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# HANDBOOK ON VAPING RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS



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# FORWARD

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During the 2017-2018 school year, the Brockton Area Prevention Collaborative and Plymouth Area Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative staff were inundated with requests for support on how to address the ever increasing issue of youth vaping. Local schools were looking for information on everything from discipline and educational resources to professional development opportunities. Vaping came into communities quickly and without much warning. The impact of vaping was significant and schools had to adapt policies to better address the associated behaviors. Schools reported constant requests of students to use bathrooms to vape, damage to bathrooms, and students becoming increasingly brazen with their use, including vaping in hallways and classrooms.

How after years of smoke free schools, do you address a vapor that dissipates quickly and smells like perfume? How do you address something so frequent that youth report they encounter it on 9 out of 10 trips to the bathroom? How do you address ever changing paraphernalia in an environment where recreational marijuana use is legal? This guide, developed in 2019, is in response to these questions and was created through interviews, focus groups, and surveys of adults and local youth, as well as an extensive literature review.

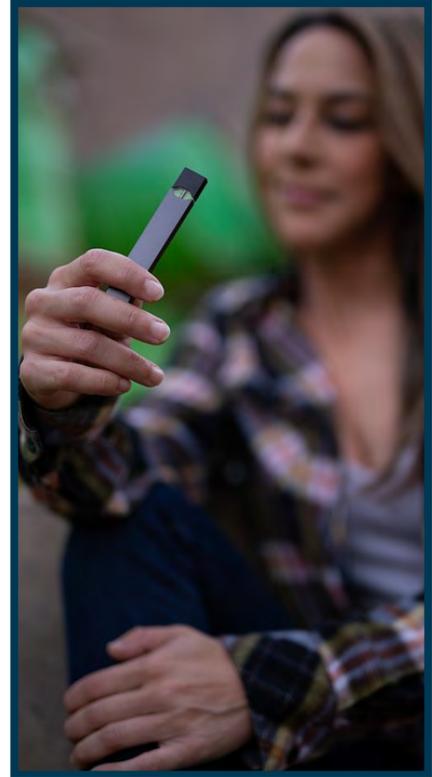


# VAPING 101

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E-cigarettes produce an aerosol, commonly called vapor, which is created when a battery is used to heat up a liquid that is inside the vape. This liquid is often referred to as vape juice, e-liquid, or vapor. Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the vapor that is produced from the e-cigarette. The aerosol or vapor that is produced can contain harmful substances, including:

- Nicotine
- Formaldehyde (used in embalming fluids)
- Ultra-fine particles inhaled deep into the lungs
- Flavoring such as diacetyl which is linked to lung disease
- Heavy metals (nickel, tin and lead)
- Propylene Glycerin (used in fog machines)



All of these chemicals are put into a cartridge, commonly referred to as a pod, which is attached to the e-cigarette and then heated up by the battery. These pods come in thousands of flavors including mango, chocolate, cotton candy, fruit punch, mint, and many others, making the device extremely appealing to younger generations.

E-cigarettes have many different names, such as vapes, e-cigs, vape pens, e-hookahs, etc. They are often referred to by brand names such as JUUL (Juuling), BO, Blue and others. In addition to the many different names, e-cigarettes also come in many different sizes, types and colors. Some e-cigarettes are made to look like regular cigarettes, cigars or pipes while others resemble everyday items such as pens, small electronic devices such as USB flash drives, and more. This is one of the main reasons behind the evasiveness of e-cigarette use, because the devices are hard to detect.

# SAFETY CONCERNS

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, e-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant women, or adults who do not currently use tobacco products. E-cigarettes have the potential to benefit adult smokers who are not pregnant if used as a complete substitute for regular cigarettes, but they have not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a smoking cessation device. As mentioned in the Vaping 101 section, one of the main ingredients in the e-liquid is nicotine. According to the Surgeon General, because the brain is not fully developed until the mid-20's, youth and young adults are uniquely at risk for long term, long lasting effects of exposing their developing brains to nicotine. These risks include nicotine addiction, mood disorders, and permanent lowering of impulse control. Nicotine also changes the way synapses are formed, which can harm the parts of the brain that control attention and learning. Most importantly, nicotine can also prime the adolescent brain for addiction to other substances.

Although we know that the aerosol from e-cigarettes is not harmless, additional research is still needed to help understand the long term health effects of e-cigarette use. This is proving difficult to do, because the FDA currently has little regulation over e-cigarettes so we cannot be certain what ingredients are in them. Many of the FDA's current enforcement activities are focused on the sale of e-cigarettes to minors both in stores and online and holding manufacturers accountable for making products so appealing to youth. They are not, however, using their regulatory authority over other areas of e-cigarettes such as the manufacture of e-liquids. Without these manufacturing regulations, e-cigarette companies can exclude certain ingredients from their labels, such as nicotine and the other harmful chemicals within. Without knowing what is in the e-liquid, you do not know what you are actually putting into your body.

*“Vaping has gotten the reputation that it is safer than smoking, however many health professionals are starting to find that vaping may cause significant health problems.”*

*- School Nurse*

# FOR SCHOOLS

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This section of the guide is written for schools to be better resourced in how to address vaping through providing information to school staff, parents, and students. Through extensive key stakeholder interviews with school personnel at all levels, it became apparent, that there was no level playing field in terms of understanding the issue beyond the scope. Professional development is recommended through providing not only up to date training for staff, but also through showing school staff what has been confiscated within the school. District by district, community by community vapes of choice vary significantly. One district may only see Juul model vapes, while another district may only see tear dropped shaped Suorin Drop models. Being current in what models are being used within your school, allows staff to know what to look for.



# FOR SCHOOLS

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## SIGNS

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- It can be hard to detect if your students are vaping, but one of the major signs to look for is equipment that resemble objects like a USB flash drive.
- Another telltale sign is if your students are frequently leaving class to use the bathroom. The bathroom is one of the most commonly used spots to vape during the school day, so be on the lookout for those kids.

*See Appendix A for more information*



*“Students are risking everything...there have been more chemical health violations as a result of vaping than ever before.”*  
-Athletic Director



<https://www.cigbuyer.com/types-of-e-cigarettes/>

## WHAT TO DO?

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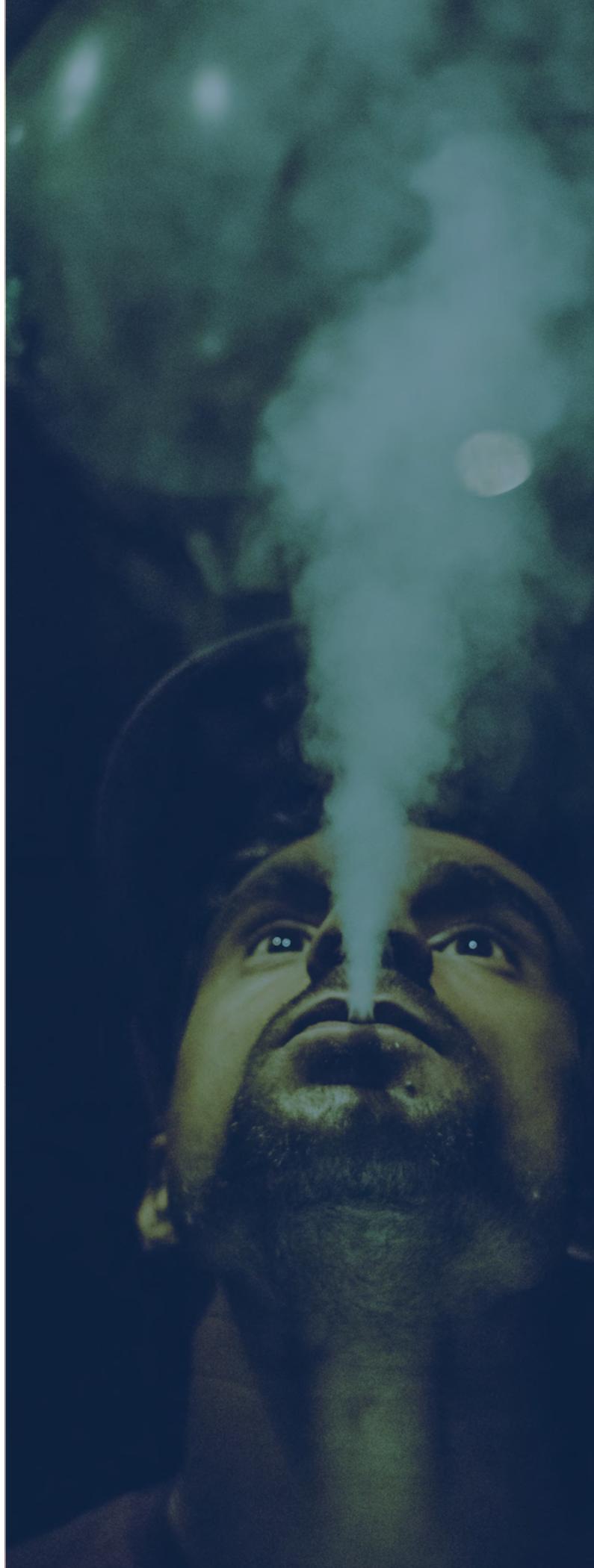
- Some schools are moving towards an educational component, rather than traditional methods such as school suspensions.
  - They incorporate methods such as having students conducting research, reflecting on their behavior, and meeting with different school faculty such as the nurse, health teacher, and school resource officer.

*See Appendix B for more information*

# FOR PARENTS

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Working with the parents of your students can be challenging. There is the age old discussion about who is responsible to educate young people on substance use. There are a mix of responses that schools report in addressing vaping with parents; everything from “I purchased the vape for the student” to “how could they possibly be vaping.” Collaborative education with the parents can prove effective, particularly when the conversation starts early. Education for parents can be age appropriate for parents of elementary students. Including vaping education in occasions outside of traditional health education events can also reach parents who otherwise may not come to a presentation.



# FOR PARENTS

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## SIGNS

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- It can be hard to detect if your child is vaping, but one of the major signs to look for is a sweet or savory scent around your house that has no obvious source. E-cigarette pods come in many fun flavors, so this could be a sign that your child is vaping.
- Another common sign to look out for is equipment that resemble objects like a USB flash drive.



*See Appendix A for more information*

## THE TALK

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*See Appendix C for more information*

- It is important to talk to your child about vaping, even if they are not doing it.
- Here are some tips to make sure the conversation runs smoothly!
  - There is no perfect talk or perfect time to talk.
  - Be patient and ready to listen.
  - Ask your child what they think.
  - Ask why before suggesting why not.
  - Voice your concerns.

"Parents don't talk to their kids about drugs or alcohol at all, maybe because they are scared. Some parents just don't know anything about vaping."

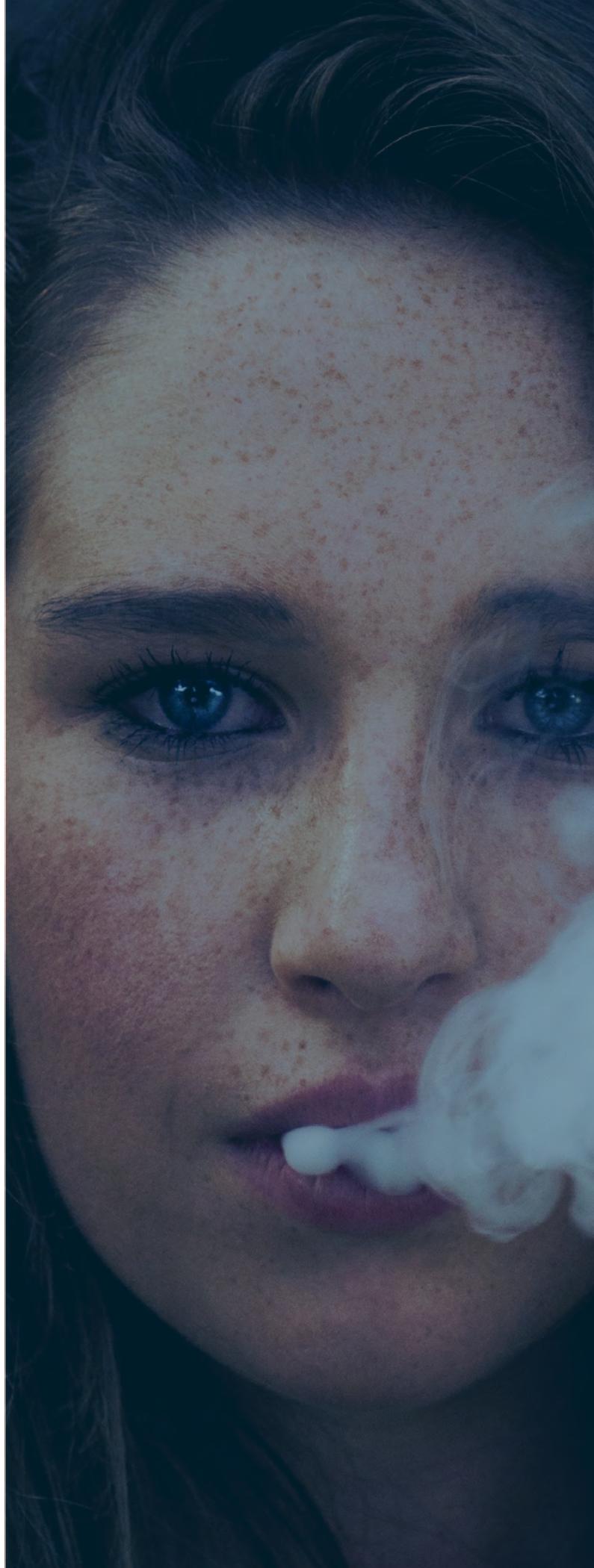
-High School Student

# FOR STUDENTS

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“Kids these days.”

When we talked to local youth, this was a theme we could draw from every meeting. Youth report that not only their own peers, but students younger than them view the rapidly changing youth culture as reason for use. As prolific as vaping may be on youth culture, many youth we spoke with, didn't vape and talked about how peer use impacted their daily lives. Engaging youth in being part of the change is a great place to start. Local high school students are making changes in their schools in policy and practice that will hopefully impact future students. Student advisory groups should be consulted on the impact of current policies and how to better create change in their schools.



# FOR STUDENTS

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## THE TALK

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- Here are some tips to talk to a friend about the dangers of vaping!
  - Act like a friend and not a parent.
  - Let them know they are not alone.
  - Show them you are concerned.
  - Do not pass judgement or accuse.
  - Provide them with resources.
  - Suggest they talk to a trusted adult.

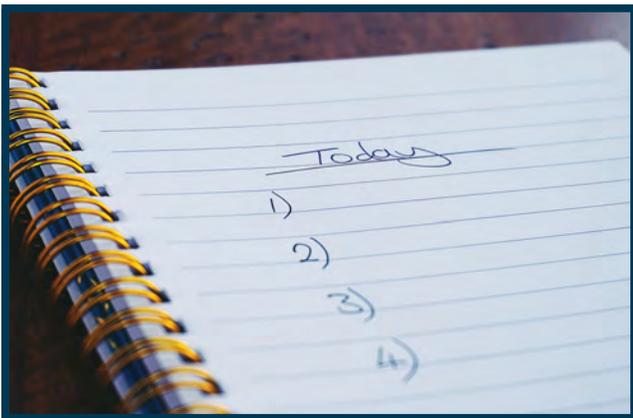


*See Appendix D for more information*

## HOW TO QUIT

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- The first step in trying to quit vaping is creating a thorough plan for yourself.
- You should determine whether you want to wean yourself off of vaping, or quit cold turkey.
- No matter what method you choose, a great tip would be to throw away your vape and all related items so you can no longer use them.



*See Appendix E for more information*

"Kids very rarely use cigarettes, they're more interested in vaping - Air Pods come out and everyone wants that, then a new phone comes out and everyone wants that. Vaping is a trend- an awful trend."  
-High School Student

# APPENDIX A: IS YOUR STUDENT OR CHILD VAPING?

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Although sometimes more subtle, there are clues to look for to know if your child or student is vaping. One of the more obvious signs is equipment. You may find devices that look like flash drives or ordinary pens, small bottles filled with a mysterious liquid, or product packaging. Take a second look at these items; they may not be what you think they are. Another tell-tale sign is scent. While the smell from vaping is faint, you may catch a whiff of a flavoring where there appears to be no other source. For example, if you smell mango or chocolate cake, take note.

Other signs include increased thirst and nose bleeds, decreased caffeine use, and certain vaping lingo. Some of the chemicals used in e-liquids have the effect of drying out the mouth and nasal passages. As a result, some kids drink more liquids or seem more prone to nose bleeds. In addition to this, some teenagers and young adults develop sensitivity to caffeine. If your child or student drank caffeinated energy drinks and quits, it may be as a result of vaping.



As a parent, you should also be on the lookout for your child's social media accounts. Kids often brag about their vaping tricks on their Instagram or Twitter pages, to show off their skills to their friends. Has your child been asking for an increase in their allowance? This may be because they need more money to purchase vape juice and pods, in order to maintain their addiction to nicotine.

In addition to these more subtle signs, you might also observe signs of a nicotine addiction in your child or student. This would include leaving class or the house frequently because they feel a need to use nicotine, or symptoms of withdrawal such as anxiety, irritability, restlessness, difficulty concentrating, depressed mood, frustration, and anger.

*"Good kids aren't hesitating to vape.  
The stigma isn't there- for both the  
students and the parents."  
-Local Parent*

# APPENDIX B: STUDENT CAUGHT VAPING?

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Schools are starting to lean more towards incorporating an educational component as a form of discipline, rather than traditional methods such as out of school suspensions. This is being done in order to provide the students with less of a punishment and more of an education centered on their behavior. When a student is assigned an out of school suspension, they are free to carry on with their vaping behavior in the comfort of their own home. They are not, however, getting their typical school day education or learning about vaping and their negative behavior. The goal of this is to provide students with education on vaping from many different aspects, in hopes that they will reconsider their behavior.



A few schools have already begun to implement vaping diversion programs and have seen success so far. Belmont High School in Massachusetts has created a program open to all students who would like to know more about unhealthy vaping. The program also offers certain eligible high school offenders an alternative to a lengthy out of school suspension. In most cases, it is a reduced suspension and a weekly educational program about the harmful effects of vaping.

Diversion allows the student the opportunity to participate in a supervised education program, weekly check-ins, meetings with a wide range of helpful professionals, as well as weekly related videos, articles, and other resources. The program seeks to treat students, not as troublemakers, but as students in need of counseling, encouragement, one-on-one connection with adults within the school, and/or targeted educational programming about the harmful effects of vaping so they may make better choices. Each week, for five weeks, students watch videos and read articles related to a particular aspect of vaping, as well as meet with one of the professionals mentioned above that coordinates with that week's topic. For example, during the week that they meet with the school resource officer, the students are to learn about the legal aspects of vaping, while they will learn about the health effects of vaping when they meet with their health teacher.

*"The consequences are the worst for the athletes. But kids who aren't athletes feel like they aren't as important to the school as their athlete peers are."  
-High School Student*

# APPENDIX C: TALKING TO A CHILD

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Regardless of whether or not you suspect your child might be vaping, it is important to have a conversation with them about it. When having this conversation, there are some things that should be kept in mind to ensure it runs smoothly. First, as a parent you have to realize that there is no perfect talk or time to talk. Opportunities may arise when you are driving in the car together or waiting at a doctor's appointment. You may want to start by mentioning a news story, a TV show, or something that you heard about vaping. This will open the door to a conversation that needs to be had between you. Talking to your child about vaping can be a learning opportunity for the both of you, and perhaps just the beginning of an ongoing dialogue. You may know some facts about vaping, but let your child know that you do not have all the answers. It will go a long way to keep your kids from going on the defensive.

When talking to your kids about vaping, be patient and ready to listen. Your goal is to have a conversation, not to deliver a lecture. You can do this by avoiding criticism and encouraging an open dialogue. You should also be honest about what you do and do not know about the dangers of vaping. Seeing that you are willing to listen to them will encourage them to listen to you. You should also ask your child what they think about vaping. It is best for you to show some genuine curiosity and put all judgement aside. Finding out what they already know not only shapes how the exchange might go, but may also increase the odds that they want to hear what you know too.



Another tip is to ask why before suggesting why not. If you only address the downsides to risky behaviors, it makes it easier for your child to dismiss you. By appreciating the appeal of vaping, you can open the door to say your piece. To finish off the conversation, you should share your concerns. You will keep your child's trust when you are up front about what you know and what remains unclear. You should be trying to make a stance that does not overestimate your control but also does not underestimate the teenager's independence. When you voice high expectations while acknowledging your limited power as a parent, it can help your child to remember to make good decisions for themselves.

# APPENDIX D: TALKING TO A FRIEND

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If you are concerned about your friends' e-cigarette use, there are multiple steps you can take to help them. Most importantly, you should act like a friend and not a parent, teacher, or other authoritative figure. If you talk to them on a peer to peer level, they may be more willing to hear out what you have to say. Let them know that they are not alone in the process, and that you will be there to help them along the way. Having a friend to be there for you can make all the difference. You need to show them that you care about them, but are just worried and concerned about their habitual e-cigarette use.

Rather than passing judgement or accusing them of anything, try to provide them with resources on vaping and the dangers behind it. They may have a lack of knowledge about vaping, which could be fueling their behavior. You can find these resources on the internet, or through a health professional at your school. If they do not feel comfortable talking to you about it, you could suggest that they talk to a trusted adult such as a coach or teacher. It may be easier for them to talk to an adult about their struggles, rather than opening up to a friend. Lastly, if you feel that the issue is out of hand and you cannot provide your friend the help that they need, let a trusted adult know so that they can intervene. Your friend may be angry with you for going to an adult, but you will be helping them in the long run.



*"Popularity is such a big deal, and kids want to be cool. You look to what the big groups of friends are doing and you want to be like them. On the other hand if you could get those kids to say vaping isn't cool, it would have a big impact on other kids."*

*-Local Student*

# APPENDIX E: HOW TO QUIT

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There are different methods to be used when you want to quit vaping. The first step is always to create a plan for quitting. You should first write down why you want to quit as motivation to keep you going. You should also make sure to identify your vaping triggers, and write those down as well so that you can avoid them in the future. Next, you should tell your friends, family and doctor in advance that you are going to quit. They can serve as resources to help you quit and keep you on track. The last step is to determine if you want to wean yourself off of vaping or quit cold turkey.

If you want to wean yourself off of vaping, you should set a schedule for yourself. As you progress through your plan of quitting, you should be reducing the strength of nicotine in your liquid, as well as cutting back on how often you vape. The next step would be to throw away your vape, as well as any other related items to ensure you do not continue using it. Once you have taken all of these steps, it is important to busy your hands when you get the urge to vape. By replacing your vaping with another activity, you will lose the desire to vape over time.



The first step in quitting cold turkey would be to schedule the day that you want to quit so you can prepare for it. As the day approaches, you should throw away all of your vapes and any related items. Since you are quitting cold turkey, there is likely to be a withdrawal period. It is very important to keep yourself busy during this time so that you do not try to vape again.

Regardless of the method you choose, the next step after quitting will be dealing with the nicotine withdrawal. Tricks such as chewing gum or hard foods when you get a craving, or using nicotine patches can help you manage your cravings during the early stages of withdrawal. It is also important to reward yourself after reaching certain goals, like going without a vape for a certain amount of time, or turning down a vape when someone else offers. This type of behavior will increase your success in the long run. Other things that will help ensure success are getting more sleep, reducing the stress in your life, and joining support groups.

*“My friends just don’t think it will happen to them, they think that the chances of becoming addicted are like one in a million.”*  
- 8th Grade Student

# WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A STUDENT?

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Students often underestimate their ability to create change around substance use in their school and community. Students have expressed that "well everyone's doing it, so how am I going to make the situation any better?" Having this perspective often hinders students' ability to stand up against their peers and take action to improve their school environment. However, with support from the school and community, there are many ways that students can be a part of the solution. Students from Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School are a great example of how empowered students became leaders in their school and community to address vaping. Vaping has been identified as a significant problem and students felt that it was time to do something about it. Bridging LIVES Peer Leaders is a youth led coalition that was created with the support of the towns' local substance use prevention coalition, Bridging LIVES.

Bridging LIVES Peer Leaders partnered with the coalition and administration within the school district to find a creative way on how to best address this issue. Students came together on a weekly basis to brainstorm how the current school policy could be improved to help address the problem. Students felt that education is one of the main factors in changing the culture around vaping because no one really knows how bad it is for you. To explore this approach, students conducted extensive research to find best-practices and up-to-date information on vaping and its effects. As a result of this process, students created an educational component to supplement an in-school suspension or Saturday detention to replace the school policy's first offense of being caught vaping. As opposed to students spending three days out of school for their first offense, Bridging LIVES Peer Leaders created a program that students would be required to complete. Students would learn about the science of addiction, the impact of nicotine and the many harmful effects of vaping through this educational component.

The Bridging LIVES Peer Leaders pitched this idea to school administration, as well as, school committee and were approved to move forward on this amendment to the school handbook. Through this approach, students will still receive consequences for their actions, but they will also be educated by their peers. The Bridging LIVES Peer Leaders are a great example of how students can collaborate with their school to make positive change happen among their peers and school environment.

# RESOURCES

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## **Blog on Vaping:**

[https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/real-cost-vaping?utm\\_source=teenRSS&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=teen-Blog](https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/real-cost-vaping?utm_source=teenRSS&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=teen-Blog)

## **The Dangers of Vaping:**

<http://makesmokinghistory.org/dangers-of-vaping/>

## **E-Cigarettes 101:**

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/electronic-cigarettes-e-cigarettes>

## **Everything You Need to Know About Vaping:**

[https://www.centerforliving.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/centerforliving.org\\_dangers\\_of\\_vaping.pdf](https://www.centerforliving.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/centerforliving.org_dangers_of_vaping.pdf)

## **E-cigarette Ads and Youth:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2016-01-vitalsigns.pdf>

## **Ways in Which Vaping Affects the Body:**

<http://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit.html>

## **Basic Information on Vaping:**

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm)

## **Facts about E-cigarettes:**

<http://times-herald.com/news/2017/11/the-facts-about-e-cigarettes>

## **Teens and E-cigarettes:**

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/infographics/teens-e-cigarettes>

## **Teens and Vaping:**

<https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/article/teen-vaping-soars-past-cigarette-use>

## **Youth Targeted Marketing in the U.S.:**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5221880/>

## **Education and Dangerous Side Effects of Vaping:**

<https://www.wired.com/2016/02/exploding-e-cigs-and-vape-pens/>

## **Vape Pen Explosion:**

<https://www.dailydot.com/debug/e-cig-vape-pen-explosion/>

## **JUUL and Youth:**

<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0394.pdf>

## **How to Quit:**

<https://teen.smokefree.gov/>

# ESCAPE THE VAPE



Photo: Center for Disease Control

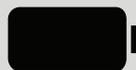
## What is Vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the **aerosol**, often referred to as vapor, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device.

*These devices typically contain **nicotine (highly addictive)**, flavorings, and other chemicals.*

**"VAPES" DON'T HAVE TOBACCO, BUT THEY DO HAVE:**

**BENZENE**



LIKE IN BATTERIES

**CADMIUM**



LIKE IN VOLCANOES

**ARSENIC**



LIKE IN BUG SPRAY



vaping can lead to **nicotine addiction** and increased risk for addiction to other drugs

# VAPES AND CIGARETTES

Different products. Same dangers.



## GET THE FACTS



Some vape pods have as much nicotine as **20** cigarettes.



It's not water vapor—**aerosol from vaping** has **cancer-causing chemicals**.



Nicotine can **harm your brain**, including your **memory** and **ability to learn**.



If you vape, you are **4 times more likely** to smoke cigarettes.

[mass.gov/vaping](https://mass.gov/vaping)

 [@GetTheVapeFacts](https://www.instagram.com/GetTheVapeFacts)

Massachusetts  
Department  
of Public Health



TC3481 04/2019

# TALKING WITH TEENS ABOUT VAPING

Adapted from "How to Talk with Teenagers About Vaping" by Lisa Damour - New York Times



## **Accept that facts don't go far.**

We (adults included) routinely do things we know to be unhealthy. Work with the facts to get the conversation started- but don't assume it gets the job done.



## **Get their perspective.**

Start with genuine curiosity and set judgement aside. "Do you know kids who are vaping" or "What's your take on vaping?" Finding out what they already know not only shapes how the exchange might go, but may also increase the odds that they want to hear what you know too.



## **Ask why before suggesting why not.**

If adults only address the downsides to risky temptations, it makes it easier for teens to dismiss us. Appreciating the appeal of vaping and other risky things can sometimes open the door for adults to say their piece.



## **Share your concerns.**

Acknowledge and understand that not all hazards are equal. We keep our teen's trust when we are up front about what we know and what remains unclear.



## **Concede the limits of your power.**

Trying to make a stance that doesn't overestimate the adult's control and underestimate the teen's independence. Voicing high expectations while acknowledging the adult's limited power can help teens remember to make good decisions for themselves.

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