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By youth, for youth: testing digital vaping prevention messages

Submission date 21/10/2025	**Recruitment status** No longer recruiting	[X] Prospectively registered [_] Protocol [_] Statistical analysis plan [_] Results [_] Individual participant data [X] Record updated in last year
Registration date 23/10/2025	**Overall study status** Ongoing	
Last Edited 21/01/2026	**Condition category** Other	

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Vaping among youth is a growing public health concern. Many young people try e-cigarettes before the age of 25 years, which can lead to nicotine addiction and other health risks. This study aims to test whether youth co-created digital messages are more effective at preventing vaping compared with traditional health messages. Unlike standard campaigns, this intervention engages youth in conceptualizing and designing the prevention messages from the start.

Who can participate?
Canadian youth aged 15–24 who are not current vapers, meaning they have not used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days and are not regular users who have recently quit. Participants must have access to the internet or a mobile device and be able to complete surveys in English. Recruitment is open to all youth who meet these criteria.

What does the study involve?
Participants will be randomly assigned to one of two groups:
1. Intervention group: Receives youth co-created vaping prevention messages.
2. Control group: Receives existing Health Canada vaping prevention messages.
All participants will complete online surveys at baseline and 1, 3, and 6 months. These surveys will measure susceptibility to future vaping and confidence in refusing and resisting vaping in various situations.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants may find the youth co-created vaping prevention messages more engaging and relatable than standard health messages. These messages may help participants reflect on their attitudes and intentions around vaping. By taking part, participants also contribute to research that could improve vaping prevention efforts for other youth. The risks of participating are minimal. Completing the online surveys may take some time, and participants might feel discomfort when reflecting on vaping behaviours, peer pressure, or social influences. There are no medical treatments involved.

Where is the study run from?
The study is managed by Western University, London, Canada and the University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBCO), Kelowna, Canada.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
The overall study started in October 2024, but the Randomised Controlled Trial is expected to start in January 2026 and run until September 2026, with each participant involved for approximately six months. The overall study is anticipated to end in January 2028.

Who is funding the study?
Canadian Institutes of Health Research (Canada)

Who is the main contact?
1. Dr Laura Struik, laura.struik@ubc.ca
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Contact information

Type(s)
Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
E-Prevention And Vaping (EPAV): mobilizing youth-generated evidence to co-produce a digital e-cigarette intervention

Acronym
EPAV

Study objectives
The study aims to develop, test, and deliver a by-youth-for-youth online vaping prevention intervention.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
1. Not yet submitted

2. Not yet submitted

3. Not yet submitted

4. Not yet submitted

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomized controlled trial

Study type(s)
Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of vaping initiation

Interventions
Assignment: 1 :1 assignment to intervention or control group. Participants are not explicitly informed of their group assignment.

Masking: Participants, outcome assessors, data analyst. Participants are not explicitly informed of group assignment but may infer assignment from exposure or lack of exposure to the youth-created vaping prevention messaging. The outcomes assessor and the biostatistician involved in data analysis will be blinded to group assignment.

Participants in the intervention arm will be exposed to a youth co-created vaping prevention video developed through a participatory design research process. The prevention messages were conceptualized and designed by youth to reflect youth perspectives, language, and experiences related to vaping.

Participants in the control arm will be exposed to existing Health Canada vaping prevention materials. While youth provided feedback on these materials during their development, they did not conceptualize the content.

Both groups will complete identical baseline and follow-up assessments at the same timepoints to evaluate differences in message recall, perceived relevance, attitudes, and intentions related to vaping. This design allows direct comparison between traditional top-down health promotion approaches and the youth-driven co-created intervention.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Susceptibility to future vaping will be measured using the Susceptibility to Future Vaping scale at baseline and at 1-, 3-, and 6-month follow-ups.

Key secondary outcome(s)
Vaping refusal and resistive self-efficacy will be assessed with the Refusal Skills Technique and Resistive Self-Regulatory Efficacy scales at baseline and 1-, 3-, and 6-month follow-ups.

Completion date
01/01/2028

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Canadian youth
2. Aged 15–24 years
3. Access to the internet or a mobile device/plan
4. Able to participate in English
5. Not current vapers (i.e., no use in the last 30 days; not regular users who quit)
6. Panel membership (Leger)

Participant type(s)
Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
15 Years

Upper age limit
24 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
1. Not currently residing in Canada
2. Outside the age range (under 15 or over 24 years old)
3. Unable to access the internet or a mobile device for participation
4. Unable to read, speak, or understand English sufficiently to provide informed consent and engage with study materials
5. Current vapers (vaped in past 30 days; been a regular vaper and quit)
6. No panel membership (Leger)

Date of first enrolment
01/03/2026

Date of final enrolment
01/09/2026

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Canada

Study participating centre
Western University
1151 Richmond Street
London
Canada
N6A 5C2

Study participating centre
University of British Columbia Okanagan
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of British Columbia

ROR

https://ror.org/03rmrcq20

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Alternative Name(s)
Instituts de Recherche en Santé du Canada, The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Canadian Institutes of Health Research | Ottawa ON, CIHR - Welcome to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, CIHR, IRSC

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
Canada

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available