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MY BREATH

# Parent Toolkit

## Section 1

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

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**BE ~~VAPE~~ FREE**

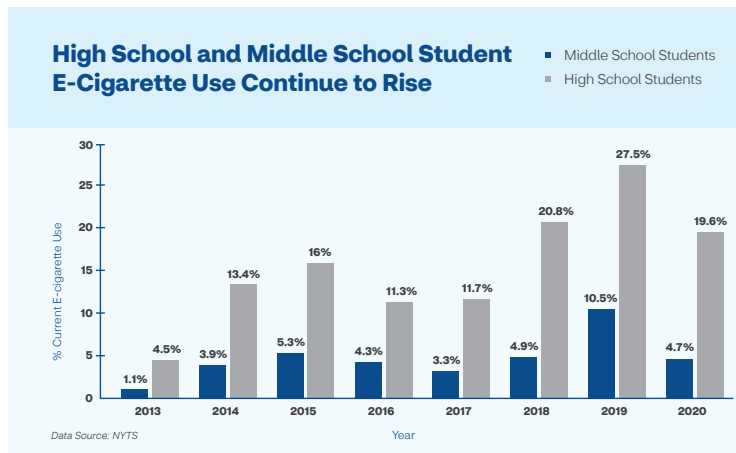
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# 4 Fast Facts on the Vaping Epidemic

Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are also known as “e-cigarettes,” “e-cigs,” “vapes,” or “vape pens.” They use a nicotine liquid, also called e-liquid or e-juice, or fluid-filled pods. Many are fruit or candy flavored.

E-cigarettes were developed as a safer alternative to combustible cigarettes, but they have quickly become an on-ramp for nicotine addiction for young people. The CDC has warned that e-cigarettes are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant women, or non-smoking adults.

## Fact 1: In today’s world, every child is at risk of trying e-cigarettes: even yours!



- As a parent, you can do everything right and vaping could still happen **to your child**.
- E-cigarette use happens in **all social groups**, even students in sports and on the honor roll.
- Between 2013 and 2020, high school e-cigarette use has **increased 335%** and middle school use has **increased 327%**. Although we have recently seen a decline in use for both age groups, the current rates still indicate that 3.6 million youth are still vaping.
- Vape shops have been found to sell to minors and claim e-cigarettes are harmless.

## Fact 2: Most e-cigarettes have nicotine, which harms brain health.

- Experts (and vaping companies) all agree: **no level** of nicotine is safe for young people.
- Nicotine in e-cigarettes can rewire the adolescent brain for **other addictions** like drugs and alcohol.
- Nicotine can harm your child’s mood, behavior, and judgement which can cause **issues in school**.
- JUUL and some disposables, two popular brands, have extremely high levels of nicotine. One JUUL pod has **one pack (20 cigarettes) worth of nicotine**.
- The nicotine in e-cigarettes is the same addictive chemical in regular cigarettes or other tobacco products.

## Fact 3: Lots of young people think it’s safe... but it’s not.

- Many children don’t know the harms of e-cigarettes. They try it because they are curious about the flavors.
- Children who use e-cigarettes are more than **6.8 times** likely to start smoking cigarettes.
- The tiny particles in e-cigarettes can **harm the users’ lungs**, making it harder to breathe.
- Some unregulated ‘street’ products have caused **permanent lung injuries** and even **death**.
- Scientists are still discovering all the long-term effects of e-cigarettes. Is your child part of the **experiment**?

## Fact 4: Vaping can be hard to spot.

- Lots of teens and tweens have secretly vaped in **classrooms, school bathrooms, and even at home**.
- E-cigarettes look like everyday objects, are easy to hide and don’t smell like cigarettes.
- There are accessories—like **clothing, backpacks, and cases**—that are designed to hide e-cigarettes.
- Because vaping is so new, **parents may not know** the signs or symptoms of use to look for.

The Surgeon General: [e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov](https://www.e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov) | The CDC: [cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm)

## Is your child at risk of trying e-cigarettes?

The short answer is: **Yes**. In 2020, over 3 million high school and 550,000 middle school students reported using e-cigarettes. By high school, 1 in 5 students reported regularly using e-cigarettes.

The topic of vaping is tough for anyone, but especially for young people. E-cigarettes can be a major problem at school, and targeted advertising make it difficult to ignore or refuse. Your child will someday be asked to take a puff.

Luckily, parenting research tells us a handful of parent actions that **will make a difference** in your child's decisions about e-cigarettes and tobacco products. Check below to see how you're already supporting your family.

Circle the answer that most describes your family	A	B	C
1. I've told my child about the harms of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.	Yes	I will	No
2. I've told my child that tobacco and e-cigarette companies pay celebrities and social media 'influencers' to post positive messages about their products.	Yes	I will	No
3. In our home, we have non-smoking rules for children under 21 years old that include e-cigarettes.	Yes	I will	No
4. I always know where my child is during their free time - before and after school, and on weekends.	All the time	Sometimes	No
5. When setting and enforcing home rules, my child would describe me as "tough but fair."	All the time	Sometimes	No
6. My child is involved in frequent extracurricular activities (e.g., art, sports, school clubs, band, etc.).	Yes	Sometimes	No
7. I generally praise my child for good behaviors like not using e-cigarettes.	All the time	Sometimes	No
8. My child cannot attend events or activities without adult supervision.	All the time	Sometimes	No
9. I know the names and phone numbers of my child's friends.	All of them	Some of them	None of them
10. I know the names and phone numbers of the parents of my child's friends.	All of them	Some of them	None of them
11. No adults in our home use tobacco products regularly, including e-cigarettes.	No one smokes	Some smoke	All smoke
12. I would definitely know if my child were using tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.	I would know	Maybe	Probably Not

Add up the number you circled in each column.

\_\_\_\_\_

A parent can do everything right, and your child may still choose to experiment with e-cigarettes. However, we can lower their risk by applying a few 'tried and true' parenting strategies. Your goal is to score more A's than B's and C's.