



HELP HAWAI'I YOUTH ESCAPE THE VAPE

Tobacco companies target youth with e-cigarettes that are designed and marketed to grab their attention and get them hooked. E-cigarettes, commonly known as vapes, are often disguised to look like everyday objects, such as pens, highlighters, or phone chargers, making them easy to conceal and hard for adults to detect. Tobacco companies hide the dangers of vaping by using colorful packaging and candy flavors to mislead both students and adults.

Vapes are not safe. They contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance that harms adolescent brain development. When heated, vapes turn liquid into an aerosol that can carry over 2,000 chemicals, including dozens linked to cancer.⁴ Many new vape models deliver even more nicotine than traditional cigarettes, accelerating addiction in young users.

Teachers, parents, and caregivers have a powerful role in preventing youth nicotine use. Start conversations early and often. Learn how to recognize the signs of use in the classroom, ask direct questions, and teach students how to say no. Your awareness and action can prevent a lifetime of addiction and protect students' long-term health.

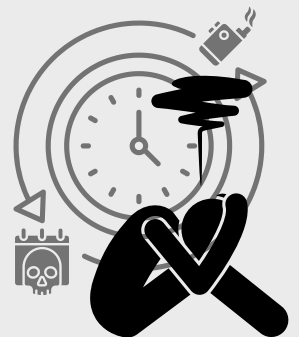


Elementary schools
in Hawai'i are reporting
vape use among
students as young as
2nd grade.*

29%
OF HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS¹ AND

17%
OF MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENTS HAVE TRIED
USING E-CIGARETTES²

Nicotine is addictive.
1 in 3 high schoolers
who vape are doing
it every day.³



1. Hawai'i State Departments of Education and Health; Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse. Hawai'i School Health Survey: Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Electronic vapor product —ever use, high schools, 2023. Published September 20, 2024. Accessed February 21, 2025. Available from: https://hhdw.org/report/query/result/yrb/VaporEver/VaporEver_HS_ST.html

1. Hawai'i State Departments of Education and Health; Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse. Hawai'i School Health Survey: Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Electronic vapor product —ever use, middle schools, 2023. Published September 20, 2024. Accessed February 21, 2025. Available from: https://hhdw.org/report/query/result/yrb/VaporEver/VaporEver_MS_ST.html

1. Hawai'i State Departments of Education and Health; Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse. Daily electronic vapor product users among current electronic vapor product users, among public high school students (grades 9-12) in the State of Hawai'i for the years 2015-2023. Honolulu, HI: Hawai'i State Departments of Education and Health; 2023.
2. Tehrani MW, Newmeyer MN, Rule AM, Prasse C. Characterizing the chemical landscape in commercial e-cigarette liquids and aerosols by liquid chromatography–high-resolution mass spectrometry. Chem Res Toxicol. 2021;34(10):2216-2226. doi:10.1021/acs.chemrestox.1c00253

*Verbally reported by elementary school staff across the State.

Common Types of Vapes

Vapes come in many deceptive shapes and sizes. Some are designed to resemble toys, highlighters, or markers, using sleek, eye-catching designs to attract young users. Others are made to blend in with school supplies, such as USB drives or pens, making them easy to hide and use unnoticed. Every device includes a mouthpiece to inhale aerosol, which often contains nicotine and other harmful chemicals.



These vapes were confiscated from various high schools and middle schools across Hawai'i.*

Tobacco Tactics



Look familiar?

Tobacco companies spend millions marketing vapes to young people. In Hawai'i, companies sell flavors like li hing mui, mango, and guava, and design packaging to mimic popular snacks and drinks. They use bright colors, childish names, and social media ads to attract attention and lure young people to start vaping. These tactics aren't accidental. Vapes are engineered to normalize addiction and hook a new generation on nicotine.

DANGER

Tobacco companies deceptively lure youth into using products that pose serious health risks. What looks like a “cloud” is actually a toxic aerosol, a mix of liquid, metal particles, and gas that can carry dozens of dangerous chemicals.⁵

New Products



Nicotine Pouches

Watch for discreet nicotine products like pouches and lozenges (e.g., Zyn, Rogue, On!). These are easy to hide and often go unnoticed in classrooms. Signs of use include frequent touching of the mouth or repeated, unexplained jaw movements.



Next-Generation Vapes

New disposable vapes now include digital screens, puff counters, and even built-in games. This is addiction by design. These devices are manipulative and disguise a harmful addiction as entertainment.



Nicotine-Free Vapes

So-called “nicotine-free” vapes are not safe. Many still contain hidden nicotine and expose students to toxic chemicals like benzene, a cancer-causing substance also found in car exhaust.⁶

5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About e-cigarettes (vapes). Published October 24, 2024. Accessed February 21, 2025. Available from: [5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. \(2024, October 24\). About e-cigarettes \(vapes\). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/about.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/about.html)

6. Digitale, A. E., Erickson, A. M., Leggett, A. H., & Collins, A. N. Yuck! don't Vape that. Stanford Medicine: Scope. Published March 22, 2024. Accessed February 21, 2025. Available from: <https://scopeblog.stanford.edu/2022/05/25/yuck-dont-vape-that>

*Courtesy of the Hawai'i Public Health Institute, 808NoVape. The brands have been modified to avoid copyright infringement.

UNSAFE FOR YOUTH

Nicotine is highly addictive and a health danger for youth.

Nicotine disrupts brain development, especially in areas that control:⁷

IMPULSE CONTROL

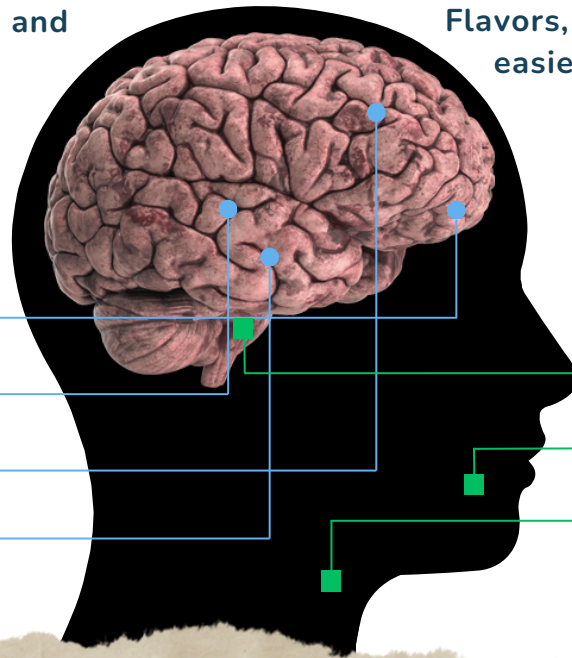
MOOD

ATTENTION

LEARNING

Flavors, such as **Menthol**, make it easier to start and harder to quit.

New research shows that menthol in vapes may worsen lung damage by helping to deliver more toxins into the lungs.⁸



INCREASES ADDICTION

COOLS TONGUE

NUMBS THROAT



How much nicotine is in an e-cigarette?



1 Pack of Cigarettes
~22 mg of nicotine

1 JUUL Pod
~41.3mg of nicotine

1 Aloha Sun
~400mg of nicotine

1 Elf Bar
~650mg of nicotine



~20
CIGARETTES



~37
CIGARETTES



~363
CIGARETTES



~590
CIGARETTES



7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. E-cigarette use among youth. Published October 17, 2024. Accessed February 21, 2025. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/youth.html>

8. Chandra, D., Bogdanoff, R. F., Bowler, R. P., & Benam, K. H. (2023). Electronic cigarette menthol flavoring is associated with increased inhaled micro and sub-micron particles and worse lung function in combustion cigarette smokers. Respiratory research, 24(1), 108. Association, A. L. (2022, September 23). The science behind the addictiveness of menthol. American Lung Association. <https://www.lung.org/blog/menthol-addiction>

EDUCATORS HELP YOUR STUDENTS ESCAPE THE VAPE

Talk to Your Students About Vaping

You can help end teen vaping! Start the conversation in your classroom, educate your students on the serious risks, and empower them to say NO to peer pressure and external factors to vape.



Tell me what you know about vaping.

Why do you think some teens vape?

Have you ever felt pressured to vape?

What ads have you seen promoting vapes?

Tips for Educators:



Introduce vaping prevention

- Encourage your school to teach youth vaping prevention curriculum (see QR code)
- Share the facts and school policies with your students
- Encourage your students to stay away from tobacco



Participate in trainings

- Participate in and host trainings on your school's tobacco policies
- Contact [808NoVape](https://www.808NOVAPE.org) through the Hawai'i Public Health Institute's website to schedule a school presentation



Lead with a supportive approach

- Refer students who vape to quit support
- Partner with parents to build a unified front against vaping in your school

Remember: Nicotine is addictive. Many young people use e-cigarettes to cope with stress and anxiety, thinking it helps, but it actually makes things worse and keeps them hooked.

Youth get FREE help to quit tobacco or vaping at My Life, My Quit Hawai'i. For more information, visit hawaii.mylifemyquit.org or call 855-891-9989.

Youth 12 years and younger require parental consent.



The Bottom Line

21+ KNOW THE LAW

Since 2016, Hawai'i State law has made it illegal to sell or give tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and e-liquids, to **anyone under 21 years old**. It's also against the law for anyone under 21 to have or use these products. If someone provides tobacco or e-cigarettes to a person under 21, they can face a **\$500 fine** (§712-1258 and §321-212 Hawai'i Revised Statutes).

Vaping means big trouble at school

In Hawai'i, all vaping devices are banned on school campuses and treated like tobacco products. Be sure to know your school's tobacco use policy and its consequences.



See More Resources

For educators



For teens



Encourage your students to check out:

The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i Youth Council



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For More Information, Contact:

Hawai'i State Department of Health Chronic Disease Prevention Health Promotion Division Tobacco Prevention and Control Section

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