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Youth Vaping in Australia Shows Signs of Decline Amid Tighter Crackdowns

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After years of troubling increases in teen vaping, new data suggests the trend may finally be reversing in Australia. Recent government figures show a noticeable drop in e-cigarette use among young Australians, particularly those aged 14 to 17, offering cautious optimism that public health efforts are beginning to pay off.

According to Health Minister Mark Butler, the percentage of 14 to 17-year-olds who vape fell from 17.5 percent in early 2023 to 14.6 percent by April 2025. This decline follows the introduction of stricter government regulation and controversial new laws implemented in July 2024 aimed at curbing access to nicotine-based vaping products. Broader population

trends reflect a similar shift, with vaping rates among Australians aged 15 and over falling by more than one-third. Even middle-aged adults, ages 30 to 59, saw usage cut in half.

The findings come from the **Generation Vape** report by the Cancer Council, one of the most comprehensive studies on vaping behavior in Australia. Researchers note that public sentiment toward vaping may also be evolving. Some teens reportedly feel embarrassed about being seen as “vapers,” suggesting a change in social norms and peer perceptions.

In parallel with legislative changes, the government has ramped up enforcement. Since January 2024, over 10 million illegal vape products have been confiscated, according to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the Australian Border Force (ABF). These products, valued at roughly \$500 million on the black market, illustrate the ongoing scale of the illicit trade.

While the recent figures are encouraging, debate continues over the long-term effectiveness and intent behind the federal government’s approach. Critics argue that Australia’s so-called “world-leading” regulations, although strict in theory, have been diluted in practice. Public skepticism remains, particularly given what some view as a history of government inconsistency and overreach on issues related to personal choice. Others caution that relying too heavily on punitive measures could push vaping further underground.

Still, if the reported reductions in teen and adult vaping are accurate and sustainable, they represent a rare success in public health policy. Continued progress will depend on maintaining a balanced strategy that includes education, family engagement, and practical enforcement, without crossing the line into excessive regulation.