

# Helpful Info for Reading Public School Nurses Assisting Teens

Nicotine/Vaping Overview prepared by:

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**What is it?** The term vaping refers to inhaling and exhaling vapor (or more precisely, aerosol) from an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette). The components of an e-cigarette, e-vape, or e-hookah usually involve a battery, vaporizer and cartridge. Nicotine or drug liquids are poured into the cartridge and then vaped (similar to a cigarette). Learn more at ***Understanding***

***Nicotine and Tobacco Products***

[http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA/Parents/New\\_Drug\\_Trends/Nicotine\\_and\\_Tobacco\\_Product\\_T](http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA/Parents/New_Drug_Trends/Nicotine_and_Tobacco_Product_T)

**Percent of Use:** On the 2015 Reading YRBS for the high school, 24% of students reported vaping use. This is significantly higher use than any other nicotine product. On the 2015 Reading YRBS for the middle school results, 7% of students reported using a vape.

**Self-Help and Educational Websites:** There are pamphlets in the school nurse's outer office for the different tobacco products (if you need more info...we can bring over more as needed). Any school in Reading can request these materials, just email [emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us)



## *Young Adult Resources to Quit*

1. TeenQuit. Free online access to the Adolescent Smoking Cessation Escaping Nicotine and Tobacco (ASCENT) program from Danya International, Inc.
2. Nicotine Free Kids. Online web community for teens and young adults with information on smoking, tobacco use cessation, and prevention.
3. Quit Smoking Support: Teens. Interactive bulletin boards, chat room, newsletter, links, and other information especially for teens.
4. TheTruth.com. An interactive, in-your-face website that helps young adults learn the truth about Big Tobacco

## **Regulations/Policies:**

- RMHS/MIAA Regulations: If there is use in school or afterschool, it would be a 1st violation of school policy and they would hopefully be referred to our class. We cover the issues of vaping and other substances. After the class, the student meets 1 on 1 with Julianne or Michelle H. to debrief. If concerned that the student needs a higher level of support, we would make a referral. We also send a nice packet of resources to their parents and let them know their child completed the class.

- Handbook violations- Most schools have a drug free policy (language should include nicotine delivery devices not just tobacco). Vapes contain nicotine not tobacco.
- Board of Health Regulations: \$100 fine (this can be added to a school violation but is usually not done). Have to be 21 in Reading to purchase any nicotine product.
- Vaping devices are unregulated by the FDA and of unknown safety but students are not allowed to possess them on school grounds or at school sponsored events.

#### **Referral:**

- Refer to primary care and/or counseling referral for nicotine use (see side effects below). Parent should be notified and educated on the risks of vaping.

#### **Physical and other side effects:**

- Do they notice anything that makes them feel funny after vaping? Some kids report feeling light-headed, woozy, nauseous
- Is their throat sore after vaping?
- Do they find their heart races or feel jumpy?
- How much caffeine do they drink? (Poison control and ERs have reported increase in youth coming in with racing heart from combo of nicotine use and too much caffeine)

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- What cartridges do they use in their vape? (some think they are getting 0.0% nicotine but testing of this liquid has shown levels of nicotine, they may also be vaping liquid marijuana and other substances)
- Inquire about other forms of nicotine use which could include snus, nicotine pills, gums, cigarettes, small cigars, etc. Other product info at <http://the84.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/OTPs.pdf>
- Did the student start using to manage feelings or emotions?
- Has their use turned into a way to cope?
- Do they take any other medications or have any other health conditions that could be impacted by their vaping use?

**Medical Concerns:** There is a lot we do not know about the dangers of vaping and e-cig use because the research is just starting. However, a recent review of peer-reviewed studies indicated concerns...

- *"Adverse events included dry mouth, irritation of the mouth and throat, dizziness, and nausea. When the solution ("e-liquid") contains nicotine, the main adverse effects are those of nicotine. Bronchial disorders, neuropsychiatric disorders and ocular irritation have been reported with inhaled propylene glycol. The effects of propylene glycol and glycerol, when heated and inhaled over long periods, are not known. The addictive effect is difficult to determine. Long-term use of e-cigarettes has been observed in about one-third of people who stopped smoking. Toxic or carcinogenic substances have been found*

in some e-cigarette aerosols, but at lower concentrations than in tobacco smoke."

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26688909>

- Hidden Formaldehyde in E-Cigarette Aerosols — NEJM  
[http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc1413069?query=featured\\_home](http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc1413069?query=featured_home)

#### **A few notes on stopping or quitting:**

There is no approved medication (prescription or over the counter) for nicotine/smoking cessation for adolescents but they can work on tapering down coupled with CBT (this is confusing because there are many products on the market but they have been tested on adults). Similar to non-suicidal self-injury, you want the student to learn new coping skills through CBT to replace the more harmful behavior.

- It would make sense for the student to be evaluated for any potential co-occurring issues as current research indicates that adult nicotine users have significantly higher rates of mental illness. Nicotine use affects brain development and is an addictive substance.

#### **Resources to share with families:**

##### **Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse Main Website**

[www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA](http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA)

##### **RCASA Section for Parents**

<http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA/Parents>

*Learn more through our online Active Parenting Program or take a class in Mental Health First Aid*

**ONLINE ACTIVE PARENTING PROGRAM:** Learn more at

[http://www.edline.net/files/OeL4T/6ee5ef0d8530168e3745a49013852ec4/Press\\_Release\\_Active\\_Parenting.3.9.16.pdf](http://www.edline.net/files/OeL4T/6ee5ef0d8530168e3745a49013852ec4/Press_Release_Active_Parenting.3.9.16.pdf)

**MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID PROGRAM:** This course, taught by local instructors from RCASA and the Reading Public Schools, teaches how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The training helps participants to identify, understand, and respond to signs of addictions and mental illnesses. The youth course is primarily intended for adults to learn how to help young people experiencing mental health challenges or crises. It reviews the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents ages 12-18 and emphasizes the importance of early intervention. For more information, please email [emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us)