

In this issue:

- ▶ JUUL electronic cigarette brand popular with youth, dominates market
- ▶ Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey indicates increase in youth tobacco use
- ▶ Electronic cigarette brand blu sponsors Super Bowl party

○ VOLUME 39 | ○ April 2018



TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

Reducing Youth Exposure to Tobacco Advertising and Promotion

JUUL electronic cigarette brand popular with youth, dominates market, easy to conceal

There is a lot of buzz about the JUUL, an electronic cigarette that is popular with young people. The JUUL is manufactured by JUUL Labs, a company that spun off from Silicon Valley company Pax Labs in 2017. With 55% percent market share, JUUL is now the most popular electronic cigarette on the market. The e-juice cartridges or “pods” are available in a variety of youth-friendly flavors , such as fruit medley and mango).

A search of Instagram and Twitter finds hundreds of threads devoted to JUUL vapor tricks, “JUUL-ing” in high school, how to hide your JUUL-ing from unsuspecting parents and teachers, etc. JUUL resembles a sleek USB flash drive, and this design makes it easy for young people to hide use of the product in schools. Some school districts are prohibiting flash drives in school because it is so

hard to tell the difference between a JUUL and a flash drive. Users charge their JUULs by plugging the devices into a USB port on a computer, which adds to the confusion.

According to JUUL’s website, the company’s mission is to “improve the life of the world’s one billion adult smokers.” The website goes on to say that “Core to this mission is preventing the illegal sale of our products to youth” and “...at JUUL Labs we are committed to combating underage use of our product.” However, in order to browse the company’s website one must only click a button indicating they are over 21 years of age, and the company has pages on youth-friendly social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter.



JUUL electronic cigarette plugged into USB charger

Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey indicates increase in youth tobacco use for first time in 17 years

The first Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey (MYTS) was conducted in 2000, and additional rounds of data were collected every two to three years after. The most recent MYTS revealed an increase in youth tobacco use for the first time since the survey began. In 2017, 26.4% percent of high school students reported use of any tobacco product in the past 30 days, which is a 7 percent increase from 2014. Much of this increase is due to the growing popularity of electronic cigarettes: 19.2 percent of high school students reported electronic cigarette use in the last 30 days and 37.7 percent reported ever use of electronic cigarettes. Nearly one-third (32.2 percent) of underage electronic cigarette users reported that they purchased their electronic cigarette from a retailer, while 18.4 percent reported they purchased an electronic cigarette from a

vape shop. Nicotine is harmful to the developing adolescent brain, and new products like the JUUL electronic cigarette are making these products more appealing to young people and easier to hide.

**Questions or to subscribe:
Please contact Betsy Brock at
651-646-3005 or
betsy@ansrmn.org**



TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

Find us online!
www.projectwatch.org

E-cigarette brand blu hosts Super Bowl party

The electronic cigarette brand blu was one of the sponsors of a Maxim Super Bowl party in Minneapolis in January. The brand planned to use the event to promote its new line of electronic cigarettes called “myblu.” A call for models went out on Facebook. The post offered to pay \$350 to “...attractive, fit ladies that are comfortable working at a Maxim Party during the Super Bowl while smoking a vapor.” The City of Minneapolis Health Department responded by letting party organizers know that smoking and vaping indoors is not allowed in the city. Blu altered their plans accordingly, although social media photos appear to show some vaping at the event. The brand offered a tasting room where party guests could sample “signature cocktails” based on the new myblu flavors. Tasting room guests were also given a “swag bag” with a free myblu starter kit.



Musician and Instagram model Nikki Heaton was in attendance to promote blu. She stands at the entrance to the tasting room.



There were many social media photos of the event, including this Instagram post from a Maxim model promoting the new myblu.



The swag bags seen in the middle of the blu tasting room at the Maxim Super Bowl Party contained a free myblu starter kit.