

Vaping harms awareness messaging: Exploring young South Australians' responses to vaping prevention campaign materials

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BACKGROUND

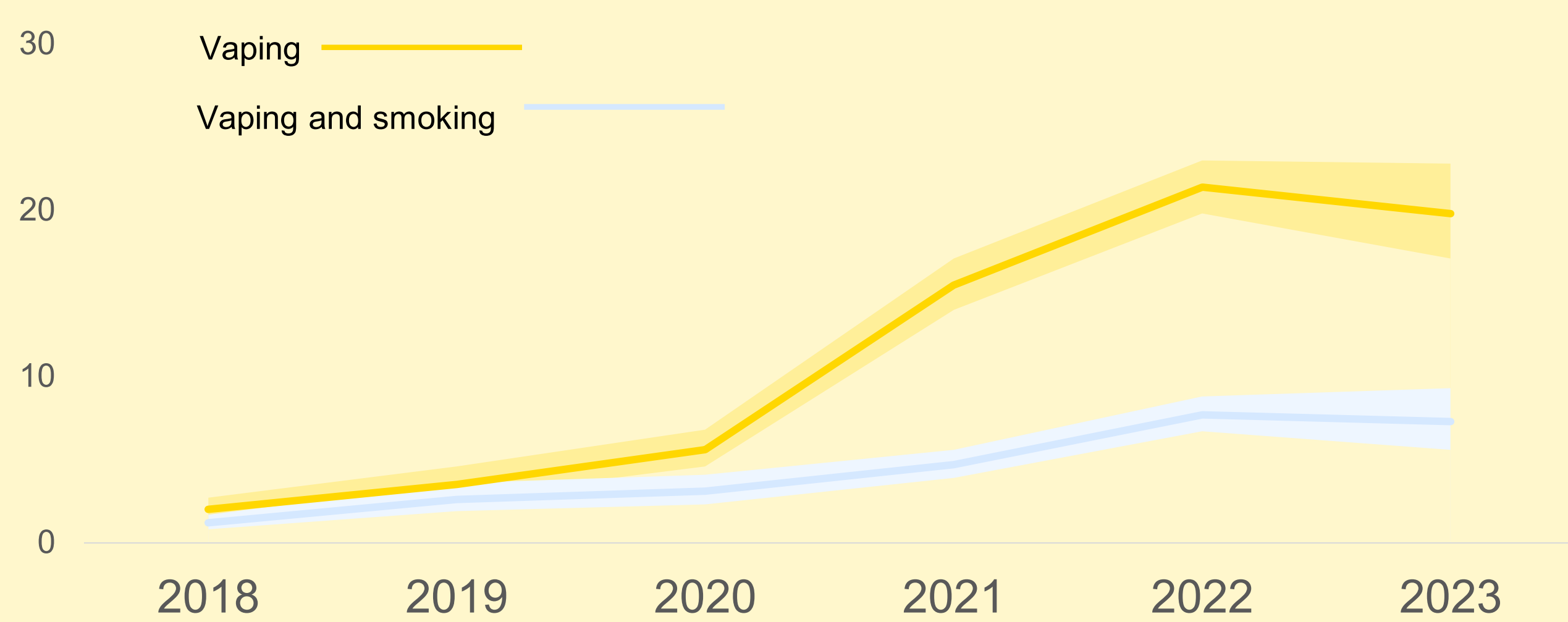
- Use of Nicotine Vaping Products (NVP) exposes people to harmful chemicals, including respiratory irritants & carcinogens.
- They are highly addictive & increase the likelihood of transitioning to smoking.
- They produce nicotine dependence driven by unregulated high nicotine concentrations, palatable flavours & nicotine salt formulations which increase nicotine absorption.

- Current legislation stipulates it is illegal to sell nicotine containing vaping products without a medical prescription & any vaping products to minors.

ISSUE

- Conflicting messaging in health information about harms of vaping, & about NVP & tobacco cessation options for young people.

Fig. 1 Vaping prevalence (%) in young Australians (18-24 years)



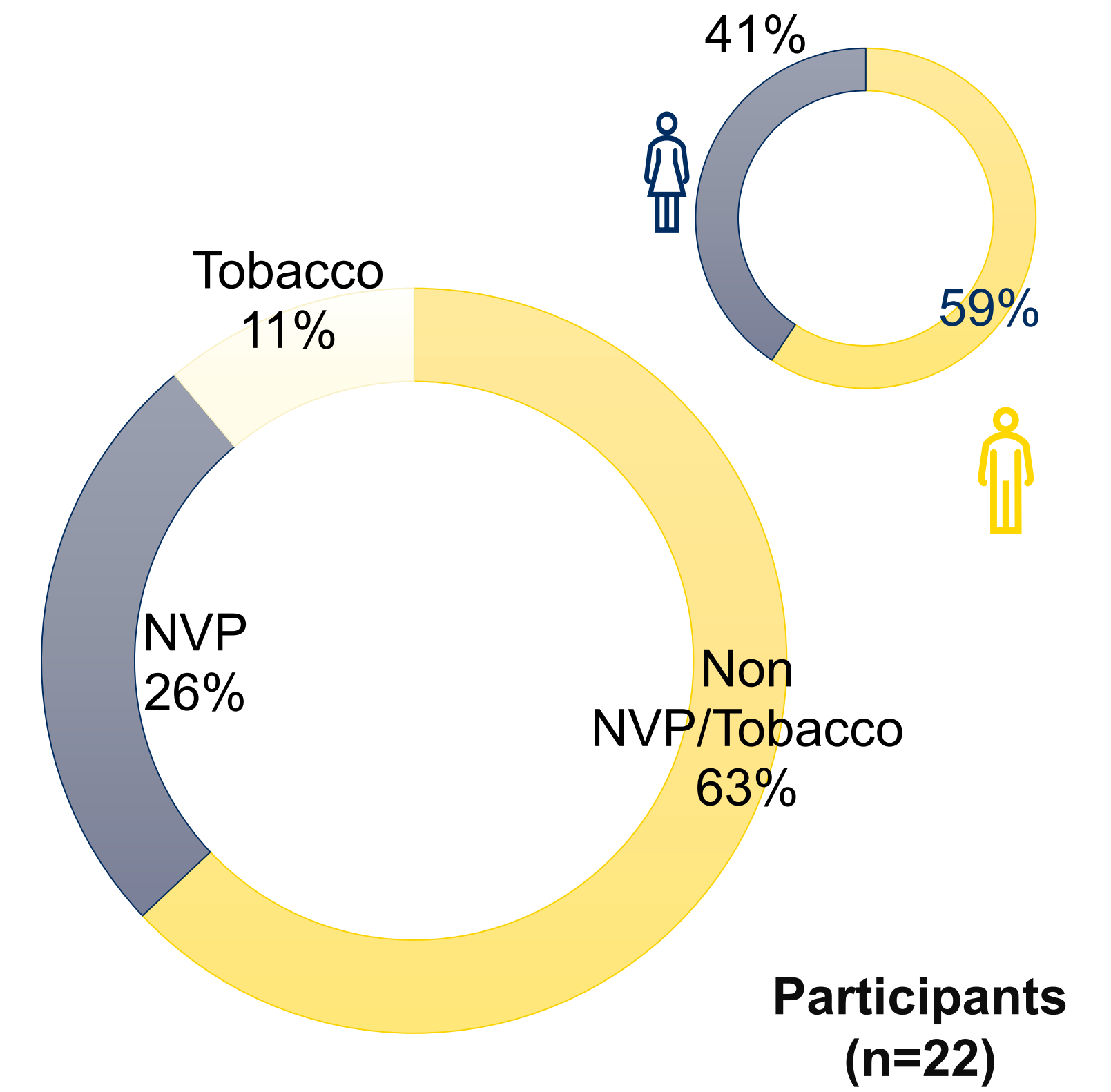
- They are easily accessible and for these reasons a sharp rise in exclusive and dual use of NVPs can be observed (fig. 1).^{1,2}

AIMS

To examine perceptions of vaping campaigns among young South Australians aged 16 to 26 years who do and who not use NVPs to inform vaping risk messaging.

METHODS

- Literature was scanned to determine methods of evaluating campaign efficacy.
- A structured guide used to determine perceptions of key elements in 3 selected campaigns (fig 3, 4 & 5).
- Focus groups/interviews transcribed & descriptive-thematic analysis completed using NVIVO software.
- Perceptions of efficacy (visual & design elements), relevance, appeal, engagement and impact of campaign coded.



CAMPAIGN/RESOURCES

1. 'Do you know what you're vaping' by NSW government (fig. 3)
2. 'Unveil what you inhale' by The Lung Foundation (fig. 4)
3. 'Epidemic' by The Real Cost (US FDA) (fig. 5)



Fig. 3

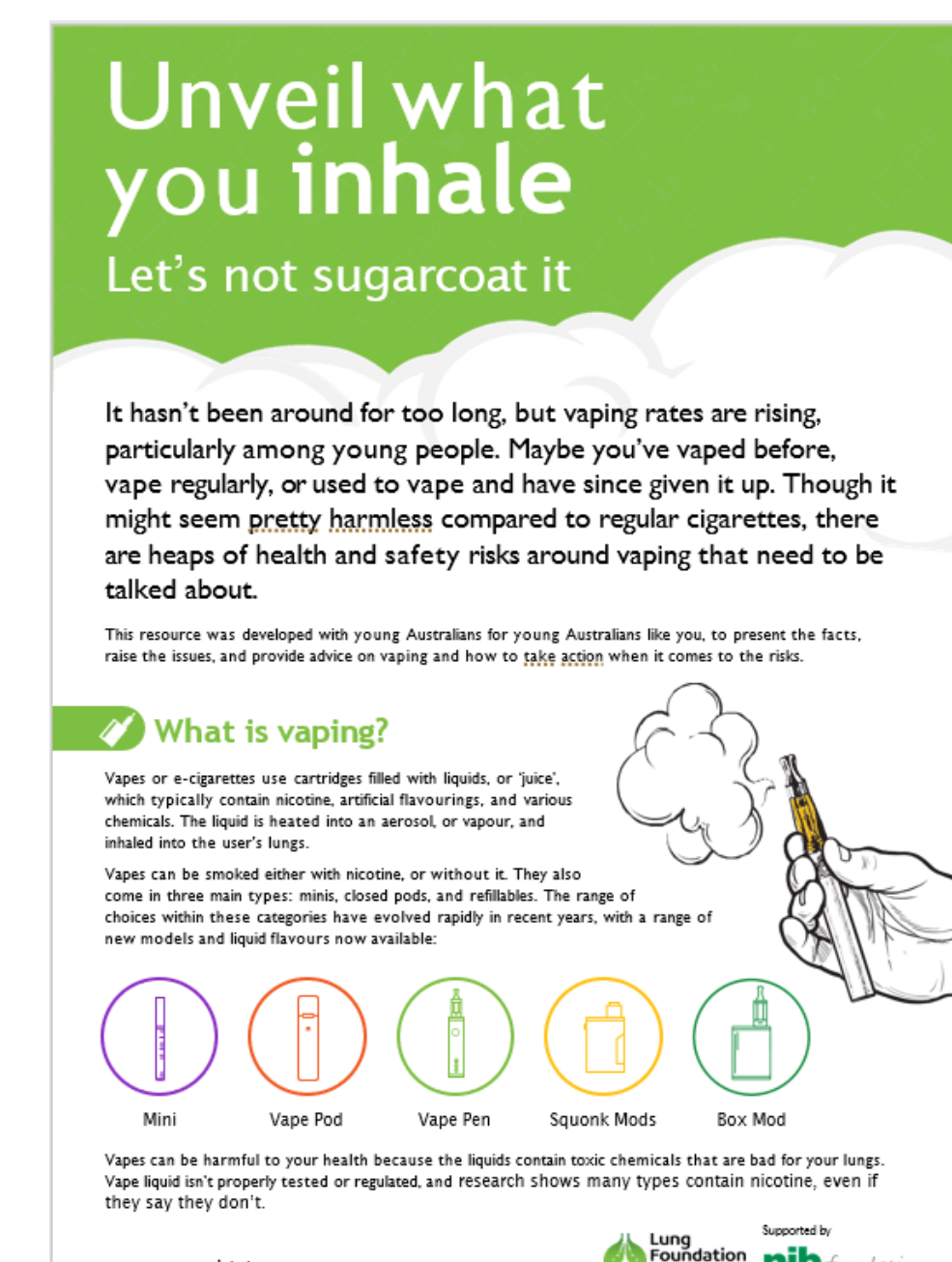


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

RESULTS

- General vaping perceptions of majority of participants:
 - Vaping is a 'cleaner or healthier' alternative to smoking.
 - Appealing & socially acceptable relative to tobacco smoking, which was viewed as more harmful.
 - Often associated with alcohol consumption at events.

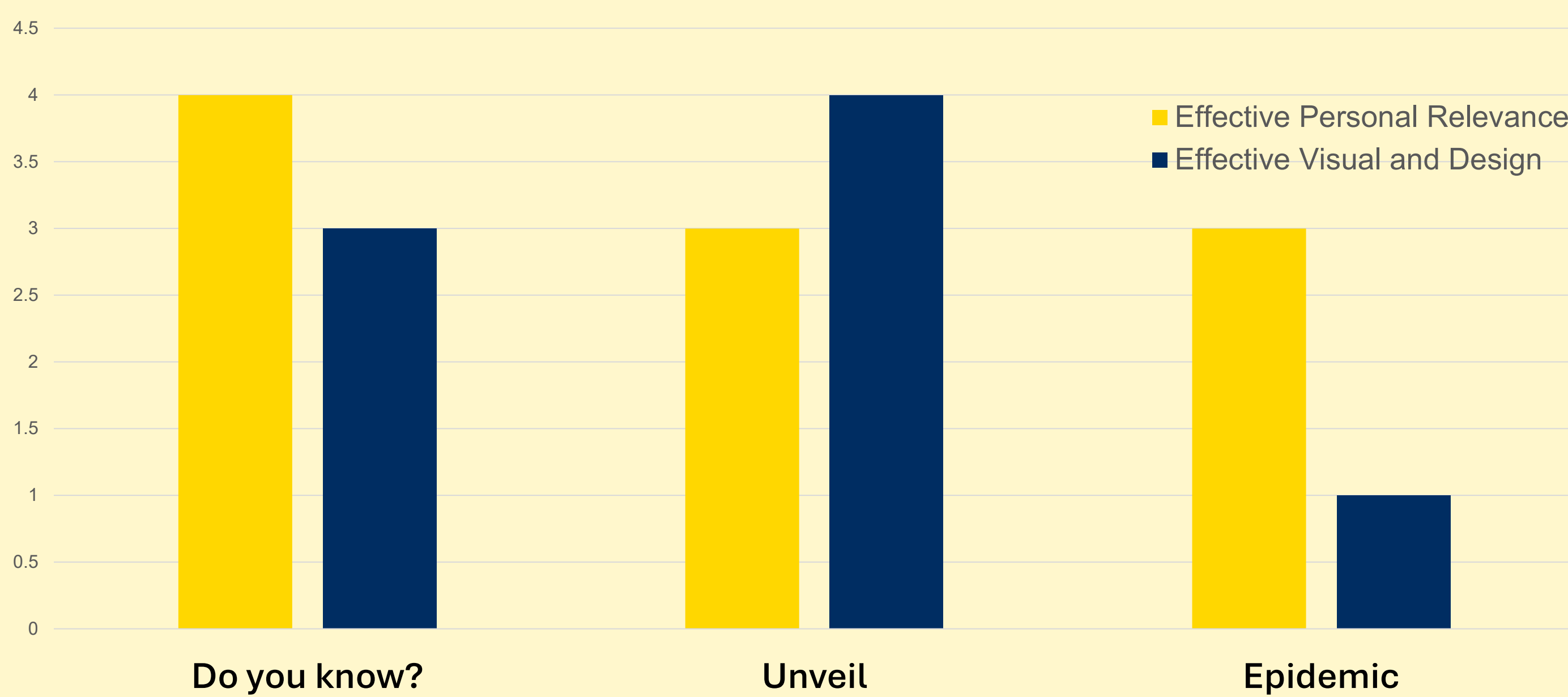
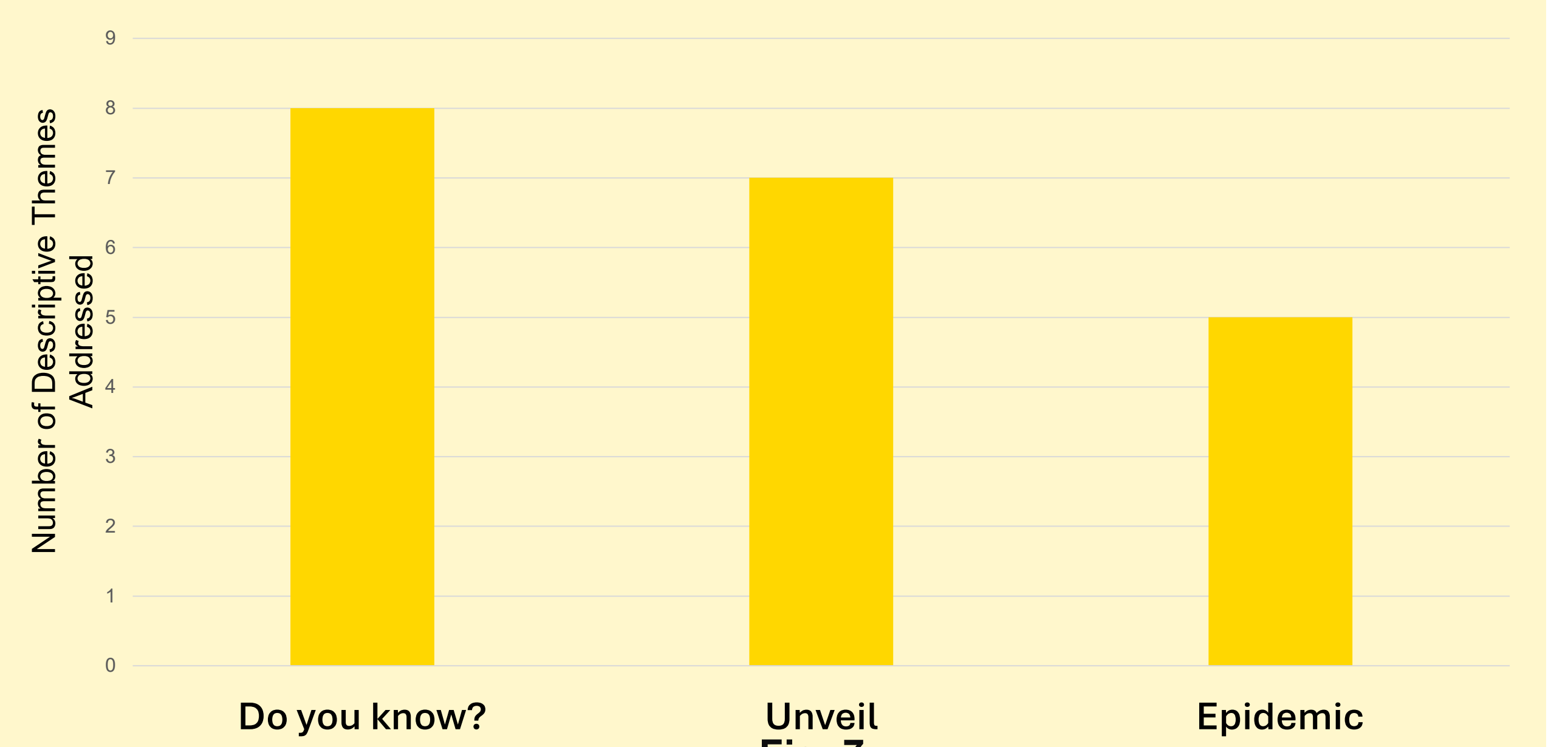


Fig. 6

- 'Epidemic': considered the least visually effective & relevant (fig. 6). It did not clearly prompt a change in vaping views or behaviours in participants. Perceptions were that it would unlikely be translated into action.



CONCLUSION

- 'Do you know what you're vaping': prompted participants who vaped to consider uncertain risks inherent to vaping & their own health, though did not indicate that this was enough to motivate them toward cessation. Whilst not as visually effective, participants felt it was most relevant & addressed more descriptive themes than the other campaigns (fig.6 & 7).
- 'Unveil what you inhale': considered most visually effective (fig. 6), with those who did not vape indicating they would click through to read more resources from the campaign, & those who did vape responding well to the challenge aspect of the messaging.

- The NSW Health campaign, 'Do you know what you're vaping', effectively addressed most of the descriptive themes examined in this study (fig. 7).
- Information on harmful ingredients and health consequences should remain mainstay themes of prevention campaign messaging.
- Bright visual design elements connoting health and wellbeing can be used to draw attention of young people who do and do not vape.
- Despite attention drawing, fear-appeals in campaigns negatively impact audience engagement.
- Messaging should clearly indicate how chemical effects are relevant to individual health and symptoms.

¹ Wakefield et al (2023), Dept Health and Aged Care and Cancer Council Victoria
² Watts, et al (2022), Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 46: 814-820