

# Use of e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches “to focus or concentrate” among U.S. youth and young adults

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Off-label medication uses discussed: None

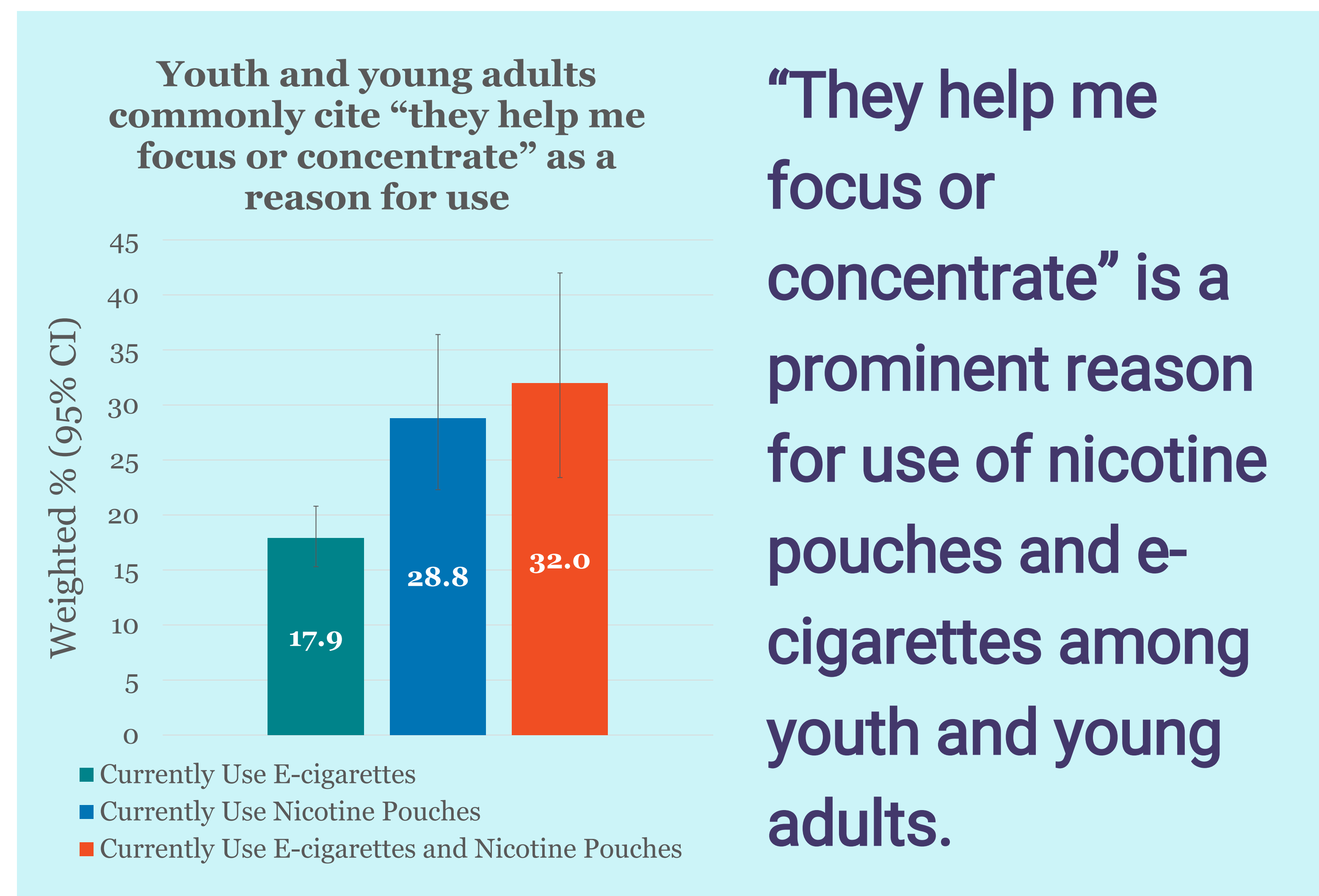
	Tobacco Industry	Non-Pharma Nicotine Product Industry	Pharma Industry
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## Significance

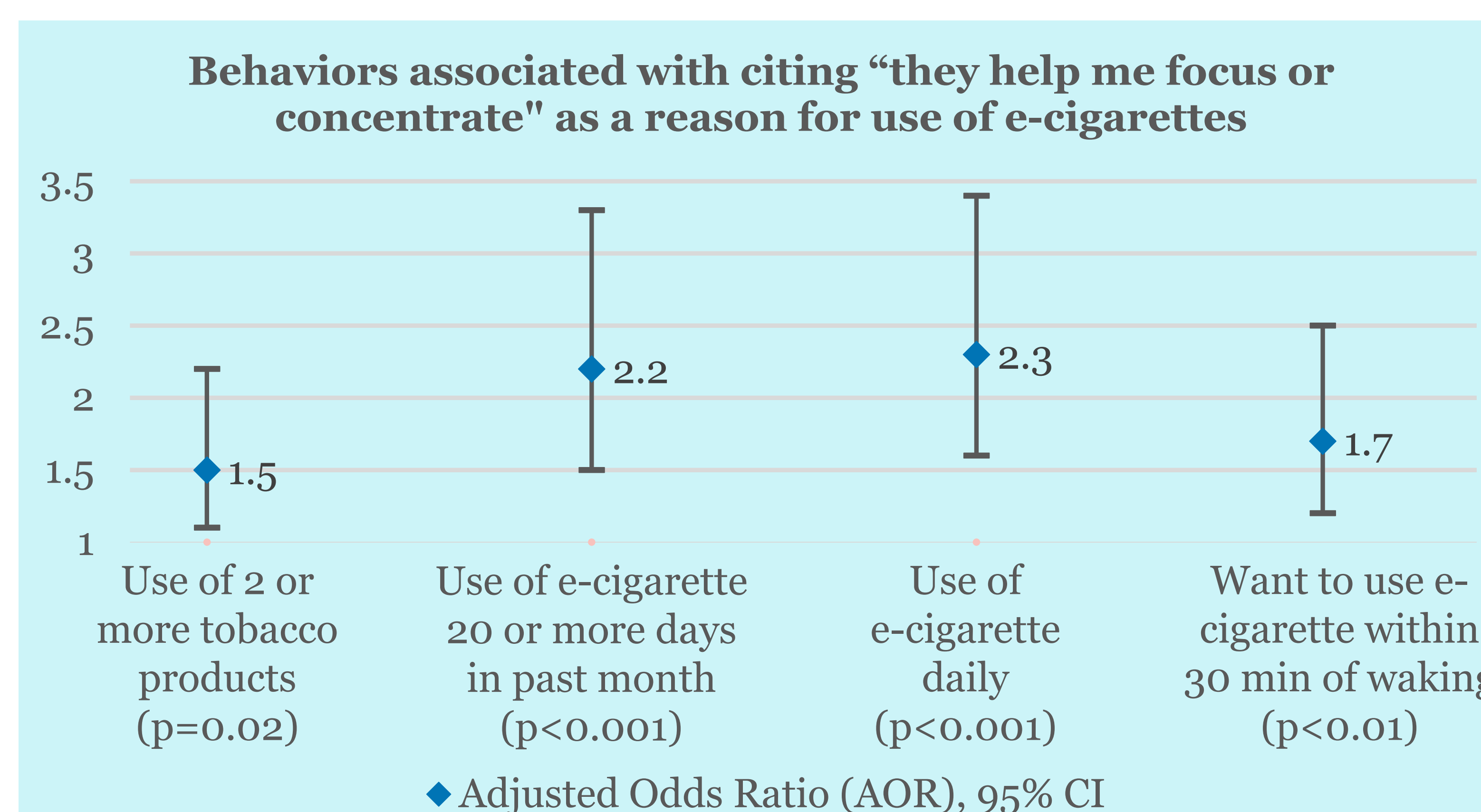
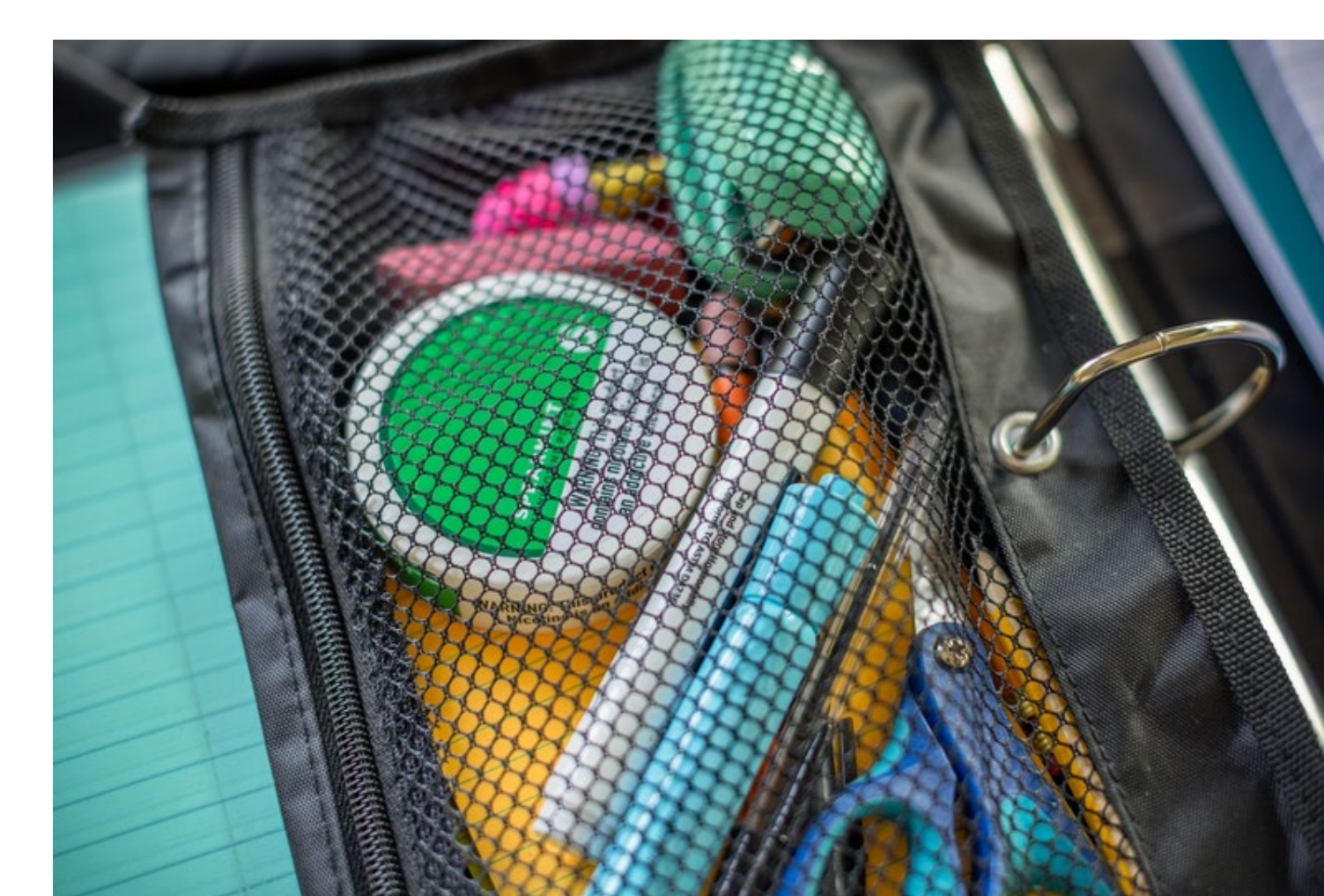
Nicotine exposure during adolescence can adversely impact brain development, including memory and attention; nicotine withdrawal symptoms can include difficulty concentrating. Despite these risks, tobacco manufacturers are marketing nicotine as cognitively beneficial. We sought to understand whether youth and young adults (YYA) cite cognition as a reason for e-cigarette or nicotine pouch use and associated factors.

## Methods

Data came from Wave 6 (February–June 2025) of the Tobacco Epidemic Evaluation Network (TEEN+) Study, a nationally representative cohort of U.S. YYA ages 13 to 27<sup>1</sup> ( $N = 10,037$ ). TEEN+ asks participants to select all reasons for each type of nicotine product use from a randomly ordered list that includes “they help me focus or concentrate.” We estimated the prevalence of self-reported use of e-cigarettes and/or nicotine pouches ( $n = 1,396$  e-cigarettes;  $n = 1,321$  pouches;  $n = 136$  dual) to focus or concentrate. In separate logistic regression models restricted to YYA who use e-cigarettes, we assessed associations between citing focus or concentration as a reason for use and tobacco-related behaviors. Models were adjusted for gender, age, race and ethnicity, and family financial status.



“They help me focus or concentrate” is a prominent reason for use of nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes among youth and young adults.



Among youth and young adults who use e-cigarettes, those reporting use to “focus or concentrate” had higher adjusted odds of polytobacco use, frequent and daily e-cigarette use, and wanting to use within 30 minutes of waking, compared with those not reporting this reason.

## Results

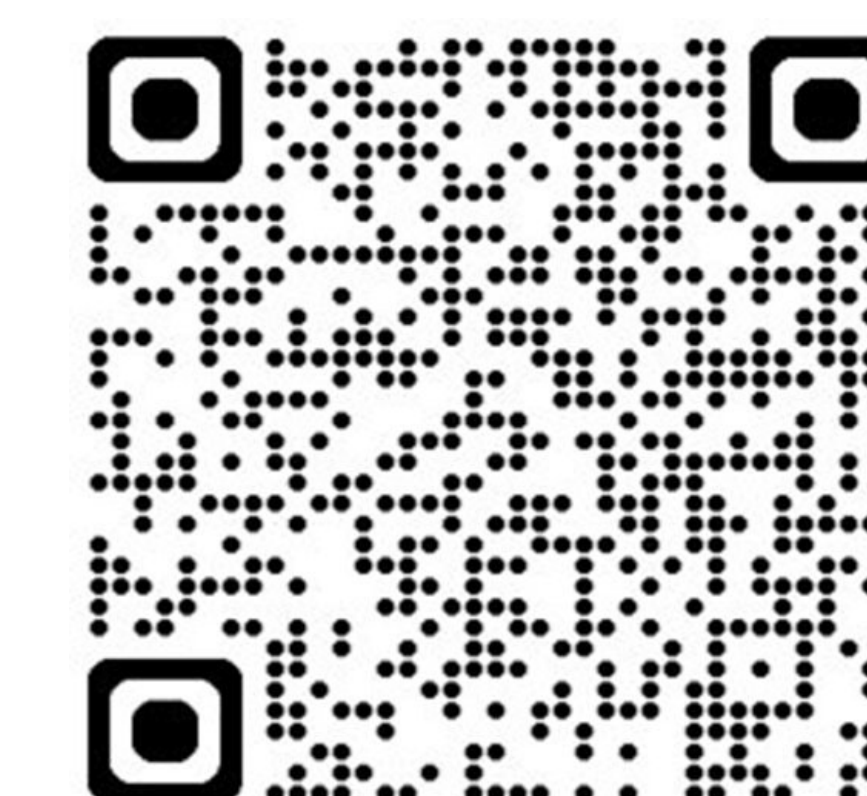
- “They help me focus or concentrate” was cited as a reason for use among 17.9% of YYA who use e-cigarettes (95% CI 15.3–20.8), 28.8% of YYA who use nicotine pouches (95% CI 22.3–36.4) and 32.0% of YYA who use both e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches (95% CI 23.4–42.0).
- Among YYA who currently use e-cigarettes, those who reported using them for focus or concentration (compared to those who did not report this reason) had higher adjusted odds of
  - Using 2+ products concurrently (i.e., polytobacco use) (AOR 1.5; 95% CI 1.1–2.3)
  - Frequent e-cigarette use (AOR 2.2; 95% CI 1.5–3.3)
  - Daily e-cigarette use (AOR 2.4; 95% CI 1.6–3.5)
  - Wanting to use e-cigarettes within 30 minutes of waking (AOR 1.7; 95% CI 1.2–2.6)
- Citing focus or concentration as a reason for e-cigarette use was not associated with combusted tobacco product use, quit intentions or past-year quit attempts.

## Conclusions

Focus or concentration is a prominent reason for use of nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes among YYA, aligning with current marketing claims touting unproven cognitive benefits of nicotine. YYA who report focus or concentration as a reason for current e-cigarette use had higher adjusted odds of frequent e-cigarette use, signs of dependence and polytobacco use. Our findings warrant scrutiny of purported cognitive benefit claims along with targeted health communication and countermarketing.

## References

1. Seaman, E., Kreslake, J., Cordova, J., Schillo, B., Barlas, F., & Marynak, K. (n.d.). Developing a National Longitudinal Tobacco Cohort of Youth and Young Adults: The Tobacco Epidemic Evaluation Network (TEEN+) Study. Nicotine & Tobacco Research.



For more information about the TEEN+ Study, visit [tobacconetwork.org](http://tobacconetwork.org)