

REFLECTION POINT

Addressing Surge in E-Cigarette Use

Adapting “The Real Cost” to a rapidly changing tobacco and media landscape

2014: THE POWER OF PREVENTION

- “The Real Cost” campaign launched to educate youth on the health consequences of cigarettes and other tobacco products.
- The **primary audience** was teens who were at-risk for **using cigarettes**, based on prevalence trends at the time. Those teens were more likely to be from a high-stress environment, more risk-seeking and have less consideration for consequences of tobacco use and addiction.
- In 2014, the campaign was primarily reaching **teens on traditional TV**, with 70% watching television as their primary media source.

2024 National Youth Tobacco Survey data found that youth e-cigarette use is at its **LOWEST IN A DECADE.**

2017: THE DAWN OF A CHANGING TOBACCO LANDSCAPE

- In 2017, 80% of youth did not perceive great risk from regular e-cigarette use.ⁱ
- These findings aligned with the **National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS)**, which found that current e-cigarette use among high school students increased 78% (11.7% to 20.8%) during 2017–2018.ⁱⁱ



THE REAL COST TM

CTP-275

THE REAL COST™

From 2023 to 2024, current **e-cigarette use declined** among middle and high school students overall (from 7.7% to 5.9%) from **2.13 million** to **1.63 million**.

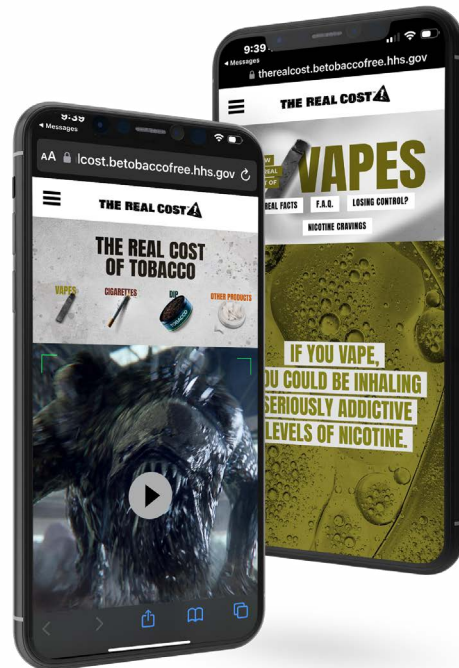
2018: How “The Real Cost” Addressed Rising E-Cigarette Use

- “The Real Cost” responded to the worrying spike in teen e-cigarette use with “The Real Cost” **e-cigarette prevention campaign**.
- The **audience broadened** to teens who were at-risk for using **e-cigarettes** (goal-oriented, valued personal relationships and health, and felt pressure to “fit in” with peers).
- Just as the audience and the tobacco landscape changed, so did the **media landscape**.
- The **campaign messaging** took facts about the dangers of vaping that resonated with teens and shared it with different creative executions adapted for unique platforms, ensuring the facts repeatedly reach teens in the media they were consuming the most. By 2018, traditional TV consumption among teens was down to 41%, so **digital strategies** became increasingly important to reach teens.

2024: E-CIGARETTE AWARENESS, PERCEPTIONS AND USE TODAY

The latest outcome evaluation data collected between August and December 2023 show that approximately 67 percent of youth were aware of at least one “**The Real Cost**” e-cigarette campaign advertisement.ⁱⁱ In addition, results based on multiple years of data suggest that there are significant associations between exposure to “The Real Cost” ads and an increase in agreement with campaign-targeted beliefs.

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