




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: John D. Frassinelli, Bureau Chief 
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: January 3, 2019

SUBJECT: Student Use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)

The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) recently published a [press release](#) to report an alarming trend in student use of tobacco alternatives, referred to as vaping or Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS). According to the 2017 Connecticut Youth Tobacco Survey, the reported use of ENDS by high school students doubled between 2015 (7.2%) and 2017 (14.7%) and 45 percent of students reported exposure to secondhand smoke or ENDS aerosol. Many students are unaware of the dangers of using such products. Because of the dangers associated with the use of tobacco and tobacco alternatives, the entire school community must be involved in prevention and education efforts.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), the use of ENDS is unsafe for children of any age. ENDS can contain nicotine, which is addictive and especially harmful to developing brains. The use of nicotine can also reduce concentration, impulse control and impact student learning. Other chemicals known to be harmful to health are also found in ENDS and second-hand exposure to these aerosols can also endanger the health of non-users ([Office of the Surgeon General](#)).

While some ENDS may look like cigarettes or cigars, others can be shaped like regular school items, such as pens and USB flash drives. These products can be easily hidden and teachers are reporting use by students even while in the classroom.

In light of this increasing trend, there are a number of actions districts can take to support tobacco use prevention efforts:

1. Share this memorandum and the attached resources with all members of the school community, including the district safety and wellness teams.
2. Establish and monitor tobacco-free policies on all school property ([School Health Index](#)).
3. Address tobacco-use prevention through comprehensive health education ([CGS Sec. 10-19. Teaching about alcohol, nicotine or tobacco, drugs and acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Training of personnel](#)).
4. Become familiar with all findings from the 2017 Connecticut Youth Tobacco Survey.
5. Engage administrators, faculty, staff, parents, students, and the local community in a comprehensive, districtwide approach to tobacco-use prevention efforts.

If you have any questions regarding this topic, please contact Donna Heins at donna.heins@ct.gov or 860-807-2082.

Tobacco-Use Prevention Resources

Connecticut State Department of Public Health Tobacco Control Program

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Health-Education-Management--Surveillance/Tobacco/Tobacco-Use-Prevention--Control-Program>

E-mail: DPHTobacco@ct.gov

Phone: 860-509-8251

Statistics, Reports and Fact Sheets: 2017 Youth Tobacco Survey Results

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Health-Education-Management--Surveillance/Tobacco/Stats--Reports>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Tobacco Use Prevention through Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/tobacco/index.htm>

E-Cigarettes Shaped Like USB Flash Drives: Information for Parents, Educators, and Health Care Providers

<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/infographics/youth/pdfs/e-cigarettes-usb-flash-508.pdf>

Electronic Cigarettes: What's the bottom line on the risks of e-cigarettes?

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm

Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

Know the Risks: The facts on e-cigarette use among youth and young adults

<https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov>

Know the Risks: Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents

https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipSheet_508.pdf

Stanford Medicine

Tobacco Prevention Toolkit

<http://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit.html>

Catch My Breath

Youth E-Cigarette & Juul Prevention Program

<https://catchinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CATCH-My-Breath-One-Pager.pdf>

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

Juul and Youth: Rising E-Cigarette Popularity

<https://youthengagementalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/JUUL-Fact-Sheet-2-5-18.pdf>