

American Lung Association

Talk About  
**Vaping**

## Get The Facts About Vaping

Research shows that vaping is dangerous, highly addictive and harmful to a child's health and brain development. And like other addictions, it's easier for kids to never start than try to stop. Get the facts, so you can have a conversation with your child.

## What Is Vaping?

### **Isn't vaping just "flavored water vapor"?**

No. Vaping involves inhaling "e-juice" in the form of aerosol produced by an electronic cigarette or vape device. The aerosols typically contain flavorings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease,<sup>1</sup> nicotine and other harmful chemicals.<sup>2</sup> Vape cartridges or "pods" can also be filled with THC, CBD or other "e-juice."<sup>3</sup>

### **Are vape devices and e-cigarettes the same thing?**

Yes, e-cigarettes and vaping devices are synonymous. Ever-evolving slang or brand names are also used to refer to vaping, including "blowing clouds," a nod to the smoke "cloud" produced by exhaling chemical-filled aerosols.

### **What do e-cigarettes and vaping devices look like?**

E-cigarettes and vape devices come in a number of forms. While some resemble tobacco products, others resemble household objects like USB devices, pens, highlighters and chargers. Vaping devices like Puff Bar are designed for one-time use and are now disposable.

## **What are the signs of use?**

Vaping is easy to hide, and the signs can be easy to miss. Unlike traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes don't leave the telltale scent of tobacco. If you notice any of the following things, it's best to talk with your child about whether or not they are vaping.

- Presence of unfamiliar technology, online purchases or packaging
- Faint sweet or fruity scents
- Behavioral and mood changes
- Increased irritability or restlessness
- Cutting back on caffeine
- Desire for flavor due to tastebud degradation
- Pneumonia
- Increased thirst
- Nosebleeds

## **Why Is Vaping Dangerous?**

### **Why should I be concerned if my child is vaping?**

Vaping is harmful and dangerous to kids. Almost all vape liquid contains nicotine, which is addictive and harmful to adolescent brain development, and vaping aerosols contain chemicals linked to serious lung disease, and heavy metals.<sup>4</sup>

### **What makes it addictive?**

E-cigarettes deliver a high level of nicotine very quickly. Each vape pod can contain as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.<sup>5</sup> And just so you know, nicotine is the third most addictive substance behind heroin and cocaine.<sup>6</sup>

Most kids don't know that the chemicals in e-cigarettes are addictive when they try vaping for the first time.

## **Why is nicotine so harmful?**

Nicotine is harmful to developing brains, affecting attention, learning, mood, impulse control, and memory.<sup>7</sup> Nicotine use in youth can increase risk for addiction to other drugs as well; research shows that teens who have vaped are almost four times as likely to go on to smoke traditional cigarettes.<sup>8</sup> The FDA is also investigating a link between seizures from nicotine overdose in kids caused by vaping.<sup>9</sup>

## **Why are kids trying it?**

Good kids vape, too. Peer pressure and managing stress are some of the main reasons that kids start vaping, even "high-achievers". And as kids learn about how it makes them feel, they become addicted and use it to cope with stress, anxiety or social situations. Some other reasons kids experiment with e-cigarettes include:

- Rebelliousness/independence
- Misinformation
- Social media influence
- Close family or friend influence
- Smoke tricks or interest in marijuana

# **What Is Behind The Epidemic?**

## **How many kids are vaping?**

14.1% of U.S. high-school students and 3.3% of middle schoolers currently vape as of 2021.<sup>10</sup> E-cigarettes have created a new trend of nicotine addiction among American teens. The FDA and U.S. Surgeon General have declared it an epidemic.

## **Is there regulation?**

No.

No vaping product has been approved by the FDA as a safe and effective way to quit and there aren't any studies to show the long-term side effects. In 2017, FDA published a rule clarifying that products made or derived from tobacco are regulated as tobacco products – including e-cigarettes and vaping devices.

And while FDA has issued an enforcement policy on flavored e-cigarette products, including fruit and mint flavors that appeal to kids, manufacturers are finding loopholes and continuing to market flavors to kids. A recent report revealed that 85% of kids who vape use flavored vaping products such as fruit, candy, menthol and mint<sup>10</sup>.

Additionally, many e-cigarette labels still do not disclose whether or not they contain nicotine. Even those that say they do not have nicotine have been found to contain it.<sup>11</sup>

## **What is Big Tobacco's involvement?**

Vaping companies are largely owned by Big Tobacco.

That's right - the same companies who funded and promoted cancer-causing cigarettes are the ones funding vaping.

Tobacco companies have repackaged the same product and marketing tactics and are targeting our kids.

As parents, you are the best line of defense when it comes to educating and protecting your child. Talk to your kids, before someone else does first.

“ There is a lot I did not know about vaping until now. You can't just say to your kids, 'You're not allowed to vape!' You have to educate yourself. ”

*Michele*

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