



Resources for School Nurses: Tobacco screening, cessation, and prevention

Utah Tobacco Prevention & Control Program

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Utah Department of
Health & Human
Services

Resources for School Nurses:

Tobacco screening, cessation & prevention

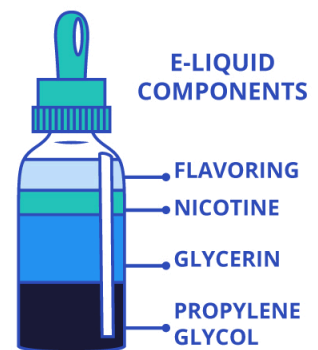
Schools greatly influence the students they serve and can play a major role in reducing tobacco use among youth. As a healthcare professional who works in a school, you have the opportunity to screen for all forms of tobacco use, including vaping, and to educate youth and administrators on their dangers. Created by the Tobacco Prevention & Control Program from the Utah Department of Health & Human Services, this guide will assist you in screening for tobacco use and referring youth to cessation and prevention resources.

The emergence of electronic cigarettes has become a new threat to the health of Utah's youth. Innovative device designs, inviting flavors, social media advertising, peer pressure, and social determinants of health contribute to high experimentation and use rates among young people. Some important information to note:

- 1 in 7 Utah high school students have tried e-cigarettes;¹
- 99% of e-cigarettes contain nicotine;²
- nicotine harms the developing brain of youth and puts them at risk for addiction to other drugs; and³
- youth tobacco use is linked to low academic performance and truancy.^{4, 5}

What is vaping?

Vapes heat nicotine extracts from tobacco with other harmful chemicals to create aerosols that are inhaled by users. Despite claims that vapes do not contain nicotine, nearly all do. Moreover, other toxic ingredients can include: propylene glycol (an ingredient in antifreeze), acrolein (an herbicide), diacetyl (a chemical linked to lung disease), heavy metals (like nickel, tin, or lead), and benzene (a chemical in car exhaust).



The role of the school nurse in creating a tobacco-free school

Nurses have an opportunity to educate administrators that addiction is a complex disease and

¹ CDC, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, 2019.

² [Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults | CDC](#)

³ [Know the Risks: E-cigarettes & Young People | U.S. Surgeon General's Report](#)

⁴ [Tobacco Use and Academic Achievement](#)

⁵ [Smoking and school absenteeism among 15-16 years-old adolescents](#)

use of a substance is not a willful defiance of school rules. If a student is dependent on nicotine or another substance, they need treatment interventions, not further isolation with increased opportunity to engage in unhealthy behaviors (Public Health Law Center, 2019b). Vaping is a long-term issue that will not be solved by a one-time presentation. The school nurse should deliver or coordinate vape education to staff and parents on a regular basis.

School culture is strengthened by students developing positive social norms. If students perceive that most of their peers do not use tobacco or vape, then they are less likely to start using tobacco and nicotine (USDHHS, 2012). School nurses can encourage coaches and other influential school staff to discuss the harms of tobacco and vaping with teams and classes. Nurses can also sponsor or support clubs and peer leadership programs that seek to raise awareness around the dangers of tobacco and substance use, and work to change school norms. The majority of students do not use tobacco and nicotine products and often welcome support in resisting marketing targeted at them and daily peer pressure.

Roles of the School Nurse in a Vape-Free School







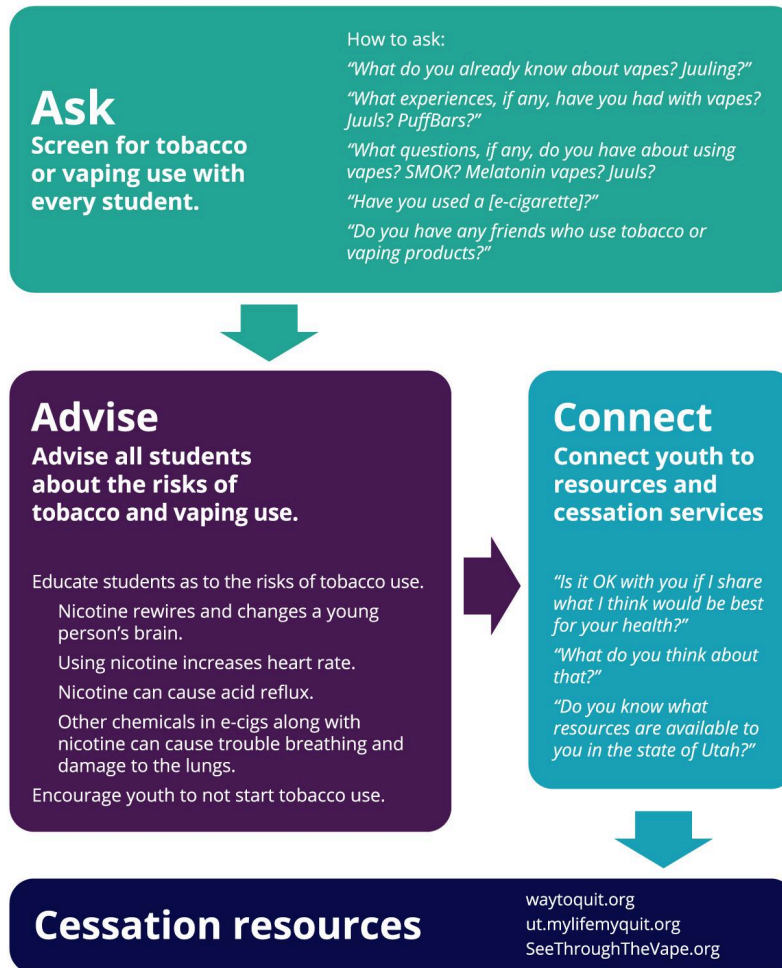
<p>Advocate for non-punitive procedures for student violations of the school's tobacco policy.</p> 	<p>Deliver and/or coordinate tobacco and e-cigarette education to parents and staff on a regular basis.</p> 	<p>Participate in reviewing curriculum content about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.</p> 	<p>Ensure that students, staff and parents who are interested in quitting are referred to treatment.</p> 	<p>Support or sponsor clubs and student programs that raise awareness around the dangers of tobacco and substance use.</p> 	<p>Advocate for state initiatives and local policies that have been shown to prevent and reduce youth tobacco use.</p> 
<p>Suggestion: Educate administrators on the nature of addiction and provide information on cessation intervention and referral.</p>	<p>Suggestion: Include all buildings: elementary, middle, and high school. Credible handouts and graphics have already been developed. <i>See Table 1.</i></p>	<p>Suggestion: Determine what updates need to be made and provide guidance on the need for evidence-based resources.</p>	<p>Suggestion: Provide appropriate cessation resources, including the state quitline.</p>	<p>Suggestion: Advocate for student support in resisting marketing and peer pressure and setting positive social norms.</p>	<p>Suggestion: Consult with others in the school district who may focus on policy initiatives and advocate as the school-based health professional.</p>

Chart image from [The Role of the School Nurse in Creating a Vape-Free School](#) | NASN School Nurse

Resources for School Nurses:

Tobacco screening & cessation

The following resources are to help school nurses to screen for tobacco product use, and to help youth quit tobacco and vape products. This guide will be updated and distributed each year.



Quitting tobacco

While quitting can be hard, there are many resources for those who are ready. Different quit methods work for different people, and no two paths to quitting are the same. Often, several attempts are needed before the right method is found.

My Life My Quit™

My Life, My Quit™ is the free and confidential way to quit smoking or vaping for teenagers. My Life, My Quit™ includes resources to help educate youth of the dangers of tobacco use and how to quit. Youth can also get tobacco cessation advice by texting "Start My Quit" to 366072.

Resources for School Nurses:

Tobacco prevention

The following resources can help prevent tobacco and vape use among youth. This guide will be updated and distributed each year.

Classroom resources

[CATCH My Breath](#) is a free program that offers in-class activities, teacher education, online resources and take-home materials for parents. The goal is to increase students' knowledge of e-cigarettes, nicotine, and addiction dangers while cutting their intended use of the product in the future.

[ASPIRE \(A Smoking Prevention Interactive Experience\)](#) is a free online prevention education resource from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. ASPIRE delivers tobacco prevention education to teens and adolescents at a self-directed pace. If you are interested in implementing ASPIRE in your school, please contact your local health department or Julie Christie (jchristie@utah.gov).

[CDC's Office on Smoking and Health \(OSH\)](#) has developed a presentation to educate youth on e-cigarettes, their health risks, factors that lead to usage, and how to avoid them.

[Vaping: Know the truth](#) is a self-led interactive curriculum that educates students about the health dangers of e-cigarette use and offers resources to help young people who are currently using e-cigarettes to quit.

The [Tobacco Education Resource Library](#) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provides a robust collection of science-based, standards-mapped classroom resources. These

resources were created to prevent vaping among middle and high school students.

Preventing tobacco use

A tobacco-free environment alone will not reduce initiation rates of tobacco use. Tobacco prevention education and evidence-based prevention practices are proven to reduce the onset of tobacco use. Programs should focus on skills training and not rely on traditional scare tactics with the "harmful" message.

Toolkits

The [National Association of School Nurses Vanquishing Vaping Toolkit](#) contains information and resources to support school nurses in implementing evidence-based programs in their schools, including planning for sustainability and building collaborations with key stakeholders to successfully engage their school communities in tackling the topic of vaping head on.

The [School Resource Guide](#) assists schools and districts in developing, communicating, enforcing, and supporting a comprehensive tobacco-free policy.

The [Tobacco Prevention Toolkit](#) and [Cannabis Prevention Toolkit](#) from Stanford Medicine are

adaptable to the needs of educators and students. These toolkits contain modules that focus on e-cigarettes and vapes, nicotine dependency, and the impacts of cannabis use.

[Addiction Policy Forum - Vaping: Know the Facts](#)

is a free, open-source toolkit that explains the harms associated with adolescent vaping and empowers audiences with the tools to take action.

Advocacy resources

The [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#) works to change public attitudes about tobacco and promote proven policies that are most effective at reducing tobacco use and save the most lives through strategic communications and policy advocacy campaigns.

[See Through the Vape](#) is a campaign on vaping awareness. Educational resources include: facts on vapes being hazardous waste, information on proper vape disposal, and a discussion guide for parents to talk about vaping dangers.