Perfecting Addictive Drug Delivery Systems for Children – The Puff Muff
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"Realistically, if our company is to survive and prosper, over the long term, we must get our share of the youth market. In my opinion this will require new brands tailored to the youth market." — Claude E. Teague, RJ Reynolds 1973

I learned about the Puff Muff device recently. The commercial interests have been quite busy. It is perhaps the perfect drug delivery device for young boys. What is it? They are advertised as "high-quality, wireless headphones built for streaming and gaming, with a built in 510 cartridges." 510 is the "industry" standard for vaporizing cannabis oil, CBD, and other concentrates like nicotine salts. This device is ideal for delivering high concentrate THC and other addictive compounds into the brains of children while they play video games. This is how you hook a young customer for life.

The most appealing market to purveyors of addictive drugs are children, this is true for legal and illegal drugs. There has been much written on the topic, one of the pieces I wrote on the subject was Occam's Razor and the Industries of Addiction. A young brain is more susceptible to addiction than a mature brain. You can watch this video by Nora Volkow, the renowned addiction neuroscientist who has studied addiction for decades as she describes why young people are more vulnerable to becoming addicted. The drug merchants target children as kids are at greater risk of becoming addicted. Once addicted, they buy lots of drugs. The companies make a lot of money. It is quite a business model.

Vaping among youth and young adults has been characterized as an emerging epidemic by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry with one in ten youth engaged in it. Studies have found that vaping results in higher blood serum concentrations of THC and nicotine compared to smoking either cannabis or tobacco. It also leads to loss-of-control and withdrawal symptoms upon cessation. Vaping may also result in increased risk of toxicity and pulmonary injury, including e-cigarette or vaping associated lung injury (EVALI), and risks of mechanical burns.

As far as the Puff Muff, consider why it is ideal:

- **Camouflage and Concealment:** The Puff Muff is a drug delivery system disguised as an accessory commonly used by children, an over-ear headphone for gaming. This reduces social detection by adults and reduces external constraints on use. Parents fail to register that their kids are wearing powerful drug delivery devices around their heads.
- **Increased Frequency of Dosing:** What science tells us and these industries are quite aware of is that the addictive potential of a drug increases when doses are delivered rapidly and repeatedly throughout the day. The Puff Muff does exactly that. It is designed for kids with lots of screen time, which adds an extra dimension. A recent study found that digital social connections is associated with early adolescent substance experimentation. The Puff Muff capitalizes on these phenomena of one addiction kindling another.
- **Environmental friction is reduced:** It is a drug delivery device that can be used continuously bath the brain in drugs through "micro-dosing" patterns, small but frequent spikes that strengthen habit formation. Less smell, less visible, more discreet and easier to use. The drug sits an inch from your kids' brain and is ready to use at any moment.
- **Youth-Oriented Design**: We see similar playbooks over the course of time. Consider the JUUL with its sleek design and flavor profiles that appeal to children. Part of the marketing plan is to make a product with wide appeal to children. It is aimed at youth culture and fits into their lives seamlessly. This also fuels rapid sales, so kids start using the product in masse before regulatory actions take hold.

Vape itself is an evolution of a drug delivery system for drugs like nicotine and cannabis. Both of these drugs have also evolved into higher potency more addictive drugs that get to the brain quickly when inhaled by vaping. Dose density has increased so each puff packs more punch. Finally, as noted above, increasing the frequency of use bathes the brain in the drug. In short, we have nearly perfected addiction delivering products, more effective than at any other point in human

history. A commercial evolution of drug delivery that aligns with broader trends in the addiction marketplace, higher potency, smoother delivery, faster reinforcement, and expanded consumer base focused on kids.

Beyond all those facets is the growing campaign to normalize destructive drug use. To consider drug use the most normal thing ever, a thing that nearly all humans do and only contributes to the quality of our lives. Roughly 760,000 Americans die each year from causes tied to addictive substances with an economic burden estimated between $700 billion and $1.6 trillion every year. The death and destruction unfold even as well-funded drug normalization groups claim that drugs are innocuous, often guised as drug policy reform, or "more sensible" public health approaches.

Two things are clear; drug normalization campaigns have mobilized young people around these messages and secondly there can be little ambiguity about who benefits from drug normalizing messages. This is at the heart of Occam's Razor; the simplest explanation is usually the correct one. There is a focus on addicting kids because it is profitable. In the case of the Puff Muff and the growing normalization of high potency drug delivery systems aimed at kids, just follow the money.

There is yet another age-old dynamic in play here in respect to addictive drug use. Drug use is way more profitable than not using drugs. Addiction rules the day, and we always capitalize the profits and socialize the consequences. Entrepreneurs get rich and society gets the bill for the devastation. We should do better for our youth than for them to be collateral damage to the vast industries of addiction. The question is, will we?

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