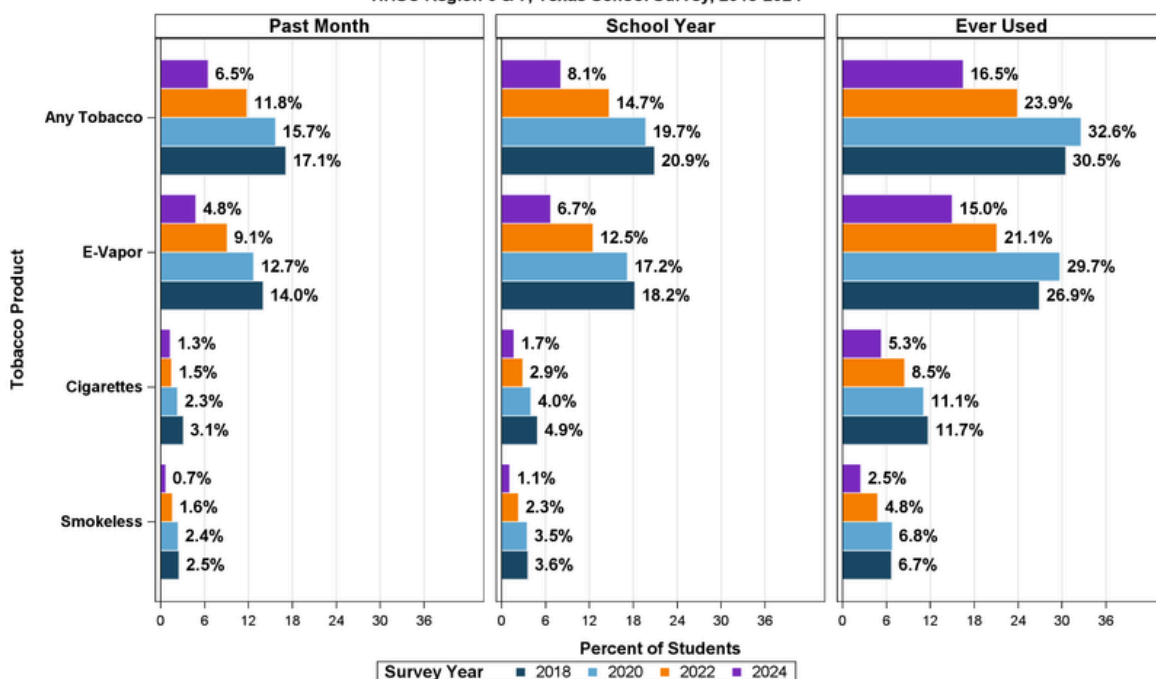


PRC 7 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



TOBACCO AND E-VAPOR USE TRENDS IN HHSC REGION 7

Tobacco Product Use Trends Among Students
HHSC Region 6 & 7, Texas School Survey, 2018-2024



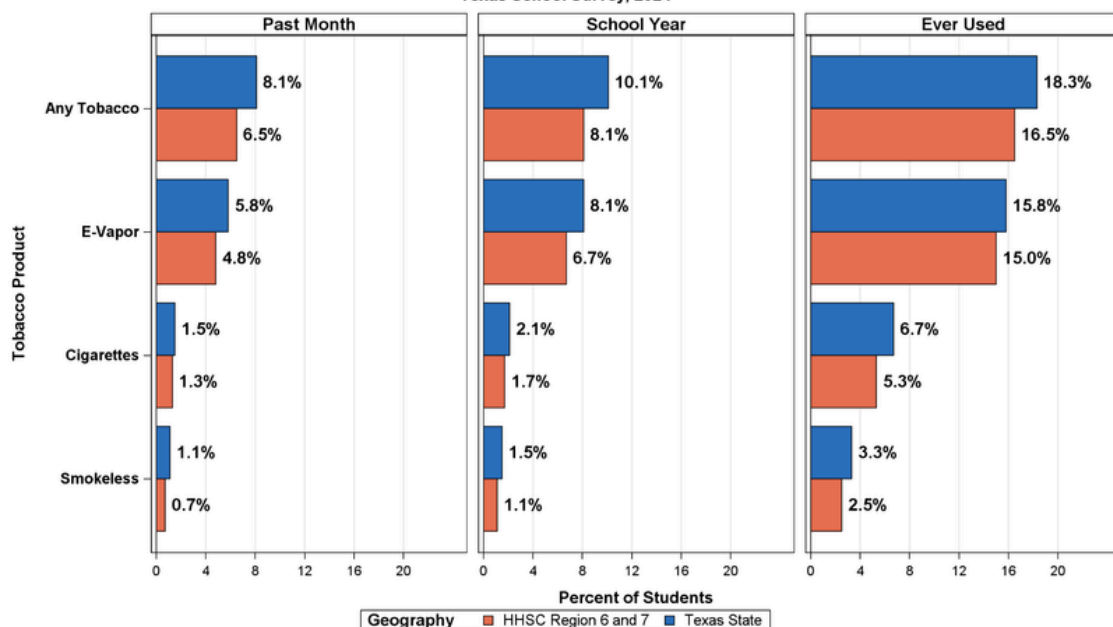
This month's data spotlight summarizes tobacco and electronic vapor product use using the **Texas School Survey** and **SAMHSA substate estimates**. For the first three figures, Texas School Survey percentages are based on the "All" student category across grades 7-12 for Region 6 & 7. The map figure presents past-month tobacco product use among people aged 12 or older.

Figure 1: From 2018 to 2024, reported student tobacco use decreased across all three measures shown in the Texas School Survey: past-month use, school-year use, and ever use.

Any tobacco product use in the past month declined from 17.1% in 2018 to 6.5% in 2024. School-year use declined from 20.9% to 8.1%, while ever use declined from 30.5% to 16.5%. Electronic vapor products followed a similar downward trend. However, e-vapor products remain one of the more common tobacco-related products reported by students.

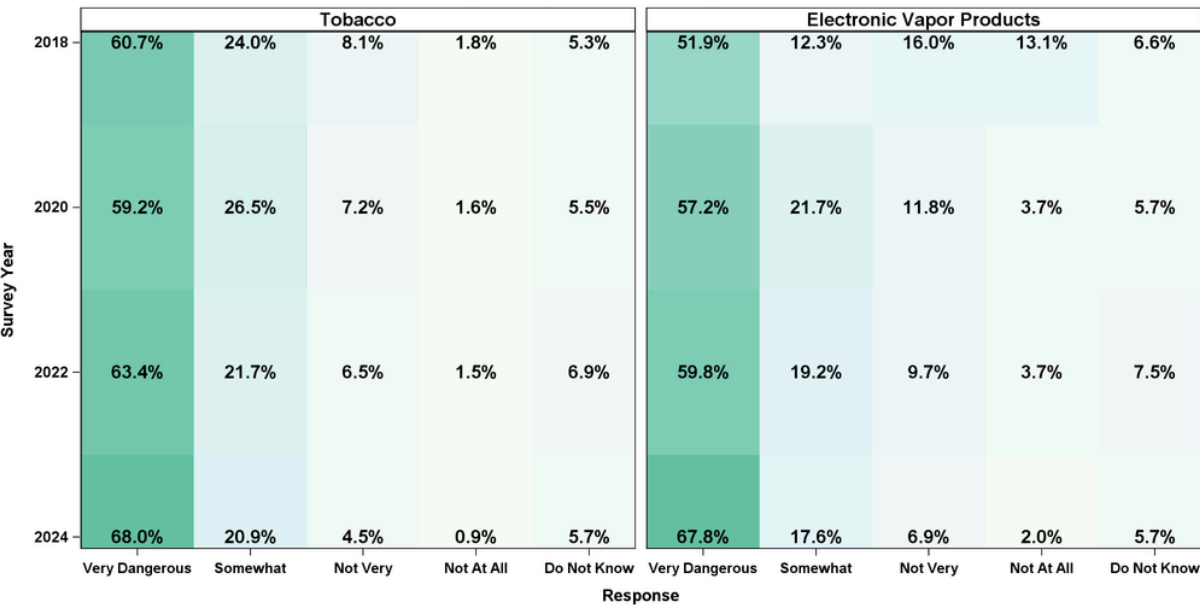
Figure 2: In 2024, HHSC Region 6 & 7 reported lower student tobacco use than the Texas state average across all products and timeframes shown. These comparisons are encouraging for regional prevention. However, the presence of any youth tobacco or e-vapor use remains a concern, particularly because early initiation can increase risk for nicotine dependence and future substance use patterns.

Tobacco Product Use: Texas State vs HHSC Region 6 & 7
Texas School Survey, 2024



PERCEIVED DANGER OF TOBACCO AND E-VAPOR USE HAS INCREASED

Perceived Danger of Tobacco and Electronic Vapor Product Use
HHSC Region 6 & 7, Texas School Survey, 2018-2024



Source: Texas School Survey, Table T-7. Values are weighted percentages for the All students row.

Student perception of harm is an important protective factor in prevention. The data show that perceived danger of both tobacco and electronic vapor product use increased over time, especially for e-vapor products. For tobacco, the percentage of students reporting tobacco use as “very dangerous” was 60.7% in 2018 and 68.0% in 2024. For electronic vapor products, the percentage reporting use as “very dangerous” was 51.9% in 2018 and 67.8% in 2024.

Broader Community Data Show
Region 7 in the Lower Range for
Past-Month Tobacco Use in
Texas.

The SAMHSA substate map provides a broader view of past-month tobacco product use among people aged 12 or older, using annual average data from 2021, 2022, and 2023. Region 7 was estimated at 16.93%, placing it in Group 3, the lowest displayed range on the map: 13.69% to 18.18%. This broader population-level view complements the student survey findings.

Key Takeaway:

These data show that prevention efforts are moving in the right direction across HHSC Region 7. Youth tobacco and e-vapor use have declined since 2018, and more students now recognize the risk associated with tobacco and vaping. Region 7 also falls within the lower range of past-month tobacco use among Texas substate regions for the broader population aged 12 or older. These trends are encouraging. However, continued collaboration among schools, coalitions, families, and community organizations will be essential to sustain progress, reduce nicotine initiation, and support healthier futures for youth across PRC7 communities. These patterns indicate that while traditional tobacco use has decreased substantially, prevention efforts should continue to address newer products, changing youth perceptions, and product accessibility.

Tobacco Product Use in the Past Month
Among People Aged 12 or Older, Texas Substate Regions, Annual Average 2021–2023
Region 7: 16.93%

