

# Vaping Resource for Schools

## Addressing student use of e-cigarettes and other vaping products

Youth tobacco use has suddenly increased in Canada since the introduction of the JUUL devices in summer 2018. The rapid uptake of e-cigarettes and other vaping devices has reversed a trend of declining teen tobacco use in the country, to the point where public health officials are declaring the issue to be ‘alarming’.

This toolkit provides tools and resources for school staff, who are working to address the use of e-cigarettes and other vaping products in schools. The toolkit outlines opportunities for action that can be taken by various school staff, along with resources and tools to help.

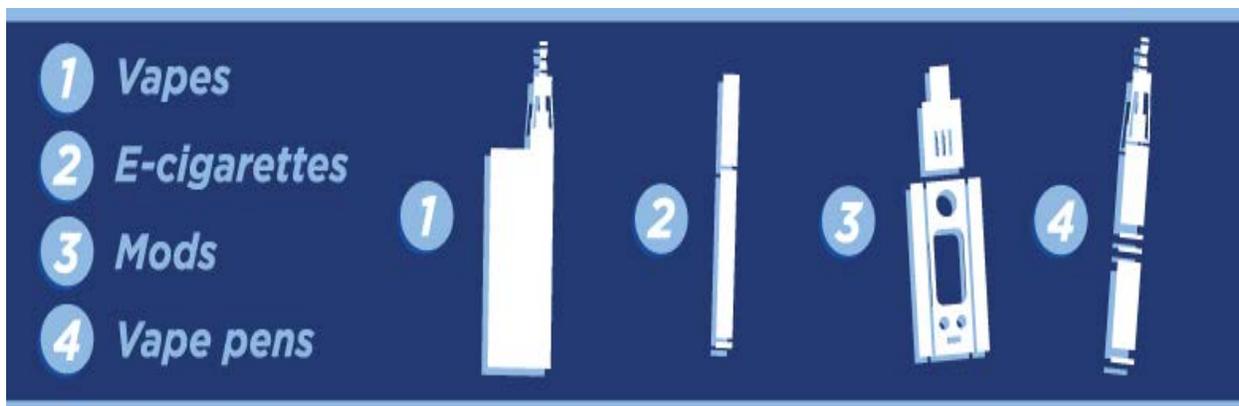


Figure 1 Courtesy of PEI Tobacco Reduction Alliance

### E-cigarettes and other Vaping Products

E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that allow users to inhale, or vape, aerosolized liquid (e-juice).

E-cigarettes, “vapes”, vape or hookah pens, e-pipes and other vaping products recently surpassed conventional cigarettes as the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. It is critical that public health officials and the general public understand the potential risks of using them.

Nearly all e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm the developing adolescent brain. Because the brain is still developing until about age 25, youth and young adult exposure to nicotine can lead to addiction and disrupt attention and learning; no amount of nicotine is safe for youth.

In the past year, concern about the health impacts of vaping and e-cigarettes, particularly for youth, has led to more awareness of the importance of a comprehensive school community health approach to this issue.

There are four aspects or components to a comprehensive school community health approach: **High-quality Teaching and Learning, Healthy Physical and Social Environments, Effective Policy,** and **Family and Community Engagement.** All four are necessary and helpful in schools’ efforts to support youth and respond to the escalating use of vaping in schools.

## **High-quality Teaching and Learning**

All educators should review the following Health Canada fact sheets about vaping.

- [About Vaping](#)
- [Vaping – The Mechanics](#) (infographic)
- [Health Canada Statement on Use of Vaping Products by Youth](#)

Engage students in researching the emerging evidence on vaping and provide opportunities for them to share this information with their peers.

- [High school students' vaping documentary brings puff of change](#)
- [Consider the consequences of vaping](#)
- [Vaping Nicotine can Alter Teen Brain Development](#)

Use current, relevant, youth friendly classroom resources that include the harms of nicotine and e-cigarette use. Curriculum supports may include the following resources:

- [Talking with Teens About Vaping: A Tip Sheet for Teachers](#)
- [The Long-term Impacts of Vaping Are Unknown \(Poster\)](#)
- [Vaping Awareness Activity Sheet](#)

## **Healthy Physical and Social Environments**

Create physical spaces on school property (inside/outside) where youth feel comfortable congregating and joining.

Ensure that the social and physical culture of your school focuses on preventing problematic substance abuse by championing school community wellbeing initiatives.

- [What Can School Communities Do?](#)

Promote student leadership through grant opportunities.

- [Micro-Funding For Cannabis and Vaping Public Education: 2019-2020 Call for Proposals](#)

Provide opportunities for youth to be engaged in the issue of vaping through co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. The [JCSH Youth Engagement Toolkit](#) offers strategies to support youth engagement.

## **Effective Policy**

Ensure that your school, school division or provincial policy or legislation on smoking includes vaping.

Create a culture where all staff feel knowledgeable and empowered to consistently enforce existing policies around smoke-free school grounds.

Use current evidence to inform policy and guidelines. A number of provinces have developed factsheets and data to school communities that have participated in the Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey ([CSTADS](#)).

Ensure that students and parents are aware that vaping is treated the same way that tobacco use is at school.

## Family and Community Engagement

Use Parents and Family Members as Primary Partners. Parent resources also provide valuable information.

- [Talking with Your Teen About Vaping: A Tip Sheet for Parents](#) (Government of Canada)
- [Vaping and Youth: Fact Sheet for Parents](#) (August 2018) (BC: Interior Health)

Seek out resources from partners in your local community, as well as national supports.

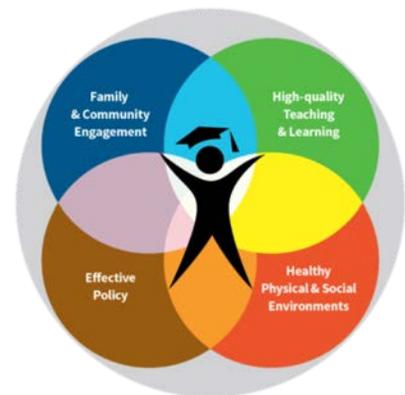
Link with health care providers and community allies (including public health nurses or non-government organizations such as the Canadian Cancer Society or the Lung Association) who may be available to provide information, presentations, displays or even provide resources or support for youth cessation.

- [Vaping 101 - PowerPoint Presentation](#) (ON: Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health)
- [E-Cigarettes, Vaping Products and Flavoured Tobacco](#) (New Brunswick Anti-Tobacco Coalition)
- [Know the Risks: Vaping and PEI Youth](#) (PEI Tobacco Reduction Alliance)
- [E-Cigarettes in Canada](#) (October 2018) (Heart and Stroke Foundation)
- [Think Before You Vape](#) (aimed at teens) (Canadian Cancer Society, June 21, 2016)

Stay up to date with news items. Some of the most recent ones include how the language is changing on terms such as vaping, increasing the challenge for public health and youth health advocates:

- [E-cigarettes, “Vapes”, and JUULs: What Schools Should Know \(PDF\)](#) (American Lung Association)
- E-cigarette use among students in grades 7-9. University of Waterloo ([uwaterloo.ca/tobacco-use-canada/e-cigarette-use-canada/e-cigarette-use-among-students-grades-7-9](http://uwaterloo.ca/tobacco-use-canada/e-cigarette-use-canada/e-cigarette-use-among-students-grades-7-9)).
- ‘Help!’ Health Canada asks Canadians for advice on problems of youth vaping. CBC News, April 13, 2019 ([www.cbc.ca/news/health/youth-vaping-nicotine-juul-vype-tobacco-industry-health-canada-1.5096740](http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/youth-vaping-nicotine-juul-vype-tobacco-industry-health-canada-1.5096740))
- [Teens say they don't vape, they Juul, making e-cigarette use hard to track](#) (April 29 2019)
- [So, your teenager is vaping: Here's what you can do](#) (January 19 2019)
- Teen vaping in Canada has taken a worrisome turn. CBC News, December 8, 2018. [www.cbc.ca/news/health/health-canada-youth-teenage-vaping-smoking-hammond-1.4937593](http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/health-canada-youth-teenage-vaping-smoking-hammond-1.4937593)

**Comprehensive School Community Health** is an approach to student and school community well-being and achievement that believes healthy students are better learners. It also believes that all children and youth must thrive in school communities committed to optimal learning, health, and well-being.



Adapted from the Joint Consortium for School Health Comprehensive School Health Framework.



The Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) is a collaboration of 25 Ministries of Education and Health/Well-being working toward wellness and achievement of all children and youth in all Canadian school communities.