COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

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October 2, 2019

THE DANGERS OF E-CIGARETTE USE AND THE OUTBREAK OF SEVERE VAPING ASSOCIATED PULMONARY ILLNESSES

Dear School Principal**:**

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is pleased to provide you with this update on the recent outbreak of severe vaping associated pulmonary illnesses (VAPI) to warn students of the dangers of electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) use, also known as vaping, and a toolkit for educating students and parents about this emergent threat. Along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health, we are recommending that all people STOP VAPING NOW. Evidence is mounting that vaping can lead to long-term nicotine addiction and may cause severe, irreversible, and sometimes deadly lung injuries.

To date, the CDC has reported 805 cases of people experiencing VAPI, now found across 46 states and 1 U.S. Territory. In Los Angeles County there have been 16 cases and 1 death. In most of these cases, the victims were young people, all requiring hospitalization, and at least half of them needing assistance with breathing using a mechanical ventilator. In total, twelve deaths have occurred in 10 states across the country.

In Los Angeles County alone, more than 30% of high school students have ever used e-cigarettes and at least 1 in 10 are current users. Additionally, the use of multiple flavored tobacco products (mostly e-cigarettes) was quite common among youth, according to the 2017-18 California Student Tobacco Survey. Until age 25, nicotine can negatively affect brain cell activity in adolescents responsible for attention span, learning, and memory. Addiction to nicotine among young people is also among some of the most difficult conditions to treat.

In response to this e-cigarette epidemic and to the VAPI outbreak, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors recently took the unprecedented action of unanimously approving a new tobacco control ordinance which bans the sale of flavored tobacco products, with the goal of restricting youth access to flavored e-cigarettes and other flavored products. We applaud the Board's decision, we are urgently getting the word out in order to educate our youth and their families about the dangers of e-cigarette use. With this in mind, we have put together a toolkit of resources which we believe will be valuable to your school, especially as you reach out to students, their parents, and to school staff. This toolkit contains resources that range from fact sheets and printable posters, to programs (e.g., Tobacco Use Prevention Education) that are already active in the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. We have also included information that may help clinical staff at school health clinics get up to speed on the risks of e-cigarette use (*Rx for Prevention*). In the weeks to come, we will be working to provide schools with additional resources, such as informative posters, to place prominently on your campuses.

We hope that you will find these resources useful and valuable to your efforts to curb the e-cigarette epidemic on your campus. For questions regarding this public health update and information about vaping/tobacco cessation aids or other tobacco control resources, please visit https://laquits.com/vaping/ or contact the Tobacco Control and Prevention Program at (213) 351-7890 or by email, tobacco1@ph.lacounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director

BF:tk

c: Muntu Davis, M.D., M.P.H.
Tony Kuo, M.D., M.S.H.S.
Tonya Gallow, M.S.W.

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https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/pdfs/OSH-E-Cigarettes-and-Youth-What-Parents-Need-to-Know-20190327-508.pdf

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/teacher-parent/pdfs/parent-teacher-ecig-p.pdf

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY HEALTH AGENCY

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October 2, 2019

IT'S TIME TO TALK ABOUT THE DANGERS OF E-CIGARETTES

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As the father of a child nearing middle school, one of my biggest daily worries is his health and safety, a concern I think we share. Unfortunately, after decades of progress in the fight against tobacco use and cigarette smoking, a new health threat has emerged on the horizon. E-cigarette use is skyrocketing among our youth, with horrifying but preventable health consequences and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is urging parents to protect themselves and their families from this danger.

We are learning just how dangerous these devices may be, and the long-term health impacts remain unknown at this time. To date, more than 805 case reports of lung injury associated with e-cigarettes, also known as vaping-associated pulmonary injury (VAPI), have been reported nationally. 17 of these cases have resulted in death, and the number is growing every week. There have been 16 case reports of VAPI and one death potentially related to the use of e-cigarettes in Los Angeles County alone.

As the popularity of e-cigarettes rises, especially among teens and young adults, I am compelled to warn our 10 million residents that the risks of using these devices, with or without nicotine, marijuana, or some street concoction, may now include severe lung injury leading to death. Symptoms include coughing, difficulty breathing, fever, vomiting and diarrhea. If you or your child experiences these symptoms, please seek medical attention immediately. Please read the attached sheet, "Vaping: Frequently Asked Questions," for more information about e-cigarettes.

Prevention begins with a conversation with our children on this new danger to their health. Also, as parents, our children look to us to be the examples. If you don't want your kids to vape, don't vape either. Should you need help quitting, call 1-800-NO-BUTTS. Additional resources are available at https://laquits.com/vaping and https://teen.smokefree.gov/ .

Together, we can reverse this dangerous trend by educating our children.

Sincerely,

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH
Los Angeles County Health Officer

VAPING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are e-cigarettes in the news right now?

Reports of sudden, severe lung illness and deaths associated with e-cigarettes have been reported across 33 states and 1 U.S. territory. The specific cause has yet to be identified and is under investigation by local, state, and federal health officials. As of September 26, 2019, there have been 16 reports of serious vaping-associated pulmonary injury in Los Angeles County.

What are e-cigarettes?

E-cigarettes are electronic devices that use a battery-powered mechanism that heats a liquid to form vapors – or more accurately, aerosol – that the user can inhale, i.e., "vaping." These liquids are not just water and may contain various flavorings, nicotine, cannabis or marijuana, or other potentially harmful substances and chemicals. E-cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes and are known by different names including "e-cigs," "vapes," "vape pens," "mods," and "tank systems." The aerosol emitted by e-cigarettes contains harmful substances, including:

- Nicotine
- Cancer causing chemicals
- Heavy metals
- Flavorings linked to lung disease
- Volatile organic compounds

They can also be used to deliver other potentially harmful chemicals such as cannabis/tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or cannabidiol (CBD).

Are e-cigarettes safe to use?

There is increasing evidence of e-cigarettes causing severe lung illness, potentially leading to death among a variety of users, and we urge everyone to stop using these products now.

If you currently use e-cigarettes or vaping products, we suggest you stop using them. This advice is especially important for adults who have never used or do not currently use tobacco products, youth, young adults, and pregnant women. These products can lead to nicotine addiction and cause harm for fetal and brain development, which continues throughout adolescence and into young adulthood.

If you cannot stop now, you should not purchase products off the street or from unlicensed facilities, and you should not modify or add substances to e-cigarette products. This is a recommendation of both the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Are e-cigarettes effective as an aid to quit smoking?

E-cigarettes are not approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as an aid or treatment to quit smoking.

Anyone attempting to quit should contact their health care provider for counseling and an FDA-approved, evidence-based treatment. The California Smokers' Helpline offers help to quit smoking and vaping. Adults, youth, and parents of youth who vape can call the Helpline for free counseling and assistance: 1-800-NO-BUTTS.

How many reports of e-cigarette-associated severe pulmonary (lung) diseases are there?

Total Number of Cases in Los Angeles County: 16

as of September 26 2019

For the most current information on this important national issue, visit www.cdc.gov/ecigarettes. The CDC will update current case numbers in real-time. Until more research can be done, the overall health impacts of vaping remain uncertain. The current cases of severe lung disease among people who vape raise significant concerns about the safety of vaping.

Almost all patients involved have reported using e-cigarette products, and many have reported using similar products containing cannabinoid compounds such as THC or CBD.

What are the symptoms of severe pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette use?

Patients with these types of pulmonary injuries have reported the following symptoms a few days or a few weeks after e-cigarette use:

- Cough, shortness of breath, and chest pain
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, fever, or weight loss

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms and have recently used, or are currently using an e-cigarette product, please seek medical care immediately for further evaluation and treatment.

Resources for those wishing to quit smoking/vaping, or with further questions:

- 1-800-NO-BUTTS or www.nobutts.org
- www.cdc.gov/ecigarettes
- https://laquits.com
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Tobacco Control and Prevention Program: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/tob
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse and Prevention Control. Call our Substance Abuse Helpline anytime: 1-844-804-7500

RESOURCES: VAPI 1-PAGER/POSTER

THE DANGERS OF VAPING

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECENT CASES SHOW SEVERE LUNG ILLNESSES OR VAPING-ASSOCIATED PULMONARY INJURIES (VAPI) ARE LINKED TO E-CIGARETTE USE.

Electronic cigarettes and other vape devices are devices that deliver an aerosol to the user through inhalation by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other substances (e.g., marijuana).

Complications during Hospitalization

Approximately **50%** of Los Angeles County **patients** who were hospitalized for **VAPI** required **mechanical ventilation**.

Nearly **2 in 3** **cases** reported in Los Angeles County are **ages 25 and younger**.[2]

Symptoms[1]

Patients with VAPI injuries have experienced the following symptoms:

Respiratory
- Cough
- Hemoptysis (coughing up blood)
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain

Gastrointestinal
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain

Constitutional
- Fatigue or malaise
- Fever
- Weight loss
- Chills

Compounds/Additives Found in VAPI Cases

Includes, but not limited to:
- Nicotine
- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)
- Cannabinoids (CBD)
- Synthetic cannabinoids
- Flavorings and other substances

Ongoing Epidemiologic Investigations

The etiology of VAPI is **undetermined** and current epidemiologic investigations involves:
- Identification of harmful aspects of e-cigarette use
- Understanding the underlining mechanisms and causes

Among LA County High School Students[3]...

1 in 10 are current e-cigarette users

56% Rate of increase among e-cigarette users between 2015-16 to 2017-18.

15% Rate of current marijuana use– higher than any tobacco products.

County of Los Angeles Public Health

Sources: [1] Layden, J. E., et al. (2019). Pulmonary illness related to e-cigarette use in Illinois and Wisconsin—preliminary report. New England Journal of Medicine.
[2] http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/phcommon/public/media/mediapubdetail.cfm?unit=media&ou=ph&prog=media&cur=cur&prid=2141&row=25&start=1
[3] Zhu S-H, et al. (2019). Tobacco use among high school students in Los Angeles County: Findings from the 2017-18 California Student Tobacco Study. San Diego, California: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control (CRITC), University of California, San Diego.
https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html
https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/Pages/RisksofVaping.aspx
http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/VapingFAQs.pdf

8.5 X11 PAGER

THE DANGERS OF VAPING

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[2] http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/phcommon/public/media/mediapubdetail.cfm?unit=media&ou=ph&prog=media&cur=cur&prid=2141&row=25&start=1
[3] Zhu S-H, et al. (2019). Tobacco use among high school students in Los Angeles County: Findings from the 2017-18 California Student Tobacco Study. San Diego, California: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control (CRITC), University of California, San Diego.
https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html
https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/Pages/RisksofVaping.aspx
http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/VapingFAQs.pdf

11 X 17 POSTER

RESOURCES: OTHER POSTERS

DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE AT: https://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/SHaPE 20AskAdvRefLetter 20Size-Front-and-Back.pdf

DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE AT: https://www.etr.org/store/product/vaping-dont-get-taken-in-poster-laminated/#gallery

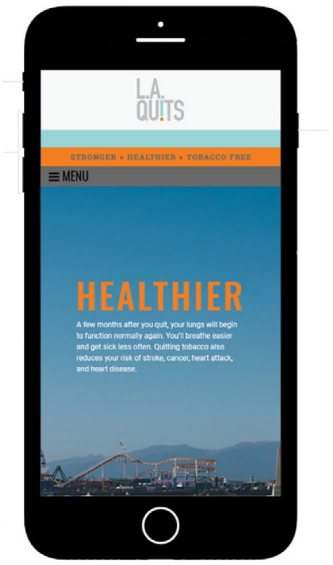
“NO SMOKING” TEMPLATES

DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE AT: https://www.tecc.org/product/no-smoking-no-vaping/

LA QUITS/1-800-NO-BUTTS

There is help available.

Visit **LAQuits.com**



or

Call the **California Smokers' Helpline**

1-800-NO-BUTTS
(1-800-662-8887)
English

1-800-45-NO-FUME
(1-800-456-6386)
Spanish

County of Los Angeles Public Health

L.A. QUITS

E-cigarettes

What are E-cigarettes? [1]

E-cigarettes are electronic devices that heat e-liquid.

- E-liquid often contains nicotine.
- When heated, e-liquid turns into an aerosol (vapor) that users breathe in.

Types[1,2]

Ciga-likes

- Same size, weight, and look as cigarettes
- Some are thrown away when e-liquid is used up
- Others can be refilled and used again

Personal vaporizers

- Same size and shape as a large pen
- Has a tank that can be refilled with e-liquid
- User can change the tank and battery to get more nicotine or bigger puffs

Mods

- Come in many shapes and sizes
- Can be made from things like soda cans or breath mint tins
- Users can change the mouthpiece or battery to make it more personal

More about E-cigarettes[2,3,4]

- E-liquid often has:
  - Nicotine
  - Propylene glycol, often used in food products and drugs
  - Vegetable glycerin, often used in food and body products
  - Flavors
  - Water
- Nicotine in e-liquid gets in the body via the mouth and throat. This can cause:
  - Heart rate and blood pressure to go up
  - Blood vessels to get narrow
- E-cigarettes are not approved as a quitting aid by the FDA[3]
  - They are also not a part of the U.S. Public Health Services Clinical Practice Guideline for treating tobacco use and dependence.

If you or someone you know wants to quit, check out the helpful tips on the back!

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California Smokers' Helpline 1-800-NO-BUTTS

1-800-662-8887
www.nobutts.org

Quitting E-cigarettes

5 Tips to Help You Quit

1. **Find your reason:** Why do you want to quit?
   - Write down your main reasons
   - Remind yourself often why you want to quit
2. **Know your triggers:** What makes you want to use e-cigarettes?
   - Write down the times when you like to use
   - Some common triggers are when you drink alcohol, feel stressed, hang out with others who are vaping, or feel bored
3. **Make a plan to deal with triggers:** What can you do instead?
   - Change your ways – do other things like take deep breaths, chew on a straw, drink water, and avoid places where you use
   - Change your thoughts – think about why you want to quit, tell yourself that vaping is not an option, and give yourself credit for quitting
4. **Set a quit date:** What day might work best for you?
   - Choose a day that is more or less stress-free.
   - Mark the date and commit to quit.
   - Give it a try.
5. **Keep trying:** What if you don't make it this time?
   - It can take multiple tries to quit for good.
   - You never know which time will stick – if you keep trying you WILL do it!

Free Help

Call 1-800-NO-BUTTS for FREE help to quit!

[1] *US Food and Drug Administration (2017).Vaporizers, E-Cigarettes, and other ENDS. Retrieved 7/23/2018 https://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/Labeling/ProductsIngredientsComponents/ucm456610.htm*

[2] *NIH (2018). Electronic Cigarettes (E-cigarettes). Retrieved 7/23/2018 https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/electronic-cigarettes-e-cigarettes*

[3] *GoSmokeFree (2018). Propylene Glycol (PG) vs Vegetable Glycerin (VG) E Liquid. Retrieved 7/23/2018 https://www.gosmokefree.co.uk/propylene-glycol-pg-vs-vegetable-glycerin-vg-e-liquid/*

[4] *Livestrong.Com.(2017). The Effects of Nicotine on the Body. Retrieved 7/23/2018 https://www.livestrong.com/article/92349-effects-nicotine-body/*

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Last reviewed: 10/18

County of Los Angeles Public Health

California Smokers' Helpline 1-800-NO-BUTTS

1-800-662-8887
www.nobutts.org

KNOW THE RISKS
E-CIGARETTES & YOUNG PEOPLE

Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents

BEFORE THE TALK

Know the facts.

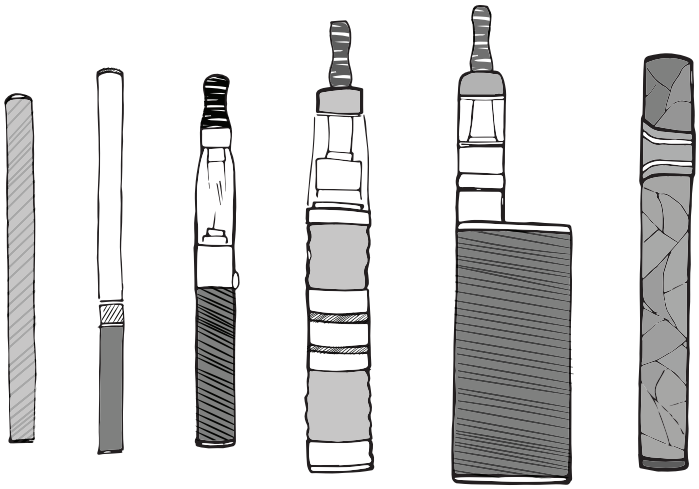
- Get credible information about e-cigarettes and young people at E-cigarettes.SurgeonGeneral.gov.

Be patient and ready to listen.

- Avoid criticism and encourage an open dialogue.
- Remember, your goal is to have a conversation, not to deliver a lecture.
- It's OK for your conversation to take place over time, in bits and pieces.

Set a positive example by being tobacco-free.

- If you use tobacco, it's never too late to quit. For free help, visit smokefree.gov or call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.



START THE CONVERSATION

Find the right moment.

- A more natural discussion will increase the likelihood that your teen will listen. Rather than saying "we need to talk," you might ask your teen what he or she thinks about a situation you witness together, such as:
  - » Seeing someone use an e-cigarette in person or in a video.
  - » Passing an e-cigarette shop when you are walking or driving.
  - » Seeing an e-cigarette advertisement in a store or magazine or on the internet.

Ask for support.

- Not sure where to begin? Ask your health care provider to talk to your teen about the risks of e-cigarettes.
- You might also suggest that your teen talk with other trusted adults, such as relatives, teachers, faith leaders, coaches, or counselors whom you know are aware of the risks of e-cigarettes.
- These supportive adults can help reinforce your message as a parent.

ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS

Here are some questions and comments you might get from your teen about e-cigarettes and some ideas about how you can answer them.

Why don't you want me to use e-cigarettes?

- Science shows that e-cigarettes contain ingredients that are addictive and could harm different parts of your body.
- Right now, your brain is still developing, which means you are more vulnerable to addiction. Many e-cigarettes contain nicotine, and using nicotine can change your brain to make you crave more nicotine. It can also affect your memory and concentration. I don't want that for you!
- E-cigarettes contain chemicals that are harmful. When people use e-cigarettes, they breathe in tiny particles that can harm their lungs.
- The cloud that people exhale from e-cigarettes can expose you to chemicals that are not safe to breathe.

What's the big deal about nicotine?

- Your brain is still developing until about age 25. The Surgeon General reported that nicotine is addictive and can harm your brain development.
- Using nicotine at your age may make it harder for you to concentrate, learn, or control your impulses.
- Nicotine can even train your brain to be more easily addicted to other drugs like meth and cocaine.

- I don't say this to scare you, but I want you to have the facts because nothing is more important to me than your health and safety.

Aren't e-cigarettes safer than conventional cigarettes?

- Because your brain is still developing, scientific studies show that it isn't safe for you to use any tobacco product that contains nicotine, including e-cigarettes.
- Whether you get nicotine from an e-cigarette or a cigarette, it's still risky.
- Some e-cigarette batteries have even exploded and hurt people.

I thought e-cigarettes didn't have nicotine—just water and flavoring?

- I used to think that too. But many e-cigarettes have nicotine. There are also other chemicals in them that can be harmful.
- Let's look at the Surgeon General's website on e-cigarettes (E-cigarettes.SurgeonGeneral.gov) together so you can see for yourself.

I (or my friends) have tried e-cigarettes and it was no big deal.

- I appreciate your honesty. In the future, I hope you (or your friends) will stay away from e-cigarettes and other tobacco products, including cigarettes. Science shows that e-cigarettes contain ingredients that are addictive and could harm different parts of your body.
- Next time we go to the doctor, let's ask about the risks of nicotine, e-cigarettes, and other tobacco products.

You used tobacco, so why shouldn't I?

- If I could live my life over again, I never would have started smoking. I learned that people who smoke cigarettes are much more likely to develop, and die from, certain diseases than people who don't smoke. This was really scary, so I quit smoking.
- Quitting was really hard, and I don't want you to go through that. The best thing is to not start at all.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Many parents find that texting is a great way to reach their teens. Here are some suggestions for text messages that might catch your teen's attention. And, you can easily share pages of the website (E-cigarettes.SurgeonGeneral.gov) with your teen.

Share this page

Look for this symbol, click it, type in the message you want or use the message provided, and share with your teen via Facebook, Twitter, or email.

Connect and encourage.

- You always liked science. Check out the science about e-cigarettes and young people: **E-cigarettes.SurgeonGeneral.gov**
- Getting off nicotine is hard but I'm so happy I quit. Don't make that mistake and get addicted. Smoking and tobacco use, including using e-cigarettes, are unsafe for young people.

Remind and repeat.

- Most teenagers don't use e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes with nicotine can mess with your brain, and your brain is still developing until you are at least 25.
- You might be tempted by e-cigarette flavors, but inhaling certain flavorings that have been found in some e-cigarettes can be harmful.

Share facts and resources.

- Just learned that many e-cigarettes have nicotine in them. That's the drug that makes cigarettes so addictive. Nicotine can also mess with your brain development.
- Just saw a report from the Surgeon General that e-cigarettes can mess with how your brain develops and might even affect your mood and focus. Please don't use any products that contain nicotine.
- Hope none of your friends use e-cigarettes around you. Even breathing the cloud they exhale can expose you to nicotine and chemicals that can be dangerous to your health.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES · USA

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office on Smoking and Health

U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE 1798

E-cigarettes and Youth: What Parents Need to Know

WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES?

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are battery-powered devices that deliver nicotine, flavorings, and other ingredients to the user. Using e-cigarettes is sometimes called "vaping." E-cigarettes do not create harmless "water vapor" – they create an aerosol that can contain harmful chemicals.

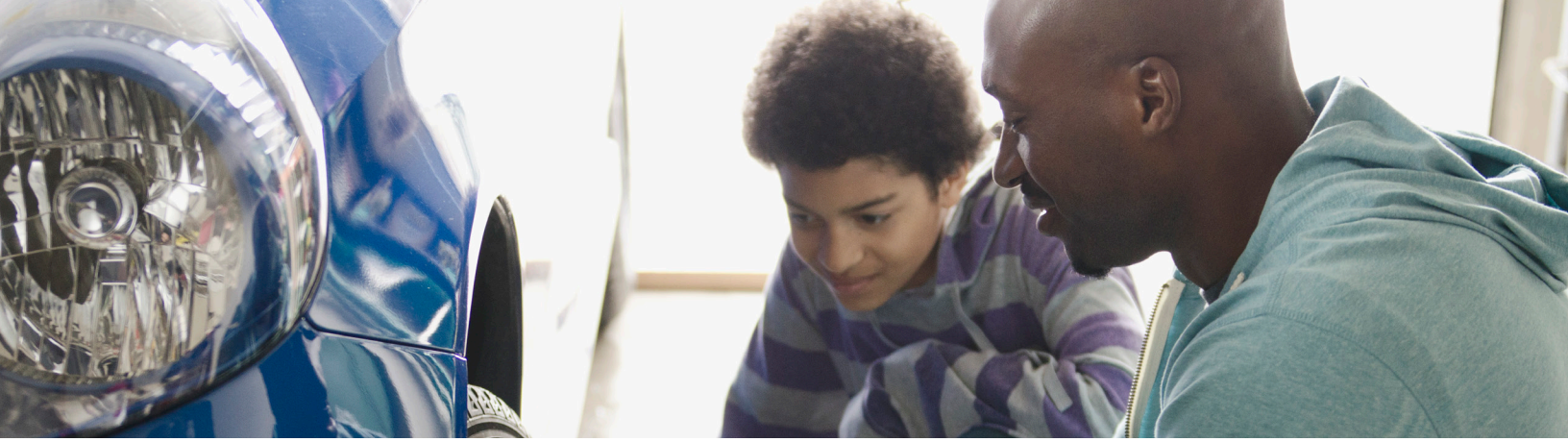
HOW MANY YOUTH ARE USING E-CIGARETTES?

- E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth since 2014.
- In 2018, CDC and FDA data showed that more than 3.6 million U.S. youth, including 1 in 5 high school students and 1 in 20 middle school students, were past-month e-cigarette users.
- During 2017 and 2018, e-cigarette use skyrocketed among youth, leading the U.S. Surgeon General to call the use of these products among youth an epidemic in the United States.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS FOR YOUTH?

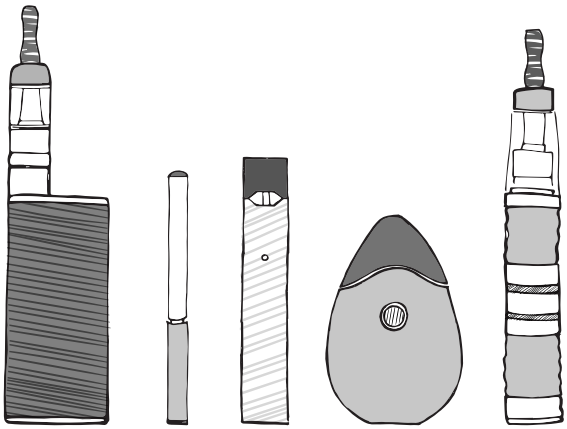
- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can:
  - » Harm brain development, which continues until about age 25.
  - » Impact learning, memory, and attention.
  - » Increase risk for future addiction to other drugs.
- Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to go on to use regular cigarettes.
- Many e-cigarettes come in kid-friendly flavors – including mango, fruit, and crème – which make e-cigarettes more appealing to young people.
- E-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful substances, including:
  - » Nicotine
  - » Cancer-causing chemicals
  - » Volatile organic compounds
  - » Ultrafine particles
  - » Flavorings that have been linked to lung disease
  - » Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



WHAT DO E-CIGARETTES LOOK LIKE?

- E-cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes. Some look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Larger e-cigarettes such as tank systems – or "mods" – do not look like other tobacco products.
- Some e-cigarettes look like other items commonly used by youth, such as pens and other everyday items. New e-cigarettes shaped like USB flash drives are popular among youth, including JUUL and the PAX Era, which looks like JUUL and delivers marijuana.



WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A PARENT OR CAREGIVER?

As a parent or caregiver, you have an important role in protecting children from e-cigarettes.

» Talk to your child or teen about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them. It's never too late.

» Set a good example by being tobacco-free.

» Learn about the different shapes and types of e-cigarettes and the risks of e-cigarette use for young people at **www.CDC.gov/e-cigarettes**.

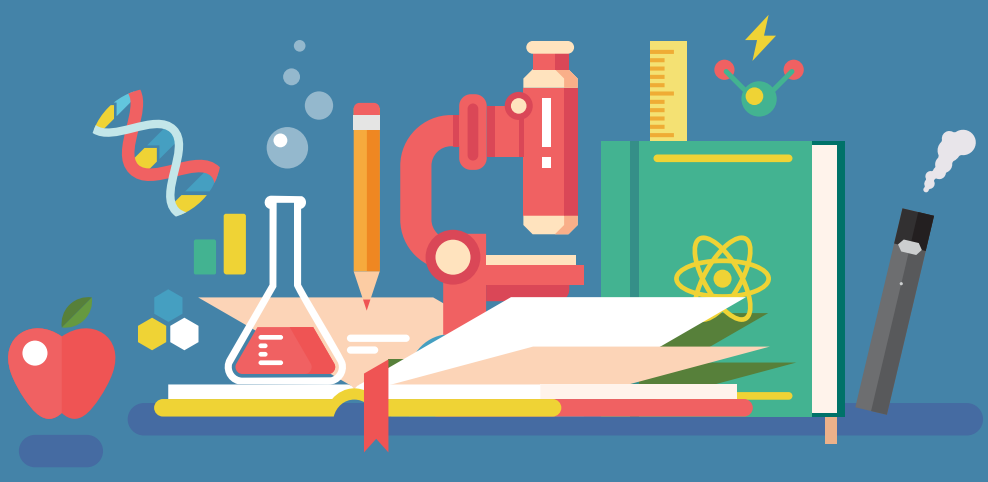
ABOUT USB FLASH DRIVE-SHAPED E-CIGARETTES

As a parent or caregiver, you may have heard about the use of USB flash drive-shaped e-cigarettes, including JUUL (pronounced "jewel"). JUUL is the top-selling e-cigarette brand in the United States.

JUUL is being used by students in schools, including in classrooms and bathrooms. JUUL's nicotine liquid refills are called "pods." According to the manufacturer, a single JUUL pod can contain as much nicotine as a pack of 20 regular cigarettes.

JUUL delivers nicotine in a new form called "nicotine salts," which can make it less harsh on the throat and easier to use by youth. JUUL also comes in flavors that can appeal to youth.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

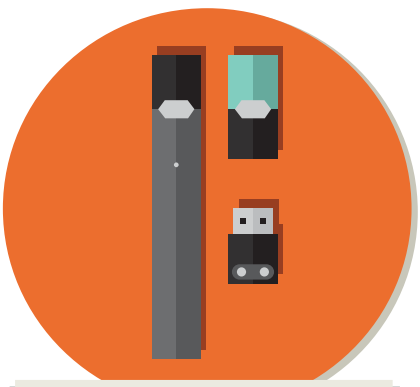


TEACHERS AND PARENTS:

That USB Stick Might Be an *E-cigarette*

E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. middle and high school students.

Some e-cigarettes don't look like tobacco products, so some kids use them unnoticed in schools, including in classrooms and bathrooms.



An increasingly popular e-cigarette, called JUUL, is shaped like a USB flash drive.

JUUL delivers a high dose of nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development.

TOBACCO PRODUCT USE IN ANY FORM, INCLUDING E-CIGARETTES, IS UNSAFE FOR YOUTH.

LEARN MORE about the risks of e-cigarettes for youth and access tips for talking to youth at:

https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/resources.html

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Print Only

NICOTINE = BRAIN POISON
FlavorsHookKids.org

THE RUNDOWN

Vaping has upended much of last decade's public health progress reducing tobacco and drug use among kids. A study by Monitoring the Future reported that the jump in vaping among 10th and 12th graders from 2017 to 2018 is the largest on record, for any substance. In fact, the U.S. Surgeon General has classified vaping a youth epidemic. How did we get here? Three simple reasons.

The flavors make it easy to hit.
The devices make it easy to hide.
The nicotine makes it hard to quit.

Use this guide to help navigate how to keep kids healthy and nicotine-free in the age of a vaping epidemic. With these resources and tips, we'll work together to get California's public health strides back on track.

CLICK TO JUMP

- HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT VAPING
- WHAT KIDS SAY
- KNOW THE SIGNS
- WHAT IF YOUR TEEN IS ADDICTED?
- HOW TO GET SCHOOLS ON BOARD
- TEN FOR TEENS
- ACTIVITIES WITH TEENS
- POISON LOOKS LIKE THIS
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
* SOURCES

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT VAPING

LISTEN

Whether or not your kids or students have tried vaping, they'll benefit from a good talk. And a good talk starts with listening. Let the kids tell you about their world. These starter questions are a simple way in:

Do you have friends who vape?
Are you curious about it?
Have you been offered?
Have you tried it?
If so, what made you say yes?
If not, what made you say no?

Before you tell kids what you think, find out from them what it's like to be a kid in a culture where underage vaping surrounds them. A conversation will work harder than a lecture.

MANY TALKS VS ONE BIG ONE

Have an ongoing dialog rather than a single talk. The temptation to vape is not a one-time occurrence, so the conversation shouldn't be either. Help kids understand that as they age through middle and high school, they'll face new challenges, and through it all, you'll be there to talk through smart, healthy life choices.

TALK SCIENCE

Mostly what kids (and adults) know about nicotine is that it's addictive. But addiction is only the beginning. Kids should know that nicotine also alters their brains in the area responsible for attention and learning, making it harder for them to carry out tasks and stay focused on their work. It makes it easier for them to get addicted to other drugs down the road. And, as if teen years weren't hard enough, nicotine can also increase anxiety, mood swings, and irritability.

BLAME FLAVORS

How has vaping grown so fast? Blame flavors. In California, almost 90% of all high school students who vape report using flavors. And flavors have been found to lower teens' perception of harm. Help your kids understand there's nicotine, aerosol, and toxic chemicals in these fun sounding flavors. And the nicotine content on the package is not necessarily accurate. The flavored tobacco industry is still mostly unregulated, so there's no way to be sure their claims are true.

WHAT KIDS SAY

Here's how to respond to things kids might say.

KID:

Vaping is a safe alternative to smoking.

ADULT:

There's actually nothing safe about vaping. It's not water vapor like some people think. The vapor is actually aerosol found to contain metals, particulates, and toxic chemicals. And the nicotine content of that aerosol can be very high.

KID:

Nicotine's just a little buzz, that's all.

ADULT:

Nicotine does release dopamine in the brain, which might make you feel good temporarily, but don't be tricked. Nicotine is a neurotoxin, meaning, it's a poison affecting the brain, especially developing brains of kids.

KID:

I thought I was vaping just flavoring.

ADULT:

You're not alone. It's not obvious to kids, or even grownups, that something so sweet and fruity is actually an addictive drug that can have long-term effects on kids' developing brains.

KID:

You used to smoke.

ADULT:

Yeah, and I wish I'd had conversations like these before I got hooked. Most tobacco users have tried to quit at least once. Some have tried many times. Breaking free of nicotine can be a long, frustrating road. I don't wish that on anyone, least of all you.

KNOW THE SIGNS

Do you notice artificial smells from behind closed doors like candy, popcorn, vanilla, or fruit flavoring?

Are there school supplies or tech products you don't recognize in kids' backpacks or rooms? How about small vials or eye dropper bottles?

Have you come across unfamiliar chargers, coils, or batteries?

Are there any unfamiliar charges on credit card statements?

Have there been changes in your kids' behavior such as increased mood swings, irritability, anxiety, or impulsivity?

Are your kids suffering from more frequent headaches or nausea?

WHAT IF YOUR TEEN IS ADDICTED?

CALL THE HELPLINE

The California Smokers' Helpline provides professional counseling in six languages. Counselors are trained to talk to either kids or parents about youth tobacco use, and effective strategies for quitting. Call to better prepare yourself to help your teen quit. And have your kids call, too. They can talk to a counselor on their own for personalized attention. Help is available by phone 1-800-NO-BUTTS; or by live chat at nobutts.org

DOWNLOAD THE APP

Encourage kids to download the first of its kind e-cig quitting app, thisisquitting.com. It puts teens in a community of their peers who are also trying to quit. Text messages tailored to age groups are sent to their phones at crucial moments. Parents and teachers can also use the app to see what kids are seeing and better support them offline. Visit thisisquitting.com for more.

IDENTIFY SIDE EFFECTS

Help motivate kids by pointing out the negatives of nicotine use. They may not realize that emotional challenges and difficulty with attention and learning could be nicotine-related. Let kids know nicotine can increase the following:

Irritability
Mood swings
Anxiety
Impulsivity
Learning difficulties

ENLIST THE PEDIATRICIAN

Ask your healthcare provider to talk to your teen. Hearing about the harm of e-cigs from a health professional can make an impact.

BE SUPPORTIVE

Quitting is hard. And as many nicotine addicts and recovering addicts will tell you, it usually takes more than one try. Stay positive with your teens. Reward the incremental progress and accept the setbacks as part of the process.

HOW TO GET SCHOOLS ON BOARD

CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATION

Email or visit schools and ask about their tobacco-free policy and their approach to teen vaping. How to start the conversation? Here's a list of questions from tobacco use prevention experts in the California Department of Education:

Has the school adopted a tobacco-free policy? Most schools have them, but not all. Among other things, a tobacco-free policy defines the meaning of "tobacco product" to include e-cigarettes, and lays out enforcement and other implementation procedures.

What is your school doing to help educate students and inform parents about these products? For example, is the school hosting educational sessions or activities on e-cigarettes/vaping for parents and students?

Do teachers and school staff know what the different e-cigarette/vaping products look like? These devices are changing all the time!

Do school nurses and school counselors know where to refer teens for quitting help? Share information about the Helpline 1-800-NO-BUTTS and the quitting app for teens at thisisquitting.com.

Ask your Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) to address the teen vaping epidemic in their communications to the school community.

Have schools share FlavorsHookKids.org and other resources on their Facebook pages, websites or email announcements to parents.

SHARE WIDELY

Pass along this guide to other parents wanting to protect kids from this widespread youth epidemic. Print out this PDF and circulate, send the PDF in an email, or link people to FlavorsHookKids.org

ATTEND MEETINGS

Get a group together and attend PTSA or school board meetings to voice your concerns. Have the following ten facts in your back pocket.

TEN FOR TEENS

Going to meetings? Writing to the school board? Reference these ten facts to ground your audience in the reality of teen vaping, and to make perfectly clear what's at stake.

U.S. Surgeon General named vaping a youth epidemic.

E-cig usage by high school students rose 78% between 2017 and 2018. That's close to double the kids exposed to nicotine in a single year.

Nicotine is one of the most toxic of all poisons.

Nicotine rewires teens' developing brains.

Nicotine can escalate anxiety, mood swings and learning difficulties.

Teens are at a higher risk of addiction than adults.

Nicotine in adolescence makes it easier to develop addiction to other drugs.

None of Juul's pods are without nicotine, but 5 out of 8 young Juulers were not aware of that.

A single Juul pod can contain the nicotine of a pack of cigarettes and may deliver nicotine to the brain 2.7 times faster than other e-cigs.

Changes to the brain from nicotine can be permanent.

ACTIVITIES WITH TEENS

GOOGLE IT

Naturally, we want to help teens find their own motivation for giving up vaping, or to not start in the first place. Lucky for us, teens are natural skeptics – and digital natives. So googling Juul's early marketing efforts, paired with Juul's claim they never meant to market kids, might help your teens see themselves as targets, and refuse to play along.

Before you sit down with your teen to google Juul's initial marketing, take a second and familiarize yourself. Knowing the facts ahead of time will help you lead the exercise. The good news is that Stanford researchers did all the digging and saved you the time.

Download the PDF and see what Juul was up to from the very beginning.

What to point out to kids?

Youthful models
Their body language
Their outfits
Sex appeal
The styled out backgrounds
Hashtags all over social media
Juul's presence at music fests
Juul's free sampling events

Ask teens to decide for themselves who they think Juul was trying to reach. Can they sniff out the hypocrisy? Do the same for Suorin, Bo, Phix, Kandypens, or any tobacco company your teen wants to stress test.

HISTORY REPEATING

Did you know that tobacco companies have long been regulated by the federal government for targeting kids? In the 70s, cigarette commercials were taken off the air. In the 90s, the cartoon "Joe Camel" was abolished. And in 2009, flavored cigarettes (except menthol) were federally banned. Visit the Smithsonian site to give teens a glimpse of the past and to show them how the e-cig industry is using Big Tobacco's playbook.

BIG KIDS UNITE

Maybe teens want a shot at impacting the epidemic themselves. The need to address vaping at the middle school level is getting more dire. Who better to inspire middle schoolers than high schoolers? Connect with California's Friday Night Live for inspiration on how teens can tackle this health topic. Or have the teens reach out to their school administrators or counselors for other ways to get involved. It could be a science or health project, or could be applied to community service hours. Ask your teens if they'd be up for putting those leadership skills to work for California's greater good.

POISON LOOKS LIKE THIS

A visual guide for some modern vaping devices.

JUUL

JUUL PODS

SUORIN DROP

BO ONE

PHIX

KANDYPEN

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents

Source: Office of the U.S Surgeon General and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health.

What You Need to Know And How to Talk With Your Kids About Vaping

Source: Partnership for Drug-Free Kids

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