

TIPS FOR TALKING WITH KIDS ABOUT VAPING



Learn about electronic, or e-cigarettes and think about what you were like as a teen before you start the conversation with your child.

What are they called?

Electronic, or E-cigarettes are known by many different names and come in many different shapes and sizes. There is a whole new vocabulary, and they are called e-cigs, e-hookahs, mods, vapes, vape pens, tank systems, Juuls, ENDS: the CT State Legislature and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) both use the name *Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems* [ENDS]. In CT, we are using the term electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products for use in policy and laws; we'll use the term **ENDS** to cover all of these products.

Know the facts:

Nearly all vaping devices contain and deliver nicotine. No amount of nicotine is safe for youth. Nicotine 'primes' the brain for addiction and can harm a teenager's developing brain. The brain 'learns' that nicotine makes it feel good and keeps looking for more; youth are more susceptible to becoming dependent and are more likely to move on to other substances that include marijuana, cocaine, and methamphetamines.

ENDS products like the pod-based Juul system use nicotine salts that deliver higher levels of nicotine quicker; one Juul pod contains as much nicotine as a whole pack of cigarettes. In addition, studies are showing that youth who use ENDS are more likely to go on to use combustible cigarettes.

ENDS devices are easily hidden, may have little or no odor, and the aerosol quickly dissipates which makes it easier to use in places where normally no smoking would occur. Most youth do not know that the devices contain nicotine and believe they are vaping 'harmless water vapor'. In addition, many of the pods and devices can be altered to incorporate other ingredients; as an example, over half of the teens that report vaping said they also used their device for other substances such as THC (or tetrahydrocannabinol, the psychoactive element in cannabis).

Talk to your teen:

Simply talking with your teen, and letting them know your concerns can help to protect them

Be patient and ready to listen. Your goal is to have a conversation, not to deliver a lecture. Do not react strongly no matter what they say in order to avoid them shutting down.

Ask open-ended questions instead of "yes" or "no" questions in order to encourage an open dialogue.

"What do you think about vaping?" vs. "Are you vaping?", or "Are you juuling?" will go further.

"Are any of your friends vaping?"

"What are you seeing at school?"

Consider your talks with your child about vaping as a learning opportunity for both of you, and perhaps just the beginning of an ongoing conversation. You may have some facts about vaping at hand, but concede that you don't know all of the answers. This will go a long way to keep them from going on the defensive. You can also research facts about ENDS together. Some good websites include the U.S. Surgeon General, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who all offer science-based information on vaping. [<https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/>], [<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/>], [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm]

Be open and honest.

Be truthful about what you know about the dangers of vaping, and what you don't. You can honestly say, though, "Vaping isn't harmless. I hope you can steer clear of it."

Although many long term effects of vaping are not yet known because they have not been around for a long time, from preliminary studies we know that there are still chemicals and toxicants in many of the products tested. Even if these products are determined to be safer than combustible (traditional) cigarettes, it does not mean they are safe.

Remember that although you cannot always control everything your children do when they're not with you, you can let them know that you are concerned about their health. Talk with your kids about vaping!

Cessation Resources:

TEXT: "DITCHVAPE" to 88-709

SMARTPHONE APP: Get the QuitStart through the app store or <https://www.smokefree.gov>

ONLINE: Visit <https://www.CommitToQuitCT.com>; or <https://www.BecomeAnEx.org>

CALL: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or 1-855-DEJELLO-YA (1-855-335-3569)
The Connecticut Quitline has call, online, and texting programs and a specialized program for youth ages 13-18

Also, adults who would like to help someone quit can text QUIT to (202) 899-7550 to **sign up**.



A sample of the wide variety of devices that are available



Concealment devices allow vaping without being noticed.