High schoolers honk their moms’ cars while wiggling finger clouds, working up the energy to face the bell. Discarded flavor pods litter parking lots.

The bad culture has descended upon Indiana and the rest of the country.

This year's Indiana Youth Survey found nearly 30 percent of Indiana high school students reported vaping in the last month. This is a 45 percent increase compared to the survey's 2017 findings.

“People do it in the restrooms, people do it in the hallways,” Carmel High School junior Ben Burguess said. “You just wouldn't believe it.”

The Food and Drug Administration commissioner released a statement Sept. 12 calling youth use of the Juul and other vapes an epidemic and announced an "enforcement blitz" to keep them away from teens.

Notices sent to five leading e-cigarette manufacturers, including Juul Labs, require the companies to submit action plans to curb underage use within 60 days.

Failing to do so could result in e-cigarettes being pulled indefinitely from the United States.

Across the state, high schoolers and college students have taken to vaping, especially using the Juul, a sleek, USB drive-shaped vaporizer with the same nicotine concentration contained in ninecigarettes as an entire pack of cigarettes.

The theory is, when people start smoking, they do it for the nicotine. As one student at Carmel High School said, "You just get hooked on it."

Juul markets its product as a satisfying alternative to cigarettes for those trying to quit smoking. Though the company glassware warnings off its package and website, the little devices are sneaking their way into high schools nationwide.

“It’s all from the Juul,” Homestead High School senior Ashlyn Frederoff said. “It’s just easy to get addicted.”

Frederoff looked over during her AP Calculus class last spring to see a boy she didn’t know since elementary school taking a puff from his Juul. She also knows guys who schedule time out of their day to go to the bathroom and smoke their nicotine cartridges together.

Russell High School senior Ben Schwab said freshmen ask him to buy them pods all the time. Across high schools, minors lean on older siblings and peers to supply.

“It’s kind of the same thing as alcohol,” Schwab said. “It’s a lot harder to get a beer than it is to go into the gas station and say, ‘Oh I forgot my ID, and I get away with buying a little tobacco product than a bottle of vodka.”

Frederoff said it's easy to see who's buying and selling pods — just look for vaping transactions labeled "Mango" or "Cucumber," two popular flavors.

Though Schwab doesn’t know anyone his age who smokes cigarettes, Frederoff said some of her peers started with the Juul and moved on to cigarettes because of the cost.

“The pods get expensive, so if they can’t buy pods, they’ll buy cigarettes,” she said.

This correlates with the data put on Juul Labs’ website.

“We did not create Juul to undermine years of effective tobacco control, and we do not want to see a new generation of smokers,” the website reads. “We believe EDC can accelerate cigarette displacement.”

Mariner High School junior Sophie Band said some friends were smoking e-cigarettes, "You hear the sound and you have to get it just to hear the sound." Band said she doesn’t know anyone her age who smokes cigarettes.

As school administrators grapple with Juul, policies have appeared across the state.

The Monroe County Community School Corporation’s spokesman Andrew Gamrat said the district has a strict ban on any kind of vaping or smoking in schools.

Jake Thurman, dean of student affairs at University High School in Carmel, Indiana, said this problem needs to be addressed in its source.

“It’s similar to alcohol like anything where society might prefer, it’s easier to get it, but you can’t do it in numeric terms so it’s very useful.”

University High School is planning an assembly on vaping, Thurman said, but they’re hoping to turn it into a larger discussion about student wellness.

“Clearly something about this is appealing to kids, just like smoking was for cigarettes were when I was those kids’ parents were in high school,” he said.

He said fast and saying a Juul is just a sign of the times, and Burguess said it’s what high schoolers do on Friday nights.

“When someone is vaping and you’re around them, you want to do it,” Burguess said. “It really gets you.”

Some people, however, just don’t think using it is cool anymore.

“I can’t help but laugh when I see someone do it because I think it’s so ridiculous,” Thurman said, “You’re sucking on a flash drive.”

Thurman then passed off a number.

“Just isn’t true what our culture would be like if Humphrey Bogart smoked on a flash drive,” he said.

By Caroline Andrus

The Food and Drug Administration commissioner released a statement Sept. 12 calling youth use of the Juul and other vapes an "epidemic," and announced new "behavior change initiatives" to keep the products out of the hands of teens.