Youth Nicotine Addiction: Strategic Regulation Defiance by the Disposable Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (ENDS) Industry

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Objective
To identify factors contributing to the growing popularity of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and youth nicotine addiction by examining federal, state, and local regulations.

Method
Searched FDA.gov for ENDS regulations and warning letters
Gathered information about disposable ENDS within Google search
Identified youth nicotine addiction statistics and risk factors
Determined how disposable ENDS are easily obtainable and attractive for youth nicotine users

Background
Puff Bar is a brand of flavored disposable ENDS. Puff Bars remain popular among youth nicotine users as mentioned by Truth Initiative, a nonprofit anti-vaping organization.

Results
- In July 2020, a distributor of Puff Bars, received a warning letter for failure to comply with FDA regulations:
  - Manufacturing a new tobacco product without a Premarket Tobacco Application
  - Selling Puff Bars in flavors other than menthol and tobacco
  - Marketing Puff Bars, on puffbar.com, as a safer alternative to smoking
- A Google search of “Puff Bar” yields 71,000,000 results
- Of the 16 websites selling Puff Bars on the first two Google search pages, all but one, puffbar.com, sell additional brands of disposable ENDS
- Puff Bars are sold wholesale from Chinese manufacturers without e-liquid
  - Distributors need to fill them with e-liquid

How Flavored ENDS Promote Youth Nicotine Addiction
- banned for sale in U.S.
- easy online and in-store purchases
- reduce perception of harm
- lead to more use

Summary
- Puff Bars continue to be sold both online and in stores across the U.S.
- Puff Bars are distributed by multiple vendors and FDA cannot track all of them.

Conclusions
The following actions are warranted:
- Stricter legal action toward retailers selling disposable ENDS
- Expanded tracking of supply chains of illegal disposable ENDS by regulatory agencies

References

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