

# The American Teen Vaping Epidemic is Exaggerated

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Conflict of Interest:

<https://rodutobaccotruth.blogspot.com/>

# 'Epidemic' Headlines

October 4, 2021

## **E-Cigarette Use in Teens Prevalent During COVID-19 Pandemic**

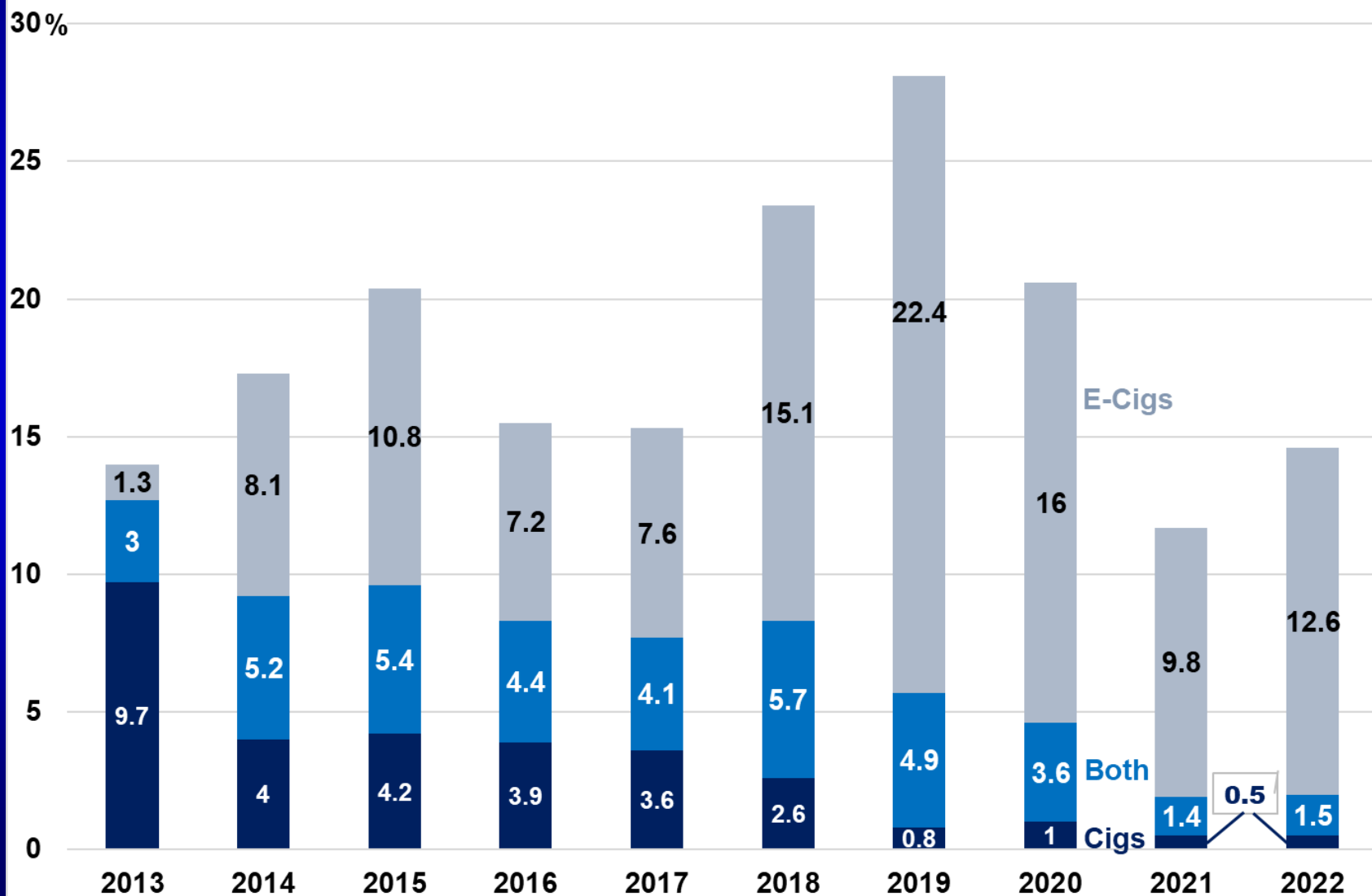
11.3 and 2.8 percent of high school and middle school students reported current use in 2021; 27.6 and 8.3 percent of users reported daily use

## **2021 Survey Shows Over 2 Million Kids Used E-Cigarettes Even During Covid-19 School Shutdown and 85% Used Flavored Products – FDA Must Eliminate All Flavored E-Cigarettes to Prevent Resurgence of Youth Epidemic**

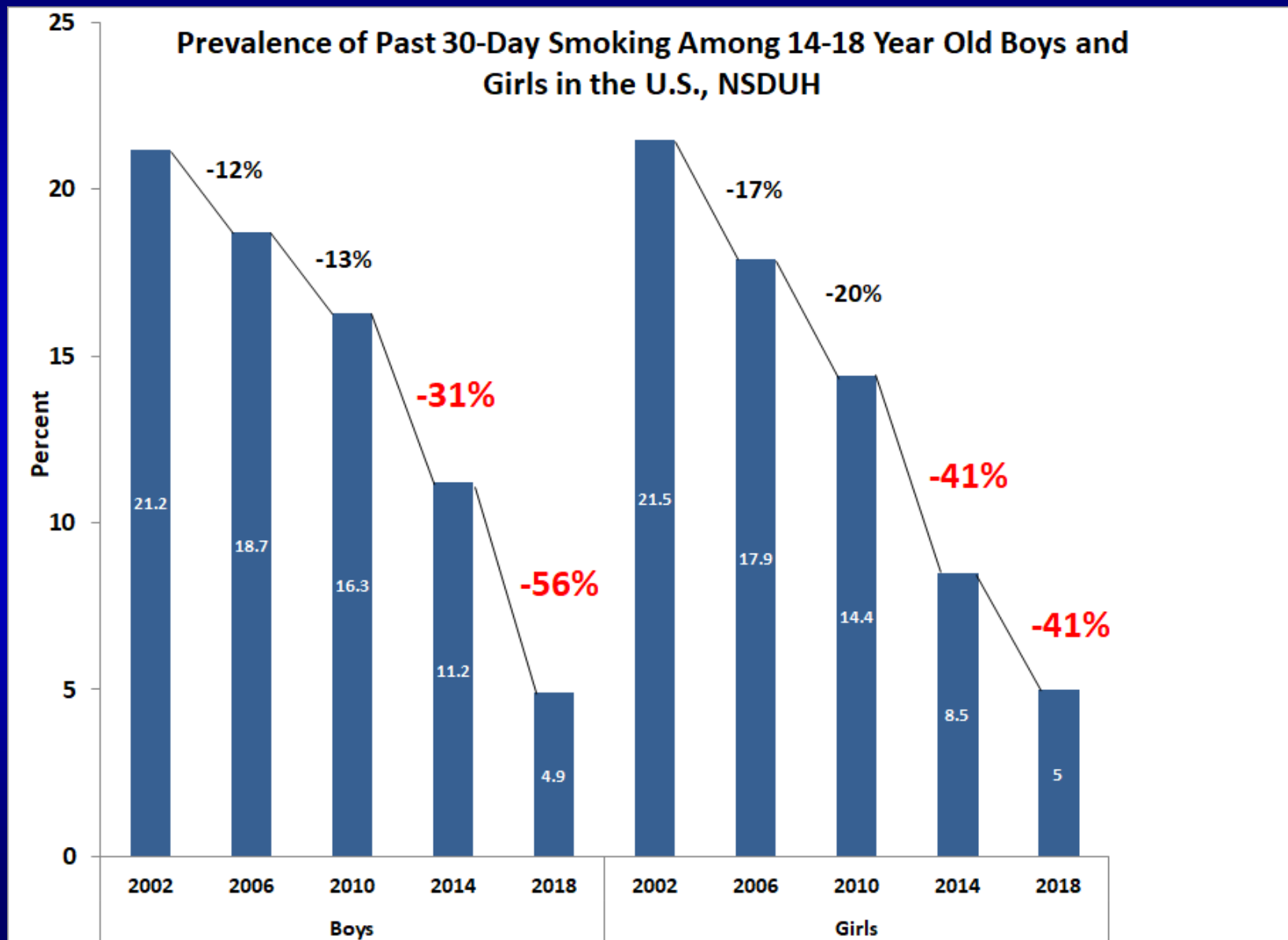
Statement of Matthew L. Myers, President, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
*September 30, 2021*

# Vaping Up, Smoking Almost Gone

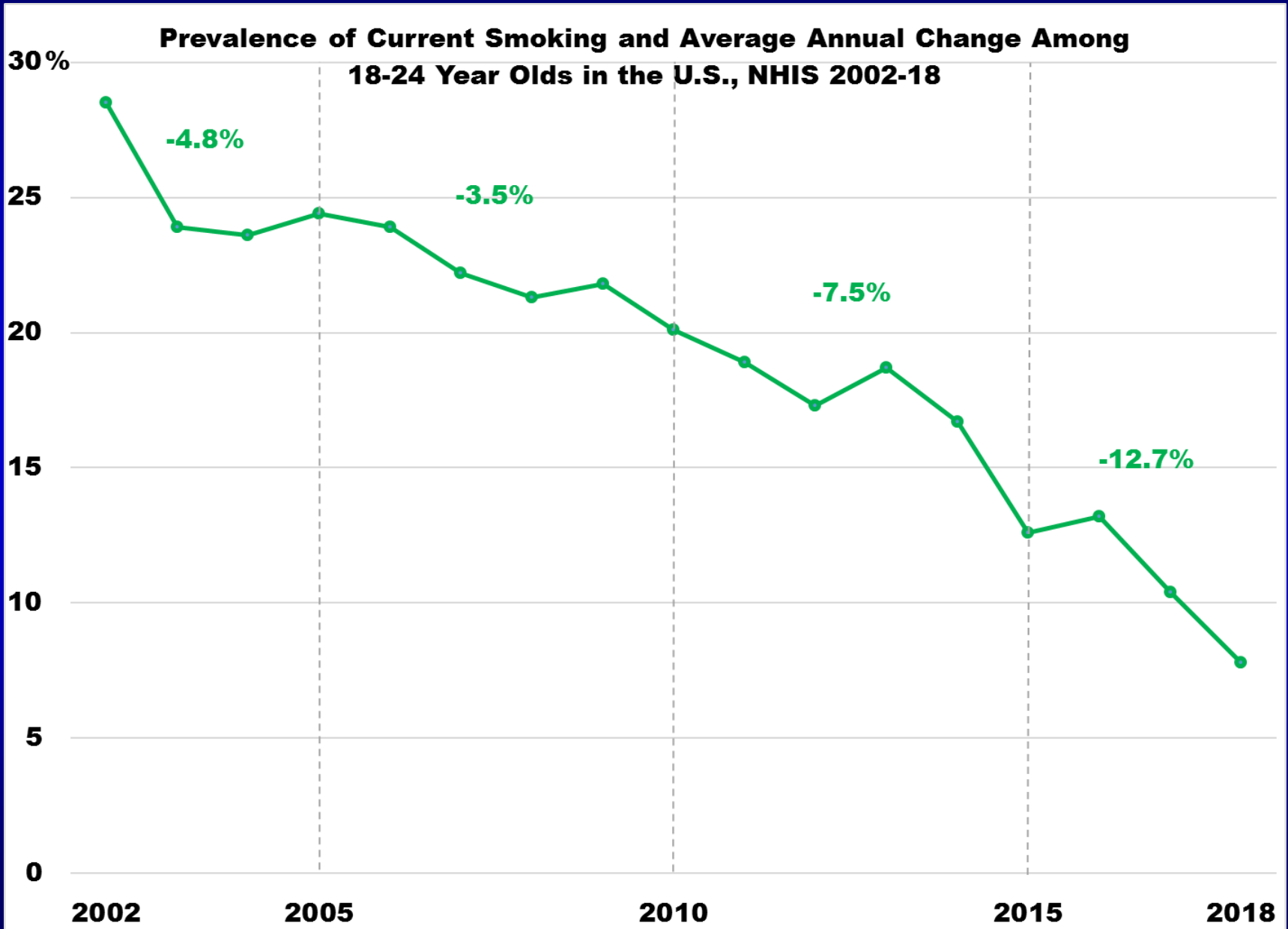
Current (Past 30 Days) E-Cigarette and Cigarette Use Among High School Students in the U.S., NYTS 2013-22



# Vaping Up, Smoking Almost Gone



# Historic Decline in Young Adult Smoking



# High School Vaping Epidemic, 2022

2.15 million American high schoolers  
used e-cigs in past month

1.42 million already used other  
tobacco

729,000 "virgin" vapers

# High School Vaping Epidemic, 2022

**729,000 "virgin" vapers**

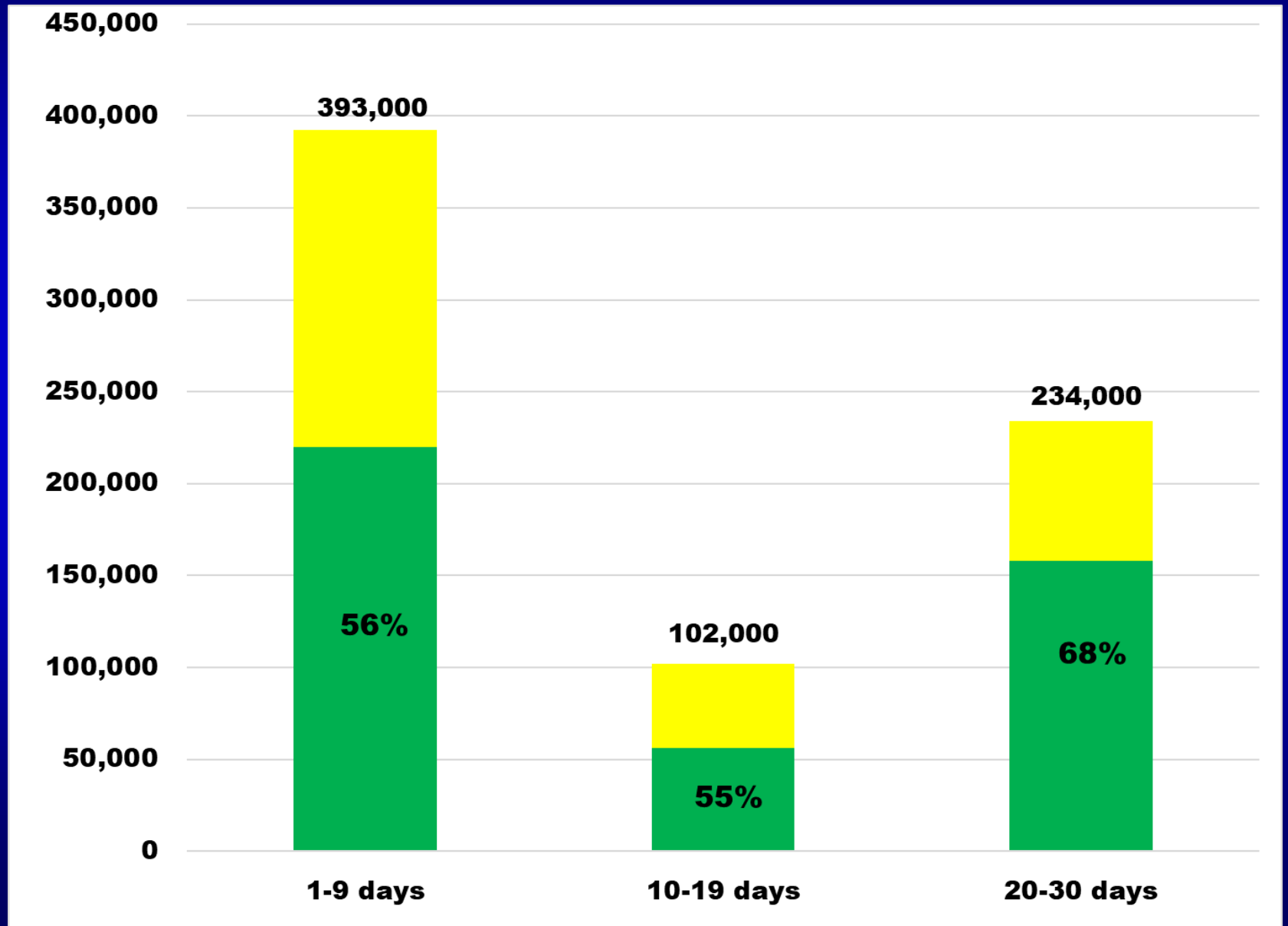
**495,000 vaped infrequently (1-19 days)**

**234,000 vaped frequently (20-30 days)**

**1.5% of all American high school students**

# Virgin High School Vapers, 2022

## Many Vaped Marijuana





# Other \*Real\* High School Epidemics

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Ever sexual intercourse                    | 40% |
| Current text/email while driving           | 39% |
| Current drink alcohol                      | 30% |
| Current marijuana use                      | 20% |
| Bullied on school property past year       | 19% |
| Current ride with driver had been drinking | 17% |
| Seriously considered suicide past year     | 17% |
| Current carry a weapon                     | 16% |
| Current binge drink                        | 14% |
| Current drive after marijuana use          | 13% |

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. High School YRBS 2017  
Online. <https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx>

# Vape Policy in the U.S. And the U.K.

|                        | <u>US</u> <sup>1</sup> | <u>UK</u> <sup>2,3</sup>                   |
|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Help smokers quit?     | No evidence            | Effective                                  |
| Safer than cigarettes? | No evidence            | Unlikely to exceed<br><b>5% of smoking</b> |
| Renormalize smoking?   | Maybe                  | No   |
| Gateway: teen smoking? | Maybe                  | No   |
| Recommend use?         | No                     | Promoted as<br>substitutes                 |

<sup>1</sup> SmokeFree.gov <https://smokefree.gov/understanding-smoking/e-cigs-menthol-dip-more/what-we-know-about-e-cigarettes>

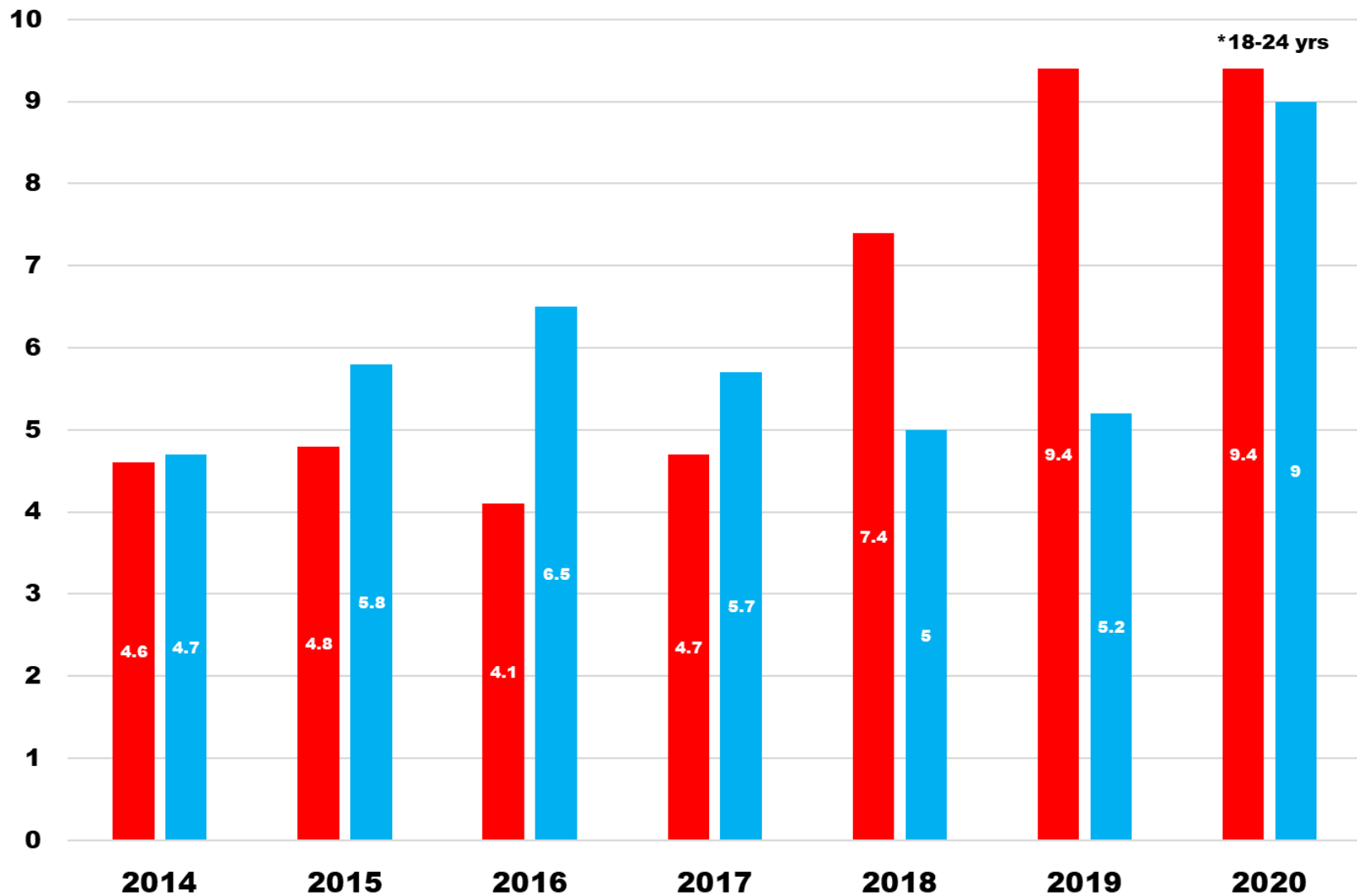
<sup>2</sup> Public Health England 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/e-cigarettes-an-evidence-update>

<sup>3</sup> Royal College of Physicians. Nicotine Without Smoke: Tobacco Harm Reduction, 2016

# Vaping Among the Young, US and UK

Prevalence (%) of Current Vaping in the **US** and the **UK**, 16-24 yrs\*

Sources: NYTS-NHIS (US); Smoking Toolkit (UK)



# Take-Home Messages

- Vaping among teens in the US has increased, **BUT** the scale has been exaggerated and distorted. It is not an epidemic.
- The increase in teen vaping was co-existent with a historic decline in teen smoking.
- Teen nicotine vaping has been conflated with vaping of marijuana.
- The rate of teen vaping pales in comparison with other risky teen behaviors: sex, drinking, distracted driving, bullying.
- US authorities have mostly condemned vaping; UK authorities have mostly endorsed it.
- Although youth/young adult vaping rates in the US and the UK are not that different, it's a crisis in the former and not in the latter.