



# Escape the Vape: Digital Alternative-to-Suspension Program to Educate & Empower Youth



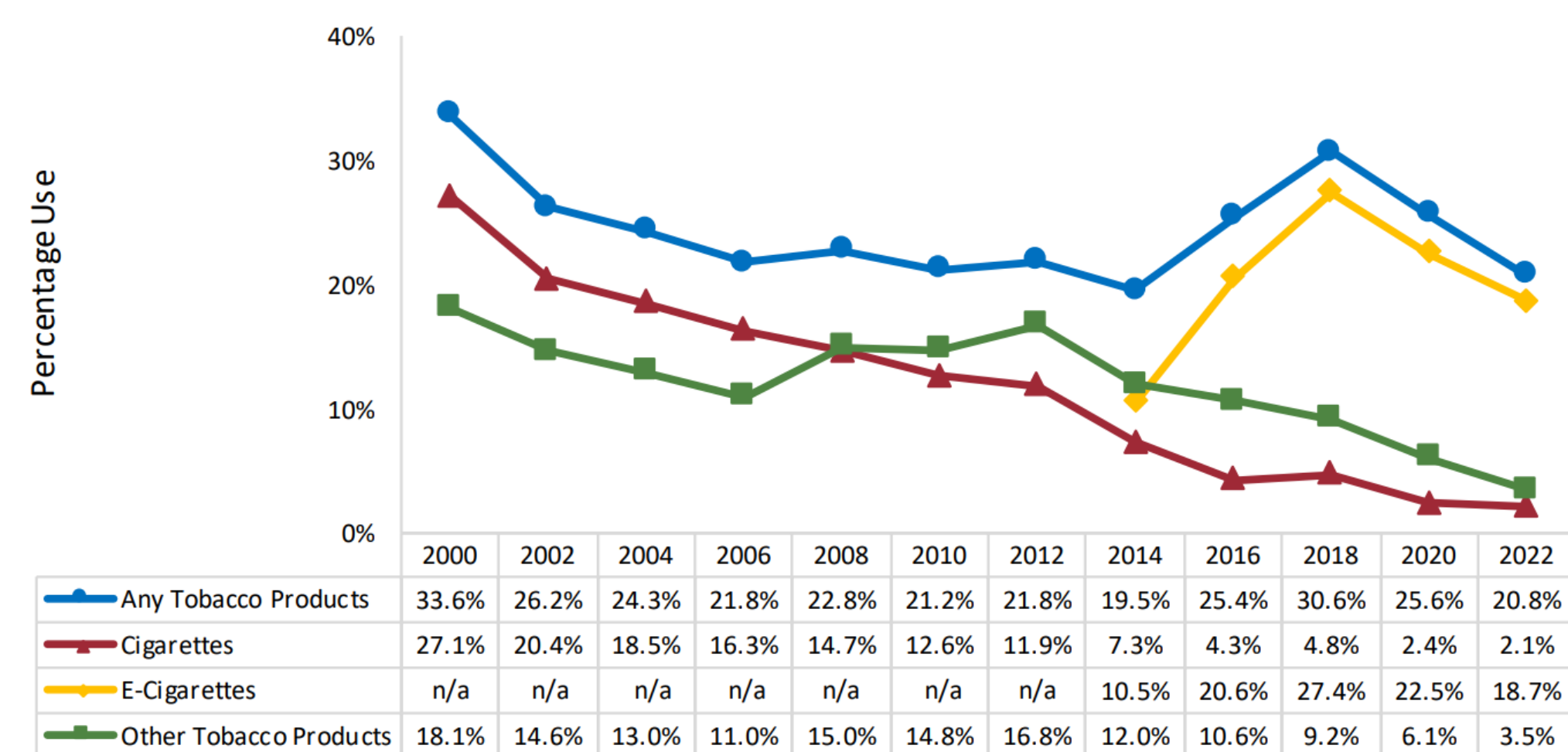
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## INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, e-cigarettes have become the most used tobacco product among US youth. According to national data, about 1 in 10 U.S. middle and high school students currently use e-cigarettes in the past 30 days and of those who currently use e-cigarettes, more than 1 in 4 youth report using these products daily (Cooper et al., 2022). In New York State, 18.7% of high school students report using e-cigarettes (Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research, 2023), however, this low percentage contradicts the prevalence we ascertain in reports from local school districts. The consequences of vaping to a person's physical health are still being researched, but it is known that nicotine and addiction can have tremendous impact on an individual's developing brain.

Trends in Any Tobacco Product Use<sup>2</sup> among High School Students in NYS, NY-YTS 2000-2022



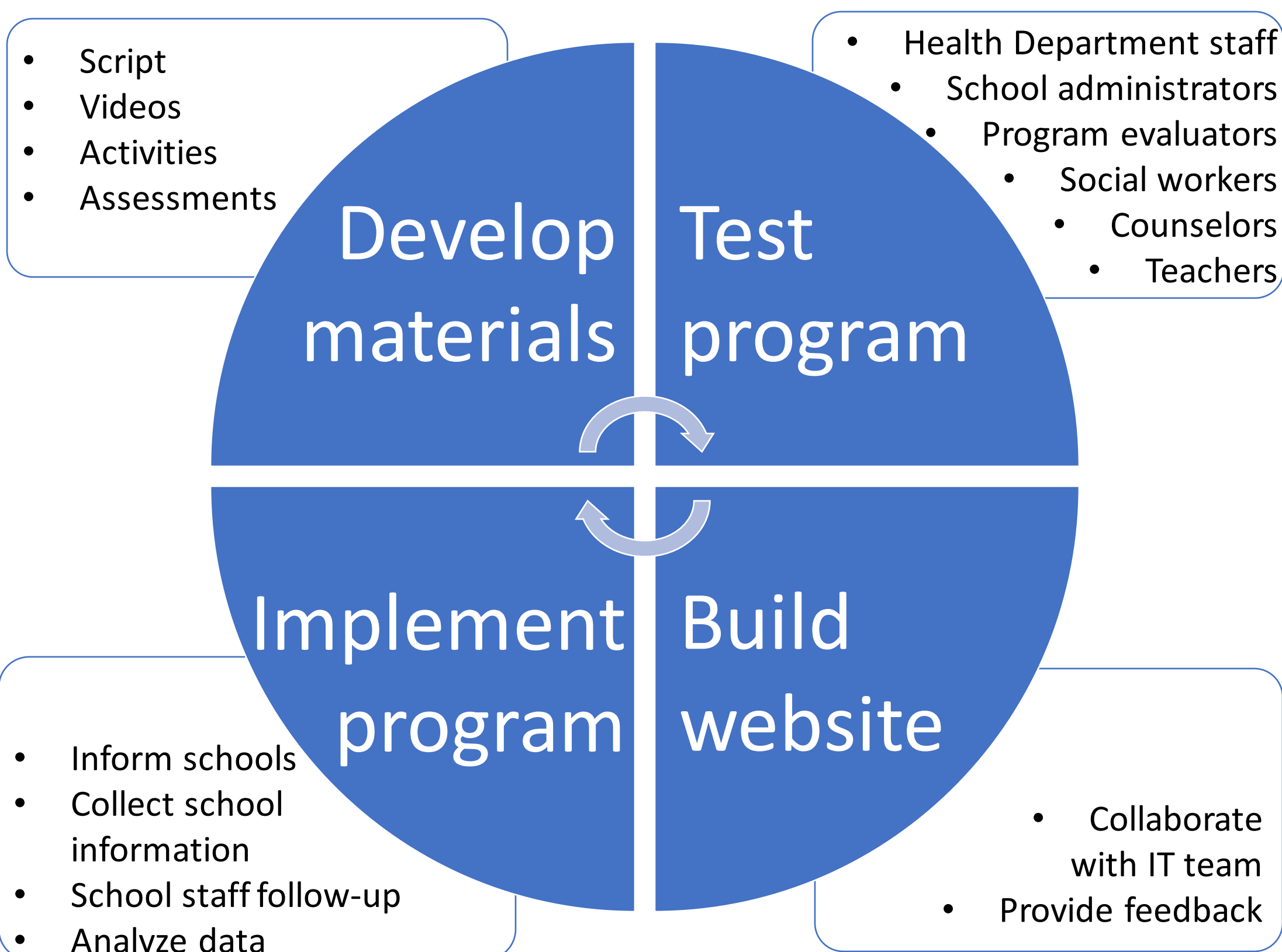
(Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research, 2023).

## OBJECTIVES

- Improve accessibility with a digital program by having the potential to reach a greater number of students.
- Increase students' knowledge of the product they are using and the potential consequences of continued use.
- Empower students to prepare to quit by providing them with the necessary tools for behavior change.
- Provide tools for staff to assist with follow-up to supplement current disciplinary measures enacted by school districts.
- Engage ESL students using digital translation services.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This program was developed for students caught vaping on school property to complete during suspension. Students are required to take our three-module course which discusses the facts and myths about vaping, the effect of nicotine on the brain, and how to change a habit. During the course, students respond to assessments and activities with the goal of making them an informed consumer and encourage them to consider quitting.



1. Conduct research to develop materials.
2. Connect and build relationships with stakeholders to have them test the program and provide feedback.
3. Collaborate with IT personnel to build the application and design the website.
4. Prepare schools with materials for implementation.
5. Analyze data, interpret results, and if needed, adjust program accordingly.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Using pre- and post-tests in addition to feedback from activities, we plan to assess the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of participants prior, during and after completion of this program.

- Students' knowledge of nicotine products and effect on the body will increase.
- Students' attitude and interest to successfully quit will improve.
- Students' self-efficacy to utilize proper tools and coping skills will improve.
- School staff will follow-up with students after completing the program to address concerns and guide them to resources.

## CONCLUSIONS

To create an alternative-to-suspension program, it is important to involve multiple stakeholders to ensure that the target population and schools' needs are addressed. Additionally, to make it digital, it is crucial to have an IT team that can implement your vision and assist with data collection.

With the increased concern for youth and support from school and community stakeholders, we expect that through successful implementation and positive feedback we will have the opportunity to partner with more districts to bring this program to their students.

## REFERENCES

- Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research. (2023, May). Youth Tobacco Use Continues to Decline Across All Product Types in 2022, One in Five Youth Still Use Tobacco. Bureau of Tobacco Control StatShot Vol. 15, No. 1 / May 2023. [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1\\_youth\\_tobacco\\_use.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1_youth_tobacco_use.pdf)
- Cooper, M., Cullen, K. A., Jamal, A., Cornelius, M., Ren, C., & Park-Lee, E. (2022, October 6). Notes from the field: E-cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students - United States, 2022. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7140a3.htm?cid=mm7140a3\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7140a3.htm?cid=mm7140a3_w)

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