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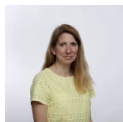


# Vaping crackdown could fuel rise in smokers, government admits

In his Conservative conference speech in Manchester Rishi Sunak said the rise of vaping among children was 'shocking and wrong'



government document setting out details of the plans reveals there could be "unintended consequences on youth and adult smoking rates"



By Jane Merrick

Policy Editor

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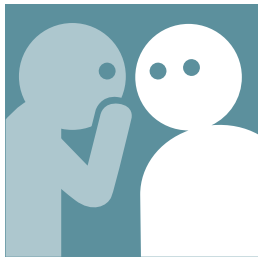
A planned crackdown by Rishi Sunak on vaping among young people could lead to a rise in the number of tobacco smokers, the government has admitted.

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But a government document setting out details of the plans reveals there could be “unintended consequences on youth and adult smoking rates” by imposing new restrictions on fruit and sweet flavours of vaping products, and so any legislation on this aspect would need to be “carefully considered”.

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The admission underlines the difficulties posed in trying to simultaneously curtail the use of cigarettes and of vapes, which have traditionally been used as aids to help smokers quit.

In his speech in Manchester on Wednesday, Mr Sunak said the rise of vaping among children was “shocking and wrong” and pledged to legislate to restrict the availability to youngsters, including targeting flavours, packaging, point of sale displays and disposable vapes.

A command paper by the Department of Health quotes research showing that children are “attracted to the fruit and sweet flavours of vapes, both in their taste and smell, as well as how they are described”.

It adds: “Restricting flavours has the potential to significantly reduce youth vaping. So, the government is considering new legislation to regulate the flavours of vapes and their descriptions.

“To avoid unintended consequences on youth and adult smoking rates, the scope of restrictions will need to be carefully considered. The options for how the government will seek to do this will be detailed in a consultation later this month.”

Mr Sunak risks a rebellion from the libertarian wing of his party by banning the sale of cigarettes to anyone born after 1 January 2009 – meaning anyone of that age and younger will never be able to purchase tobacco, even when they are adults.

The Prime Minister told Radio 4’s Today programme this was the “biggest single intervention in public health in a generation”.

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anyone born after 1 January 2009 – although it is not clear how this would be enforceable.

Local authorities would be given powers to issue on the spot fines for anyone selling tobacco and vapes to those underage.

Firms which sell vapes online will have to introduce tougher age verification to stop underage sales, the legislation is likely to state.

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