

# Identifying Promising Directions for Teen E-Cigarette Prevention Messages Among Hawai'i Teens

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Promising beliefs for teen vaping prevention messages include **addiction concerns** and **vaping as stress-inducing vs. -reducing**.

Addressing **vaping health harms**, such as impacts on the brain and immune system, remains promising.

**Social norms** are an important area for future prevention messaging.

## Aim

As part of a larger vaping prevention media campaign evaluation, we examined key perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, and vaping susceptibility among teens in Hawai'i to identify promising directions for future vaping prevention messaging.

## Methods

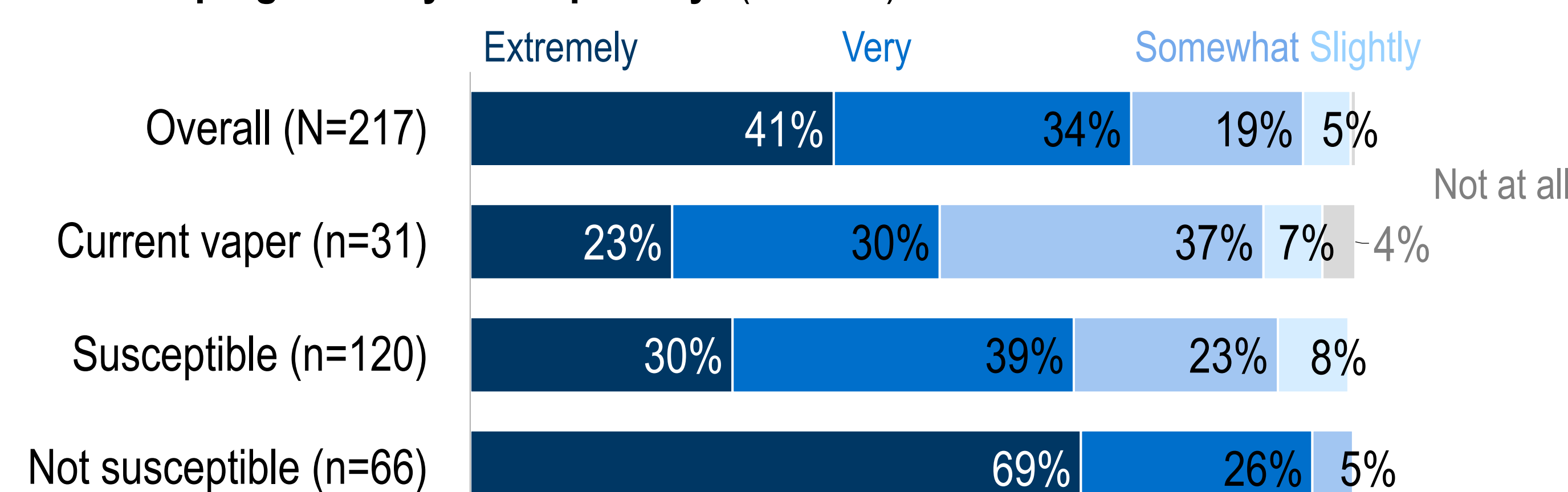
Two waves of online surveys conducted with teens 13-18 in Hawai'i.

Wave 1 (Feb '21-Mar '21): *n* = 212  
Wave 2 (Dec '21-Feb '22): *n* = 219

Primary recruitment took place via social media advertisements on Instagram/Facebook, Snapchat, and TikTok that linked to a mobile-friendly survey. Results were weighted to better reflect teens in Hawai'i by age, county, and gender.

## Teens who vape or are susceptible to vaping perceive lower harms

Perceived vaping harm by susceptibility\* (Wave 2)



\*"Susceptible" includes ever (but not current) users as well as never users who indicated susceptibility per responses to 4 validated items (Strong, et al., 2015).

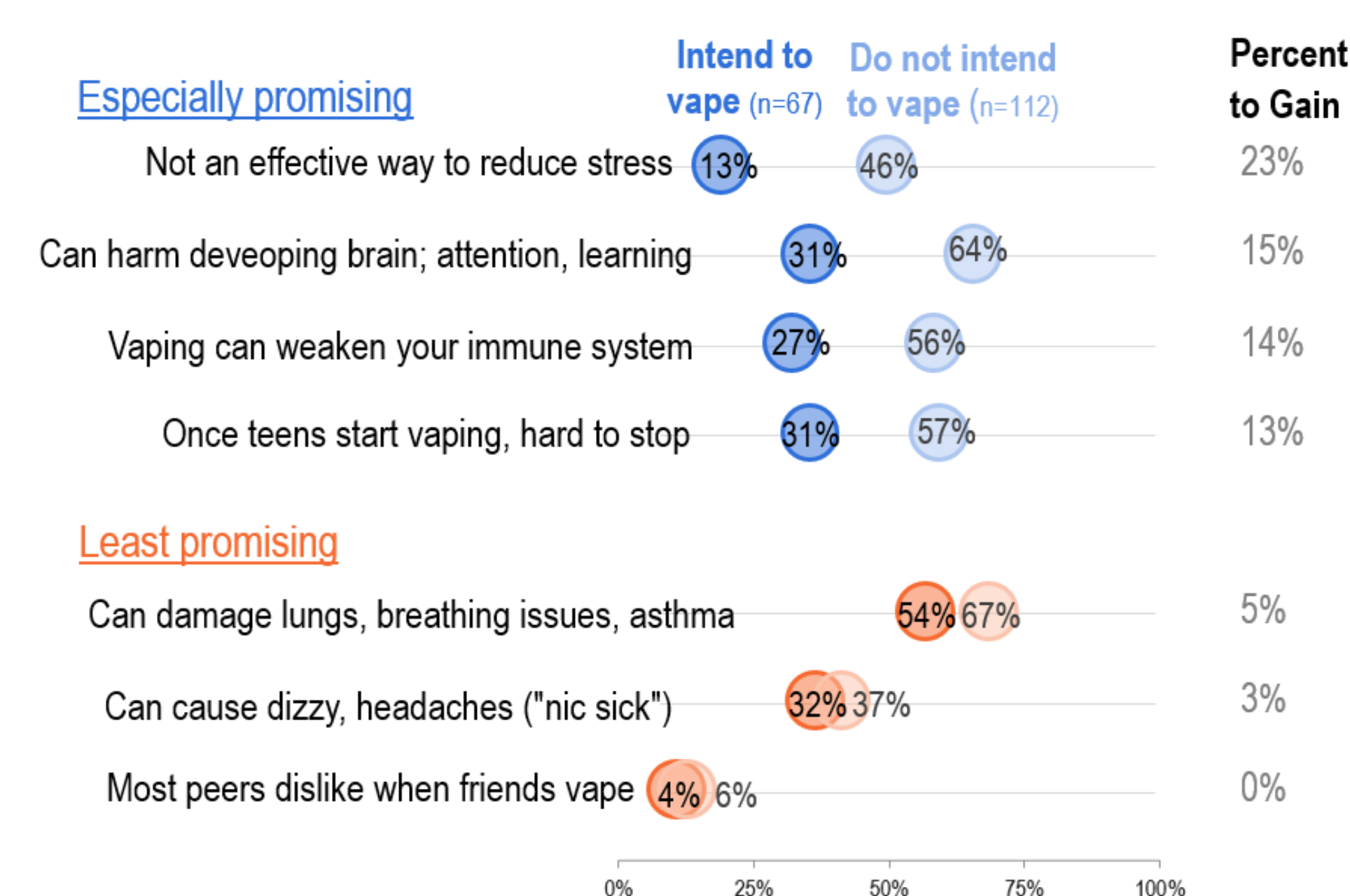
## Promising beliefs emphasized social, psychological, and physical consequences

Belief statements were analyzed to identify promising beliefs associated with lower intention to vape and the greatest potential for increasing intention not to vape (Hornik & Woolf, 1999).

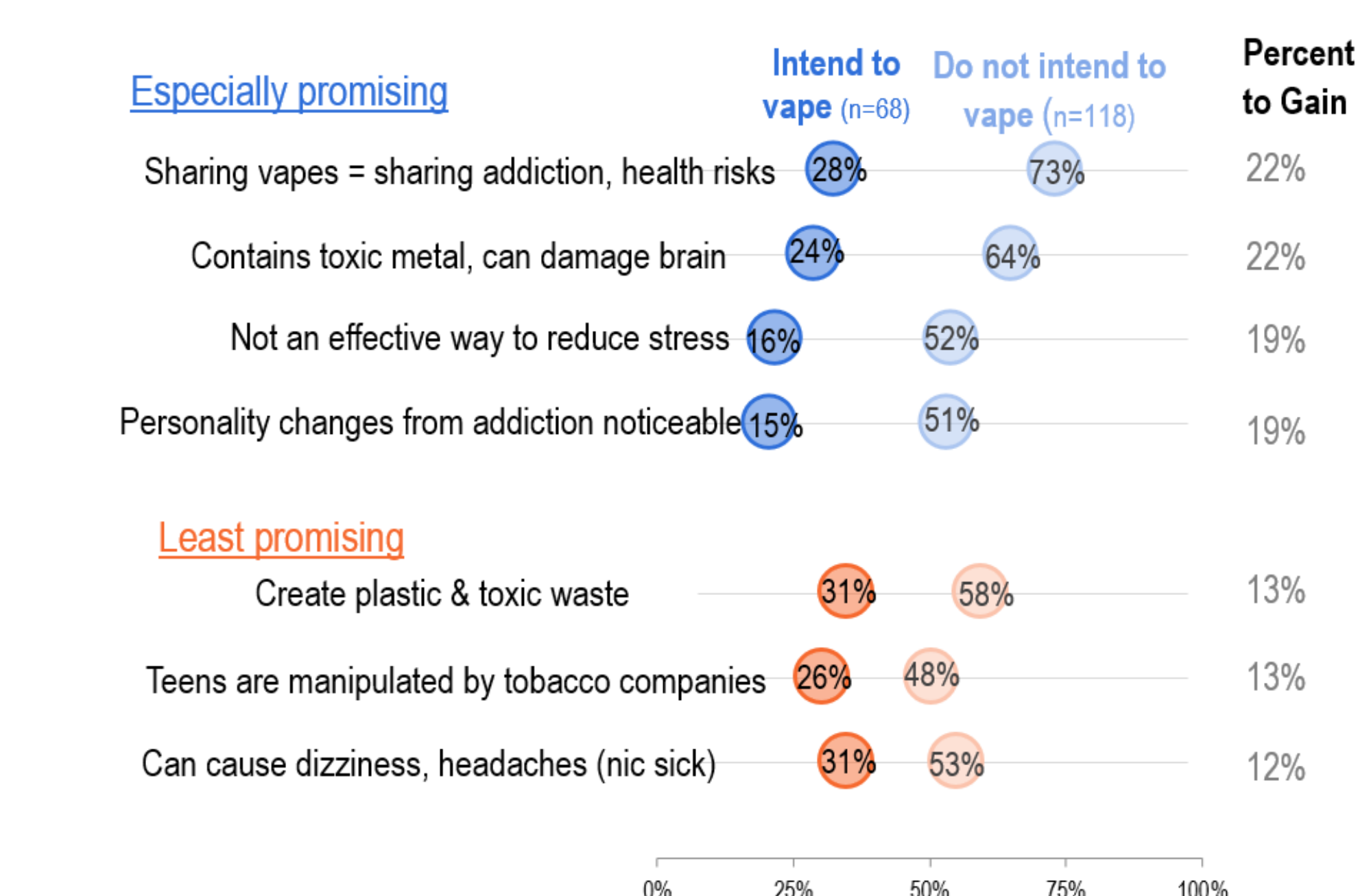
Percent to gain reflects the additional proportion of the teens who would have the desired intention (i.e., no intention to vape) if 100% of teens endorsed the belief.

Less promising beliefs were those that showed lower potential for changing teen intentions to vape. Some could become more promising via further exposure.

Percentage of teens who strongly agree with vaping beliefs (Wave 1)



Percentage of teens who strongly agree with vaping beliefs (Wave 2)



## Vaping is viewed as a social norm; most teens overestimate prevalence

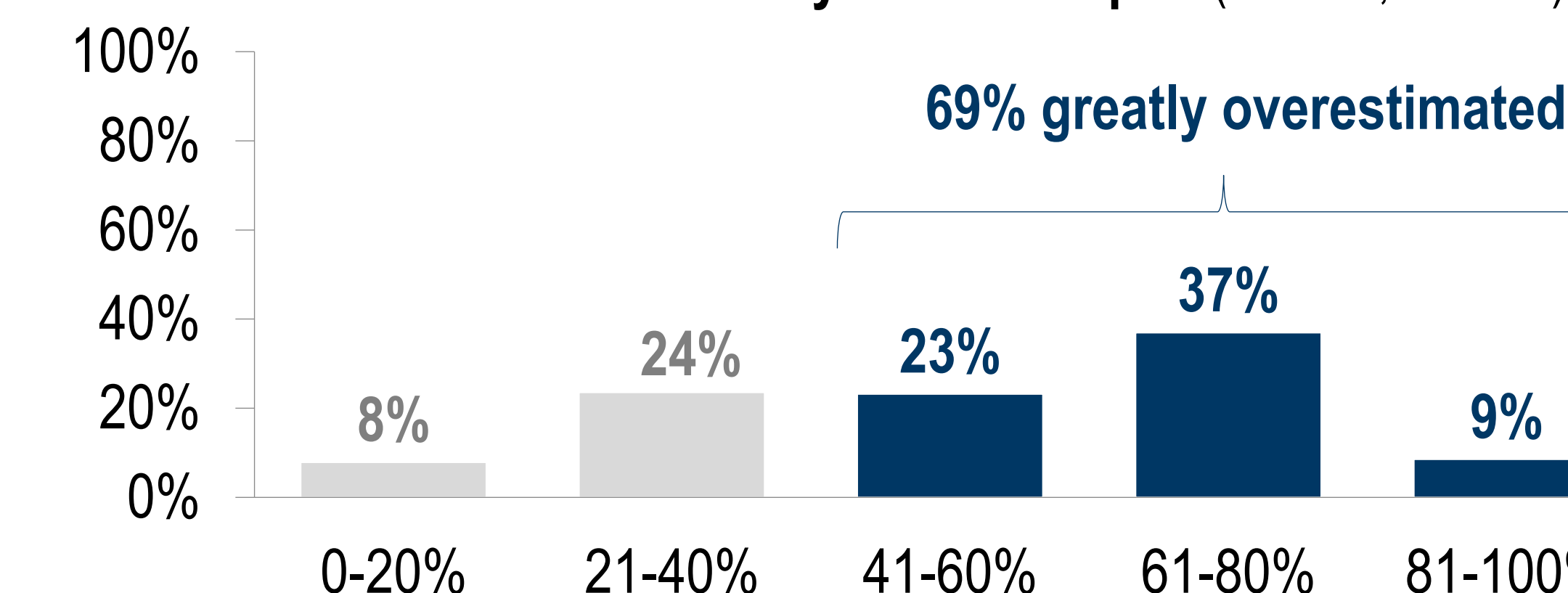
Across both waves, when asked what more we should know about teen vaping in Hawai'i, teens most frequently shared how prevalent vaping is.

"Almost every teen I know these days vapes, and if you don't, you're basically the outcast." – current vaper

"Everybody does it, even the people you would least expect." – susceptible teen

"Kids peer pressure you into using them ☹️" – never vaper

What % of teens in Hawai'i do you think vape? (Wave 2; n = 217)



## Conclusions

- Messages that emphasize **additional adverse effects beyond long-term health effects** (e.g., addiction and lack of stress reduction) are likely to resonate and influence future vaping behavior. **Addiction** was also the most common reason for quitting.
- There is **still a need for messaging to influence teens' harm perceptions** of vaping, especially among teens who are highly susceptible or already vaping.
- Social norms is a relatively underutilized approach with potential to impact teens. **Addressing social misperceptions of vaping** (i.e., emphasizing that vaping is actually less prevalent than teens estimate) is an important consideration for future messaging.
- Consistent with recent national research on effective vaping messages, **beliefs about industry manipulation and environmental impact were less promising** for Hawai'i teens (Boynton et al., 2022).



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