

Understanding Vaping and Other Tobacco Product Use Among Youth

It is unsafe for kids, teens, and young adults to use e-cigarettes (also known as vapes) and other tobacco products. As an educator, you can talk with students about the risks of using these products.

What Can You Do as an Educator?

Educators are an important source of health information for students.

You can help students:

- Develop healthy skills for addressing stress and anxiety.
- Recognize and resist the social pressure to vape.
- Understand the risks of vaping.

Educators can empower students to quit vaping and support them in living lives free from nicotine addiction.

What Are E-cigarettes (or Vapes) and How Do They Work?

E-cigarettes are devices that heat a liquid into an aerosol, which a person breathes in. Other people can also breathe in this aerosol when the person vaping breathes out.

The aerosol produced by an e-cigarette usually has flavoring, nicotine, and other harmful and potentially harmful chemicals in it. Nicotine is a highly addictive substance.

What Do Vapes Look Like?

Vapes come in many shapes and sizes. Some are designed to look like ordinary products (e.g., colorful highlighters, USB flash drives, or other electronic devices). Others look like cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Vapes can be as small as a pen or as big as a smartphone.

There are many types of vapes, including disposable, rechargeable, and refillable devices. Vapes are often brightly colored and are available in flavors that appeal to young people, like fruit, candy, menthol, and mint.



To learn more, visit [CDC.gov/Vaping](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaping).

Why Is Vaping Unsafe for Youth?

Brain development continues until about age 25, and nicotine exposure can harm the developing brain. Also, youth use of nicotine can lead to nicotine addiction and may increase the risk for future addiction to other substances.

What Are the Health Effects of Vaping for Youth?

E-cigarettes typically contain nicotine, as well as other harmful and potentially harmful chemicals.

- Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.
- Youth might vape to deal with stress or anxiety, creating a cycle of nicotine dependence. But nicotine addiction can also be a source of stress.
- Some youth who use e-cigarettes or cigarettes also report symptoms of depression and anxiety. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include irritability, restlessness, feeling anxious or depressed, trouble sleeping, problems concentrating, and craving nicotine.

What Are Other Names for Vapes?

E-cigarettes or vapes are known by many different names. Youth sometimes call them “e-cigs,” “e-hookahs,” “mods,” “nic sticks,” or “vape pens.” They also might refer to them by brand names.

What Other Tobacco Products Do Youth Use?

E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth in the United States since 2014. However, youth might also use cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco, including nicotine pouches. About 30% of youth who report current tobacco use report using more than one type of product. Youth who use multiple products are at higher risk for developing nicotine dependence and might be more likely to continue tobacco use into adulthood.



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