

## E-Cigarettes: Pointers for School Nurses and Student Assistance Professionals (SAPs)

There has been an alarming increase in youth use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), also known as e-cigs, e-hookahs, mods, vape pens, vapes, tank systems and electronic nicotine delivery systems. An e-cigarette is a battery-powered device that converts liquid, containing nicotine or other harmful chemicals, into a mist, or vapor, that the user inhales.

Below are facts and resources to help raise awareness about the vaping crisis and nicotine addiction.

- E-cigarettes, which typically contain nicotine, are never safe for youth and young adults.
- E-cigarette use among youth increased 75% from 2017 to 2018 [National Youth Tobacco Survey].
- Youth use of e-cigarettes increases future risk of smoking traditional cigarettes and can be just as addictive.
- Customizable e-cigarette devices can be used to deliver non-nicotine substances, such as cannabis extract or honey oil.
- According to a study by Environmental Health Perspectives, 75% of fruit-, candy- and cocktail-flavored e-cigarettes, which attract youth, contained diacetyl, a chemical linked to lung disease.
- E-cigarette aerosol can contain harmful substances, including nicotine, heavy metals like lead, volatile organic compounds and cancer-causing chemicals [John Hopkins School of Public Health].
- Since launching in 2016, JUUL has become the most popular e-cigarette on the market. Its design, which looks like a USB flash drive, makes it easy to conceal. All JUUL products contain nicotine; one pod delivers the equivalent of a pack of cigarettes.
- Signs of addiction to nicotine include trembling, nausea and the frequent use of the e-cigarette product. Watch for classroom behavior such as frequent trips to the bathroom or frequent hand-to-mouth activity, along with visits to the health office reporting nausea and light-headedness.
- Read more on nicotine poisoning from the [Northern New England Poison Center](#)
- Nurses or SAPs can assist youth by recognizing symptoms associated with vaping, discussing these with the student and parent and referring to the student's healthcare provider and 802Quits, Vermont's 24/7 quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) for ages 13 and older. For more, visit [802quits.org](#)
- It is illegal to sell any tobacco product to minors, including e-cigarettes, yet underage teens are obtaining devices, such as JUUL, Suorin and MarkTen, often from older students, family or friends.
- E-cigarettes are called "tobacco substitutes" in Vermont's state statute. Use of e-cigarettes is banned - except in vape shops - wherever lit tobacco products are restricted, including on school grounds, at school events and while being transported.
- Learn more from [Know the Risks: A Tip Sheet for Parents from the Surgeon General](#)

For more information, visit [healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco](http://healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco) or email [tobaccovt@vermont.gov](mailto:tobaccovt@vermont.gov).

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