

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT

You can help prevent and reduce the use of vaping products among youth. Below are some common myths along with some facts, to help engage youth in meaningful discussions about the harmful effects of vaping.



Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol (commonly referred to as “vapour”) produced by a vaping device that heats an e-liquid (also called e-juice). E-liquids are available in hundreds of fruit and candy flavours and can also contain varying levels of nicotine.

Vaping products have many names such as electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vape pens, mods, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS). Vaping products are packaged and branded in ways that appeal to youth.

According to the 2017 *Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey* (OSDUHS), in the past year, e-cigarette use among Ontario’s youth has surpassed tobacco use. Nearly 19% of Ontario high school students in Grade 12 report having used an electronic cigarette at least once compared to 15% that tried tobacco at least once.¹





»»» MYTH #1

“Vaping isn’t bad for you.”

FACT:

- » There is broad scientific consensus that youth should not vape.
- » Vaping products produce an aerosol (“vapour”) that can contain many chemicals with known toxicity, for example formaldehyde.²
- » The product JUUL looks like a USB flash drive. One nicotine e-liquid pod is equivalent to the same amount of nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.
- » Vaping e-liquid with nicotine can result in addiction to nicotine and may predispose youth to addiction to other substances.³
- » Children and youth are vulnerable to the negative effects of nicotine. Nicotine can alter brain development and can affect memory and concentration.³
- » Flavoured e-liquid can entice youth to try e-cigarettes.
- » There is evidence that e-cigarette use can increase the risk of smoking cigarettes among youth and young adults.²
- » Device malfunctions have resulted in injuries such as burns.



»»» MYTH #2

“Vaping is better than smoking cigarettes.”

FACT:

- » The long-term safety of inhaling the chemicals from vaping products is unknown. Vaping is not safe. If you don’t smoke, don’t vape.
- » Compared to combustible cigarettes, e-cigarettes do produce fewer chemicals and at lower levels. Less harmful doesn’t mean safe.
- » Switching completely from smoking cigarettes to e-cigarettes will reduce an individual’s exposure to many toxic and cancer-causing chemicals.





»»» MYTH #3

“Vaping will help me to quit smoking.”

FACT:

- » Evidence about e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation aid is limited. More research is needed on the effectiveness of vapour products as a tool to help youth quit smoking.
- » To date, no vapour product has been licensed by Health Canada to treat nicotine dependence.
- » Renfrew County and District Health Unit recommends that people in search of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) should use products that have been proven safe and effective. These products include the nicotine patch, gum, lozenge, inhaler and mouth spray.
- » Renfrew County and District Health Unit also recommends that youth talk with their healthcare provider for support and advice to quit smoking.



»»» MYTH #4

“All my friends are vaping.”

FACT:

- » Although there has been a recent rise in vaping, the truth is that most youth do not vape.
- » The three most common reasons that youth report for using vapour products include curiosity, flavoring/taste and low perceived harm.⁴
- » Vaping products are currently being marketed to young people. These products are easily accessed and can be purchased on the internet. The Canadian government is planning to introduce new regulations to restrict advertising.
- » Vaping products are packaged and promoted in ways that are attractive to youth (e.g. sleek designs and are available in a variety of youth friendly flavours such as “Banana Cream”, “S’Mores” and “Sour Skittles”).





>>> MYTH #5

“I can use vapour products anywhere I want to.”

FACT:

- » The *Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017* (SFOA) prohibits the use of e-cigarettes in all the same areas where tobacco smoking is already banned. This includes:
 - » anywhere on school property (indoors and outdoors) and within 20 metres from the perimeter of the school grounds; and
 - » all enclosed public places and workplaces.
- » The fine for vaping in a prohibited area is \$305.
- » It is also against the law to give or sell vapour products to youth under the age of 19 in Ontario. The fine for supplying a vapour product is \$490.
- » There are reports of youth vaping in schools as the aerosol (“vapour”) cannot be easily detected, does not set off fire alarms in schools, and is easier to conceal from adults and authorities.

1. Ontario Student Drug Use Health Survey, 2017.
2. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM): The Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes: A Consensus Study Report of the NASEM. 2018.
3. Health Canada (Vaping Webpage). Available from: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping.html. Accessed: October 4, 2018.
4. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General—Executive Summary. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. 2016.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
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