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Cigarillo and Little Cigar (CLC) Portrayals on Instagram

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Abstract

Among US public health concerns, smoking remains a significant target for intervention. However, teen and young adult users appear to be adopting different preferences and patterns of smoking than prior generations. Little cigar and cigarillo (LCC) use is rapidly expanding among this age group. Depictions of LCC product use are highly prevalent on social media, a preferred and ubiquitous channel of communication among young people. The purpose of the study is to identify and examine primary themes and message attributes of posted LCC behaviors and messages on social media – and specifically on Instagram. A quantitative content analysis was conducted to describe the profiles of Instagram users posting LCC – related images and the content of the posted images. The coded sample included more than 2000 images which were randomly selected to represent each of the four brands. Undergraduate coders were included in the creation of the coding scheme. The results identified the majority of Instagram users who posted LCC –related pictures as being young, white, males. The posted images feature LCC packages, partially smoked cigarillos, and blunts which are often posed for the photograph. The findings of this study will assist us in future prevention message creation.