

FDA Authorization of JUUL is A Threat to Kids



On July 17, 2025, FDA announced authorization of four JUUL e-cigarettes, in both tobacco and menthol flavors, and a JUUL device. FDA's authorization of JUUL is a step backward in the nation's efforts to reverse the youth e-cigarette epidemic that was driven by Juul in the first place.

JUUL's Impact on the Youth E-Cigarette Epidemic

JUUL's irresponsible marketing of a sleek, easy-to-hide product and use of kid-friendly flavors and unprecedented nicotine levels led to skyrocketing youth e-cigarette rates. According to the National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), high school e-cigarette use increased from 11.7% in 2017 to 27.5% in 2019, leading the Surgeon General to declare youth e-cigarette use an epidemic.¹ At the peak of the e-cigarette epidemic in 2019, nearly 60% of high school e-cigarette users reported that JUUL was their usual brand.² While JUUL's popularity has declined in recent years, it remained among the top ten most popular e-cigarettes among youth in 2025.³ As of March 2026, JUUL was still the second best-selling e-cigarette in the U.S.⁴

JUUL's Youth-Friendly Marketing Launch

When JUUL first launched in 2015, the company used colorful, eye-catching designs and youth-oriented imagery and themes, such as young people dancing and using JUUL. JUUL's original marketing campaign, "Vaporized," included billboards in New York City's Times Square, YouTube videos, advertising in Vice Magazine, launch parties and a sampling tour.⁵ Social media continued to fuel JUUL's popularity, with lasting effects.⁶ States, cities, counties, school districts, and Native American tribal entities have filed lawsuits to hold JUUL accountable for its irresponsible marketing and role in the youth e-cigarette epidemic, leading to settlements totaling over \$1.1 billion.⁷



Flavored E-Cigarettes—including Menthol—Hook Kids

Research shows that flavors play a key role in youth e-cigarette use. Menthol, just like other flavors, widely appeals to kids, a fact that the tobacco industry has known for decades. Menthol masks the harsh taste of tobacco products, making them easier for young people to initiate use. Menthol also enhances the effects of nicotine on the brain.⁸ The FDA itself has found, in denying marketing applications for other menthol-flavored e-cigarettes, that "non-tobacco-flavored e-cigarettes, including menthol flavored e-cigarettes, have a known and substantial risk with regard to youth appeal, uptake and use."⁹ In 2025, 15.5% of youth e-cigarette users reported using menthol-flavored products.¹⁰

JUUL and Youth Nicotine Addiction

JUUL pioneered the use of nicotine salts, which according to a 2018 Surgeon General advisory, allow users to inhale high levels of nicotine more easily and with less irritation than e-cigarettes that use free-base nicotine. As a result, it is easier for young people to initiate the use of nicotine with these products.¹¹ According to JUUL, each 5% JUULpod contains the nicotine equivalent of a pack of 20 cigarettes. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug that can have lasting damaging effects on adolescent brain development, particularly the areas of the brain responsible for attention, learning, mood and impulse control.¹² Kids are not just experimenting with e-cigarettes like JUUL, but are using them frequently, leading to an addiction that is difficult to break. According to the 2025 NYTS, 43.1% of high school e-cigarette users reported vaping on 20 or more days/month, and 29.6% reported daily use.¹³

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- ¹ Wang, TW, et al., *Tobacco Product Use and Associated Factors Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2019*, MMWR, 68(12): December 6, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/ss/pdfs/ss6812a1-H.pdf>.
 - ² Cullen KA, Gentzke AS, Sawdey MD, et al. e-Cigarette Use Among Youth in the United States, 2019. *JAMA*. 2019;322(21):2095–2103. doi:10.1001/jama.2019.18387.
 - ³ Park-Lee, E., et al., "Tobacco product use among middle and high school students in the United States: National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2025," Nicotine & Tobacco Research, published online June 23, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntag116>.
 - ⁴ CDC Foundation, "Monitoring U.S. E-Cigarette Sales: National Trends," <https://tobaccomonitoring.org/>. Data from Circana, which includes e-cigarette sales data from convenience stores, gas stations and other retail store chains. Sales from the internet and tobacco-specialty stores, including vape shops, are not included.
 - ⁵ Jackler, RK, et al., "JUUL Advertising Over its First Three Years on the Market," January 2019, https://tobacco-img.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/21231836/JUUL_Marketing_Stanford.pdf. See also Stanford's repository of JUUL marketing at <https://tobacco.stanford.edu/pods/juul/>.
 - ⁶ Huang, J, et al., "Vaping versus JUULing: how the extraordinary growth and marketing of JUUL transformed the US retail e-cigarette market," *Tobacco Control*, published online May 31, 2018.
 - ⁷ Public Health Law Center, JUUL Litigation & Settlements: Frequently Asked Questions, July 2023, <https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Juul-Litigation-FAQ.pdf>.
 - ⁸ CDC, *Menthol Tobacco Products*, <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/menthol-tobacco/index.html>.
 - ⁹ FDA, "FDA Denies Marketing of Two Vuse Menthol E-Cigarette Products Following Determination They Do Not Meet Public Health Standard," January 24, 2023, <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-denies-marketing-two-vuse-menthol-e-cigarette-products-following-determination-they-do-not-meet>.
 - ¹⁰ Park-Lee, E., et al., "Tobacco product use among middle and high school students in the United States: National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2025," Nicotine & Tobacco Research, published online June 23, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntag116>.
 - ¹¹ Office of the Surgeon General, "Surgeon General's Advisory on E-Cigarette Use Among Youth," December 18, 2018, <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/surgeon-generals-advisory-on-e-cigarette-use-among-youth-2018.pdf>.
 - ¹² HHS, *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*, CDC, Office of Smoking and Health (OSH), 2014, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/index.html>. See also: CDC Office on Smoking and Health, "Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults," March 2019. Accessed August 9, 2019.
 - ¹³ Park-Lee, E., et al., "Tobacco product use among middle and high school students in the United States: National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2025," Nicotine & Tobacco Research, published online June 23, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntag116>.