Vaping

Why Is Nicotine Unsafe for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults?

- Most e-cigarettes (vapes) contain nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products.
- A CDC study found that 99% of the e-cigarettes sold in assessed venues in the United States contained nicotine.[1]
- Some vape product labels do not disclose that they contain nicotine, and some vape liquids marketed as containing 0% nicotine have been found to contain nicotine.
- Nicotine can harm the developing adolescent brain.[2] The brain keeps developing until about age 25.
- Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.[2]
- Each time a new memory is created or a new skill is learned, stronger connections – or synapses – are built between brain cells. Young people's brains build synapses faster than adult brains. Nicotine changes the way these synapses are formed.
- Using nicotine in adolescence may also increase risk for future addiction to other drugs.[2]

How Does Nicotine Addiction Affect Youth Mental Health?

- When a person is dependent on (or addicted to) nicotine and stops using it, their body and brain have to get used to not having nicotine. This can result in temporary symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.
- Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include irritability, restlessness, feeling anxious or depressed, trouble sleeping, problems concentrating, and craving nicotine.[3] People may keep using tobacco products to help relieve these symptoms.[4]
- Youth may turn to vaping to try to deal with stress or anxiety, creating a cycle of nicotine dependence. But nicotine addiction can be a source of stress.
- What may start as social experimentation can become an addiction?
  - The most common reason U.S. middle and high school students give for *trying* an e-cigarette is "a friend used them." [5]
  - The most common reason youth give for *continuing* to use e-cigarettes is "I am feeling anxious, stressed, or depressed." [5]
- Youth e-cigarette and cigarette use have been associated with mental health symptoms such as depression.

What Can I Do to Prevent My Child from Using E-cigarettes or to Help Them Stop?

- Set a good example by being tobacco-free and ensure that your kid is not exposed to the secondhand emissions from any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
- If you use tobacco, it's never too late to quit. For free help, visit smokefree.gov or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.
- Talk to your child or teen about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them. It's never too late.
- Get the Talk With Your Teen About E-cigarettes [PDF – 5.2MB] tip sheet for parents. Start the conversation early with children about why e-cigarettes are harmful for them.
- Let your child know that you want them to stay away from all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, because they are not safe for them. Seek help and get involved.
    - Set up an appointment with your child's health care provider so that they can hear from a medical professional about the health risks of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
    - Speak with your child's teacher and school administrator about enforcement of tobacco-free school grounds policies and tobacco prevention curriculum.
    - Encourage your child to learn the facts and get tips for quitting tobacco products at Teen.smokefree.gov

Where Can I Learn More?

- Behavioral Cessation Supports for Youth and Young Adults (aap.org)
    - This page on the American Academy of Pediatrics site contains a list of behavioral supports that can help youth quit smoking, vaping and/or using other tobacco products.
- N-O-T: Not On Tobacco
    - This cessation program from the American Lung Association is designed to help youth ages 14 to 19 quit e-cigarettes. The program consists of 10 sessions to be delivered in a small group format. A mobile-friendly online version for youth is available at https://notforme.org
- INDEPTH: An Alternative to Suspension or Citation
    - Developed by the American Lung Association in partnership with the Prevention Research Center of West Virginia University, this education

program is available for schools and communities to establish to help youth make healthier choices when it comes to e-cigarette use.

- [The Real Cost of Vaping | Scholastic](#)
  - These cross-curricular resources from Scholastic and the FDA include lessons and activities to help students learn more about the real cost of vaping.
- [Youth Vaping Prevention & Resources to Quit | Truth Initiative](#)
  - This self-led, interactive curriculum provided by the Truth Initiative encourages youth to live vape-free lives.
- [E-cigarettes and Youth: Toolkit for Partners](#) [PDF–13 MB]
- [Surgeon General's Advisory on E-cigarette Use Among Youth](#)
  - [Download](#) [PDF–572 KB]
- [SAMHSA—Understanding Addiction](#)
  - Anyone can experience addiction. Learn the common signs of addiction at the SAMHSA website.
- [E-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov](#)
  - Information from the Surgeon General on the risks of e-cigarettes for young people, and includes free tools such as a [parent tip sheet for talking to teens about e-cigarettes](#) [PDF – 5.2MB].
- [Teen.smokefree.gov](#)
  - Information to help teens who want to quit using e-cigarettes.
- [Truth Initiative's This is Quitting Program](#)
  - This free mobile program is designed to help young people quit e-cigarettes. Resources are available for teens and young adults as well as parents.
- [Find Treatment](#)
  - Find a list of addiction treatment centers using the SAMHSA website. Please contact a center directly to ask if they treat e-cigarette dependence.
- [Electronic Cigarettes](#)
  - Basic information about e-cigarettes from CDC's Office on Smoking and Health.
- [CATCH My Breath](#)
- [Stanford University Tobacco Prevention Toolkit](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Reducing Vaping Among Youth and Young Adults Guide](#)
- [Policy Playbook for E-cigarettes](#) [PDF – 12 MB]
  - This resource provides policy and advocacy tools for communities, public health practitioners, educators, and others to help address youth e-cigarette use.