

Researcher finds teenage e-cigarette use 'clustered' in certain schools

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A new study from the University of Colorado Denver finds that certain school environments have an impact on electronic cigarette use among teenagers.

The study was led by Adam Lippert, an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and published in the journal *Health and Place*.

Since 2011, the prevalence of adolescent electronic cigarette use has drastically increased in the U.S. This month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that e-cigarette use has surpassed the use of other tobacco products and that over 3 million middle and [high school students](#) used e-cigarettes in 2015.

Lippert's study examined data collected by the CDC in the 2011 and 2013 National Youth Tobacco study to determine if individual e-cigarette use coincides with total use at the school level over time.

Lippert's research showed that [students](#) attending schools where e-cigarette use was very common were more likely to use themselves, regardless of [personal risk factors](#) including whether they smoked regular cigarettes or knew someone who did.

Furthermore, Lippert found that school-to-school differences in e-cigarette use rates have increased over time, suggesting that certain schools have fueled the rise in teen e-cigarette use while in others, use

has remained low. Lippert argues that there is something in the culture of some schools that encourages students to use e-cigarettes.

"Our results indicate that there are certain types of schools that facilitate higher rates of e-cigarette use among students," said Lippert. "Since our data was collected over several years, we can determine something is happening within these [school](#) environments that contributes to e-cigarette use."

One reason for electronic cigarette use clustered in particular schools may be the pervasive perception that e-cigarettes are less harmful than conventional cigarettes. Lippert notes that educators should take these types of perceptions, as well as the number of individuals using e-cigarettes, into account when implementing initiatives to curb e-cigarette use.

Provided by University of Colorado Denver

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