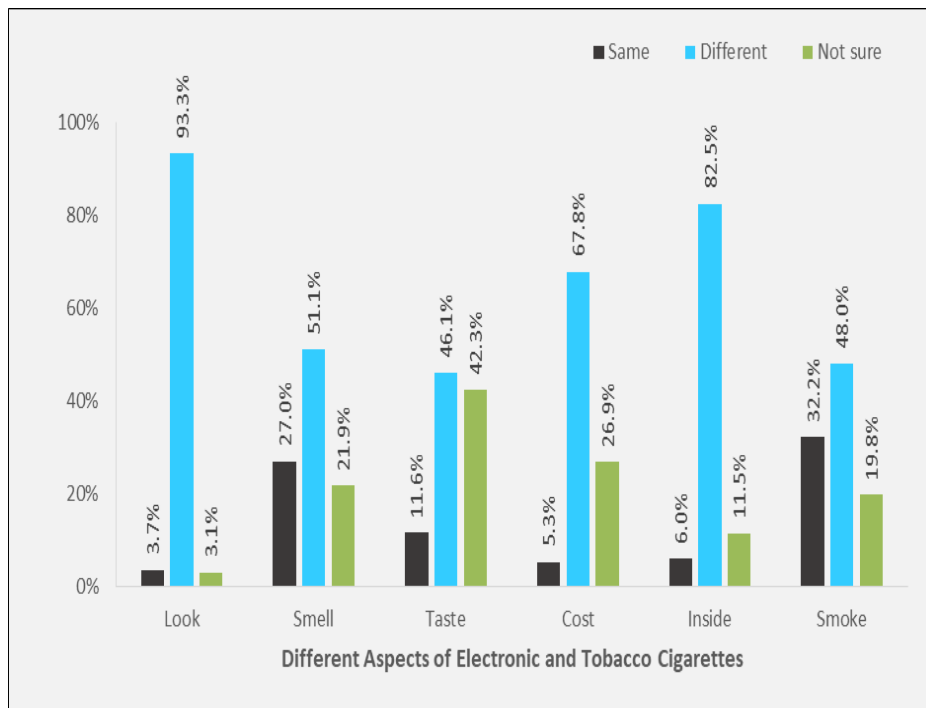
2b. What is this person doing?

3. Put a DJ through the answer you think is best:

 LOOK the	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	
 SMELL the	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	
 TASTE the	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	
 COST the	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	
The inside of  are	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	
The smoke of  are	SAME	DIFFERENT	NOT SURE	




Children are aware of electronic cigarettes and can differentiate them from tobacco cigarettes












“They [electronic cigarettes] don’t have any tobacco in”
(Male, Aged 9, School 7)

Girl, Aged 11, School 5, Electronic Cigarettes

People smoke electric cigarettes to prevent themselves from smoking a normal cigarette. Some people smell different scents because people use flavours.











Children believe people mainly use e-cigarettes *to stop smoking* and smoke tobacco cigarettes *to look cool*

	Rationale	Electronic Cigarettes (370 responses*)	Tobacco Cigarettes (445 responses*)
	To stop smoking	102 (28%)	0 (0%)
	Don't know	60 (16%)	79 (18%)
	Better than smoking	44 (12%)	0 (0%)
	Like it, want to, fun, enjoyable	40 (11%)	92 (21%)
	Healthier	39 (11%)	0 (0%)
	Look cool / be popular	38 (10%)	98 (22%)
	Easier, quicker	12 (3%)	0 (0%)
	Addicted to cigarettes	10 (3%)	65 (15%)
	Stress relief	7 (2%)	45 (10%)

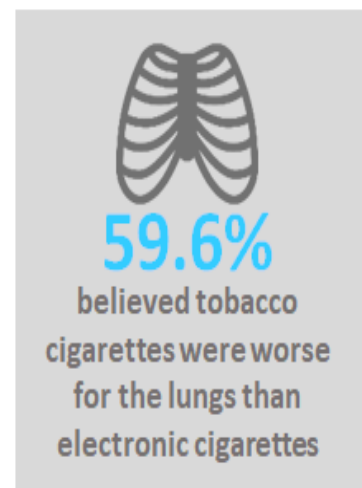
“People who smoke normal tobacco, they wanted to quit so they started smoking the electronic (Male, Aged 11, School 3)

*Responses are the number of responses per inquiry based on word frequencies from a content analysis of the D&W text rather than individual children

Children have little understanding of health harms of e- cigarettes

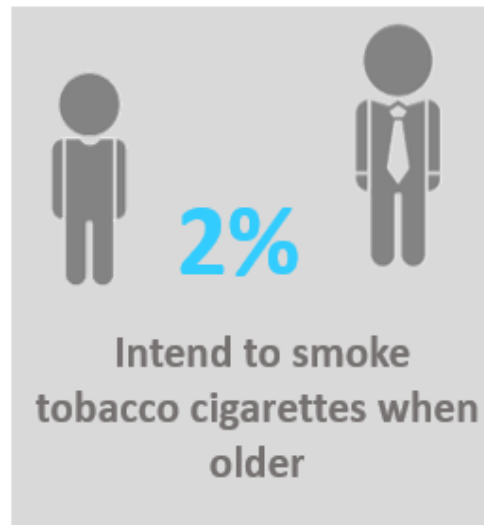
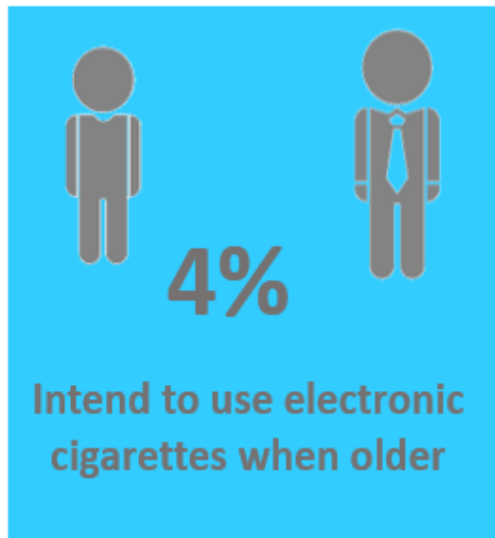
	Perceived Health Harms	Electronic Cigarettes (385 Responses*)	Tobacco Cigarettes (540 responses*)
	No effect on health - not harmful	26 responses (6%)	4 responses (1%)
	General illness Hurts body, poorly, ill, unhealthy	87 responses (23%)	105 responses (19%)
	Same health effect as smoking	17 responses (4%)	n/a
	Better, healthier than smoking	28 responses (7%)	n/a
	Internal damage Lungs, heart, chest, cancer	87 responses (23%)	301 responses (56%)
	External damage Black teeth, bad breath, wrinkly	10 responses (3%)	58 responses (11%)
	Death - Kills, die	14 responses (4%)	46 responses (8%)
	Don't know	116 responses (30%)	26 responses (5%)

***Responses are the number of responses per inquiry based on word frequencies derived from a content analysis of the D&W text rather than individual children*



“I think the electronic one [is healthier] because it has fruits in” (Female, Aged 7, School 3)

Few children intend to use electronic cigarettes or smoke tobacco cigarettes when they grow up



“If I’m talking about now, I have never actually smoked so I don’t know what it’s like so when I’m 18 I might think ‘oh what’s it like?’ and then you can’t stop smoking”
(Male, Aged 11, School 1)

“I don’t want to breathe a drug into my body” (Female, Aged 11, School 1)

Children perceive vaping and smoking to be unacceptable for children but more acceptable for adults



46% reported that it was okay for grown-ups to smoke tobacco cigarettes



0.2% reported that it is okay for children their age to use tobacco cigarettes



50% reported that it is okay for grown-ups to use electronic cigarettes



1.2% reported that it was okay for children their age to use e - cigarettes

“[Older people] they will be older then and their lungs won’t be damaged that much [compared to younger people]”
(Male, Aged 7, School 5)

Exposure to electronic and tobacco cigarettes through family and friends influences children's perceptions of smoking and vaping

Somebody in their household ...



22%

Uses electronic cigarettes



32%

Smokes tobacco cigarettes

“My father stopped smoking about 3 years ago now, he has been on vapes since then. He has been lowering the nicotine and he is down to 0 now”
(Male, Aged 11, School 5)

“People get stressed a lot, like my mum smoked. She's get stressed cause her dad passed away a few years ago...she just says it calms her down” (Male, Aged 9, School 2)

Key Considerations



Education

Electronic cigarette education is needed in Welsh primary schools



Health Promotion

Health messaging should reinforce the view that electronic cigarettes are for smoking cessation



Research

Research is needed to understand how perceptions can influence future vaping behaviour



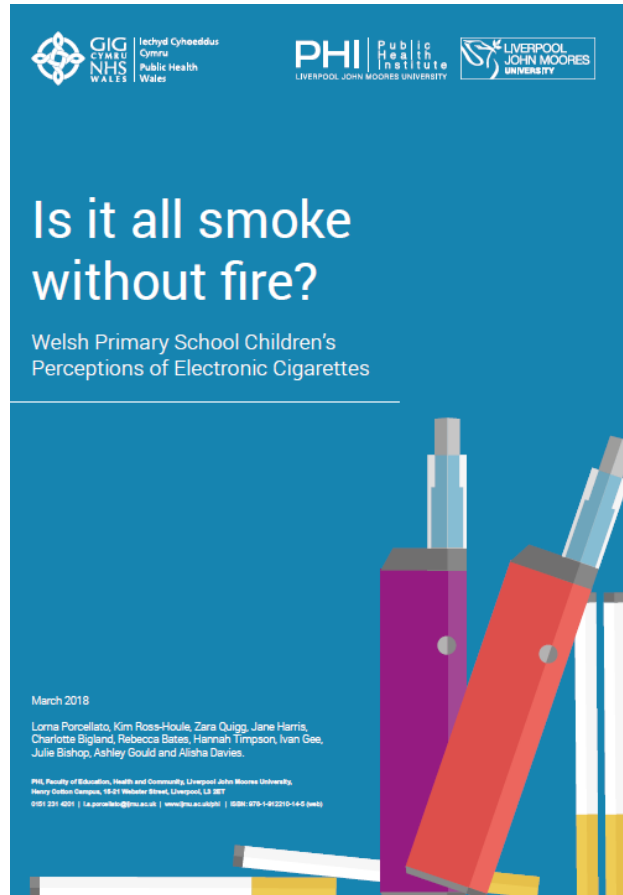
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Full Report Coming Soon....



For further information
about the study:

- Public Health Institute:
www.ljmu.ac.uk/phi
- Public Health Wales:
www.wales.nhs.uk