



# Combating the Teen Vaping Epidemic

Workbook for  
Community Leaders



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## Introduction

This workbook provides community leaders with key information and interactive activities to help address the concerning rates of teen vaping. By understanding the facts, risks, and solutions around youth vaping, you will be equipped to make an impact in your community. This workbook aims to engage you through reflections, discussions, goal setting, and calls to action. Let's work together to protect youth from the dangers of nicotine addiction!

### Reflection Activity:

What concerns you most about teen vaping in your community?

What motivates you to act against this epidemic?



## The Facts on Vaping

- In 2019, 27.6% of high school students in Ohio reported current e-cigarette use.
- Use increased from 13.6% to 27.6% among Ohio high schoolers from 2017 to 2019.
- In 2019, 25.9% of 12th graders in Ohio reported vaping in the past month.
- Most vape are fruit, candy, dessert, mint, or menthol flavored products.
- 25% of Ohio teens ages 12-17 reported thinking about trying vaping in 2020.
- Estimated vaping rates among Ohio middle schoolers are around 5.5%.
- Ohio ranks 12th in the U.S. for high school vaping rates.
- High schoolers are nearly 3x more likely to vape compared to middle schoolers.
- E-cigarettes are the most used tobacco product among youth as smoking declined.

### Key Ohio Trends:

- Fruit/candy flavors increasing youth appeal.
- Disposable, easy to hide vapes surging.
- Higher nicotine concentrations being used.
- Faster increase among middle schoolers.
- Aggressive youth marketing practices.



### Demographics Most Impacted:

- High schoolers 3x more likely to vape than middle schoolers.
- Boys vape more than girls in high school, less difference in middle school.
- Highest rates among multiracial, Native American, Pacific Islander groups
- LGBTQ+ youth vape at nearly 3x the rate of heterosexual youth.
- Minimal differences by grades or family income.

### Research Activity

Look up statistics on youth vaping rates and trends in your locality.  
Jot down key statistics to inform your work.



## Concerns from Parents

- Vaping downplayed as safe, but nicotine harms adolescent brain development.
- Fruit, candy, dessert flavors clearly target youth appeal.
- Teens unaware of addiction risk and long-term health consequences
- Discrete, hide-able devices like Juul make monitoring difficult.
- Hard to spot signs of vaping if teens charge devices secretly.
- Unsure whether to punish or take an educational, supportive approach.
- Do not know how to spot warning signs or have effective conversations.
- Fear vaping leads to risky behaviors and other drug use
- Feel schools do not do enough vaping education or enforcement.

### Discussion Activity

What concerns about youth vaping are you hearing from parents in your community? How could you help address them?



## Vaping Myths vs. Facts

Myth: Vaping is harmless compared to smoking.

**Fact: Vaping exposes users to addictive nicotine and toxic chemicals that can damage lungs and health.**

Myth: Vaping just produces water vapor.

**Fact: The vapor contains nicotine, ultrafine particles, and cancer-causing chemicals like formaldehyde.**

Myth: Vaping helps smokers quit cigarettes.

**Fact: Most vapers become dual users. Teens who vape are more likely to start smoking.**

Myth: Vaping is not addictive.

**Fact: The nicotine in vaping products is highly addictive. Teens can become dependent within weeks of first use.**

Myth: Sweet vape flavors are harmless.

**Fact: Kid-friendly flavors increase youth appeal but contain toxic chemicals when inhaled.**

Myth: Vaping does not cause long-term health issues.

**Fact: Vaping can increase risks of lung disease, heart disease, and asthma. Long-term effects remain unknown.**

Myth vs. Fact Activity:

List 2-3 vaping myths you want to help debunk locally:

## Warning Signs of Teen Vaping

### Physical signs:

- Increased thirst/dehydration
  - Nosebleeds
  - Mouth sores
- Changes in eating habits
  - Headaches/migraines
- Stained teeth or strange odors

### Behavioral signs:

- Increased secrecy
  - Rebelliousness
  - New friends
- Dropping activities
- Lower motivation
- Anxiety/moodiness

### Environmental signs:

- Pens, USBs, or other hiding devices
  - Bottles of vape "juice"
  - Strange chargers
- Packages from vape shops.
- Spending on mystery items
- A noticeable vape smell.



### Observation Activity:

What warning signs of teen vaping, if any, have you noticed in your community?





## Tips for Caregivers

The focus should be on making a safe space to talk openly without judgment. Listen closely to everything your teen says. Don't lecture them. Discuss family values around substance use. The goal is to help guide your teen to make good choices on their own.

When they talk, show you understand their feelings and thoughts. Don't argue with their views. If they aren't ready to talk, let them know you can discuss it later when they feel open to it. Ask questions to help them think through the risks and benefits of vaping. Support their ideas for avoiding vaping.

### Conversation Starters:

- Ask open-ended questions without judgment.
- Express empathy - "What draws you/your friends to try vaping?"
- Develop discrepancy - "What do you think the risks of vaping are compared to the perceived benefits?"
- Avoid argumentation - "I understand this is something you feel strongly about. My goal is not to argue but to understand."
- Adjust to resistance - "It's okay if you aren't ready to talk about this. Let's revisit another time when you are open to discussing it."
- Support self-efficacy - "What ideas do you have for how to avoid vaping situations?"

Need more help to keep the conversation started or going?

Here are more examples:

- What do you think about vaping? Why do you think some teens vape?
- How much do you know about e-cigarettes and the risks of vaping?
- What have you heard from friends about vaping?
- How does our family talk about substance use and why it can be harmful?
- If one of your friends offered you a vaping device, how do you think you would react?
- What would your advice be to a friend who started vaping but wants to quit?
- How can we help educate other students about the dangers of vaping?
- What messages do you think appeal to teens about vaping? How can we counteract those?

Setting Expectations:

- Explain health risks and addiction dangers.
- Make clear vaping is prohibited.
- Outline rules and consequences

Securing Devices:

- Restrict teen access to cash, credit cards, mail.
- Lock up any vaping devices found at home.
- Use phone/computer parental controls.

Discussion Activity:

What tips would you add for parents in your community around discussing and monitoring teen vaping?

Monitoring Signs:

- Look for physical, behavioral, and environmental changes.
- Check texts and social media for vaping references.
- Stay alert to shifts in mood or interests.
- Search for paraphernalia.

Getting Support:

- Consult a doctor if addiction is suspected.
- Consider counseling and treatment options.
- Connect with parent support groups.



## Recommendations for Schools

### Ban Vaping Devices:

- Prohibit all vaping devices and paraphernalia on school property.

### Mandatory Education:

- Require vaping education in health classes, starting in middle school.
- Use peer-to-peer learning and student-led campaigns.

### Disciplinary Actions:

- First offense – Parent meeting and education program attendance
- Second offense – Detention and cessation counseling
- Repeat offenses – Cessation referral and consider suspension

### Counseling Support:

- Screen for addiction and provide counseling referrals.
- Offer in-school support groups and cessation programs.

### Policy Communication:

- Post policies clearly in handbooks and websites
- Send policy letters to parents and students.

### Ongoing Assessment:

- Survey student vaping behaviors and attitudes
- Review violation data to gauge policy effectiveness
- Modify approaches as trends change.

### Brainstorm Activity:

What policies or programs do you think your school district should adopt to reduce youth vaping?



## Organizing a Community Forum

This is a guide to create a community forum for community leaders that may need guidance

### Venue:

- Central, accessible location with tech capabilities

### Promotion:

- Eye-catching posters, social media, email blasts
- Recruit student ambassadors

### Speakers:

- Students to share experiences.
- Doctor to discuss health risks.
- Parents and educators to provide perspectives

### Discussion Questions:

- What policy changes are needed?
- How can we reduce access and peer pressure?
- What resources do parents/schools need?
- How can students get involved in solutions?

### Resources:

- Vaping facts brochures
- Local cessation programs
- Sample district policies

### Follow-Up:

- Feedback survey for attendees
- Share recordings online and via media
- Plan future forums to develop action plans

### Planning Activity:

Outline your ideal community youth vaping forum. Who would you involve?  
What content and discussions would you prioritize?



## Public Awareness Campaigns

This is a guide to build public awareness for community leaders that may need guidance.

### Influencers:

- Recruit student athletes, artists, youth group leaders for social media.

### Posters/Billboards:

- Place engaging anti-vaping messages in high traffic public spaces.

### Online Ads:

- Target youth on social media, streaming sites, and game apps.

### Contests:

- Challenge teens to develop anti-vaping art, rap songs, videos.

### Design Activity:

Draft a creative message, image, or tagline for an anti-vaping public awareness campaign



## 30-Day Action Plan Community Templates

Goal: Reduce youth vaping rates by \_\_\_\_% in 30 days

### Week 1: Educate Parents

- Share vaping facts at PTA meetings
- Email parents on warning signs
- Host parent vaping education night

### Week 2: Engage Schools

- Meet on strengthening vaping policies
- Provide prevention education resources
- Support new policy roll-out

### Week 3: Increase Awareness

- Launch anti-vaping poster campaign
- Promote community forum through media
- Display vaping facts at youth centers

### Week 4: Build Momentum

- Recruit youth ambassadors for social media campaign
- Publish op-ed calling for vape-free zones
- Celebrate progress and learnings

### Ongoing:

- Support cessation programs
- Monitor data and continue education

### Goal-Setting Activity:

What specific goal would you set for reducing youth vaping rates in your community over the next 30 days? How will you know if you've achieved it?



## 30-Day Action Plan School Templates

Goal: Reduce youth vaping rates by \_\_\_\_% in 30 days

### Week 1: Establish Policies

- Ban vaping devices on grounds.
- Review/strengthen discipline measures.
- Send policy notification to parents/students.

### Week 2: Educate Students

- Add vaping curriculum to health classes.
- Bring in speaker on health risks.
- Post educational posters.

### Week 3: Engage Parents

- Host informational vaping meeting for parents
- Provide tip sheet on discussing vaping with teens.
- Update on new policies and discipline

### Week 4: Promote Cessation

- Connect caught students with counseling.
- Launch student-led anti-vaping campaign.
- Celebrate progress after 30 days.

### Ongoing:

- Monitor data and continue education.
- Strengthen community partnerships.

### Goal-Setting Activity:

What specific goal would you set for reducing youth vaping rates in your school over the next 30 days? How will you know if you've achieved it?



## Resources

### Cessation Programs:

- [Teen tobacco use quitline](#)
- [Freedom from Smoking clinics](#)
- [SmokefreeTXT program](#)
- [Nicotine Anonymous meetings](#)

### Educational Programs:

- [Catch My Breath e-cig prevention program](#)
- [Stanford Medicine tobacco prevention toolkit](#)
- [American Lung Association INDEPTH program](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics Julius B. Richmond Center anti-vaping resources](#)
- [Tobacco 21](#)
- [Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes](#)

### Ohio Health Organizations:

- [Ohio Department of Health Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Program](#)
- [Franklin County Public Health Quit Smoking Programs](#)
- [Columbus Public Health Tobacco Cessation Resources](#)
- [Nationwide Children's Hospital Vaping Informational Resources](#)
- [The Breathing Association Tobacco Cessation Programs](#)
- [Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center Tobacco Cessation Program](#)
- [Ohio Hospital Association Tobacco Cessation Resources](#)

### Policy Guidance:

- [Tobacco Control Legal Consortium](#)
- [American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation](#)
- [Public Health Law Center](#)

### Research Activity:

List local agencies or services that can support your community's anti-vaping efforts:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____



## About the Author

Dr. Iyaad Hasan is a FNP with a DNP and MBA. After his father's passing at age 13, he witnessed firsthand the barriers families encounter in accessing healthcare and essential services due to language barriers. This experience fueled his dedication to becoming a compassionate advocate for underserved and marginalized communities. As a Commissioned PHS Officer, he was part of immigration health initiatives in California and national responses in the early 2000s. For nearly two decades at the Cleveland Clinic, he advocated for cancer screening and prevention and his leadership also successfully raised the sales age to 21 in 2015. In 2016, he transitioned to CC Abu Dhabi, where he ignited community outreach and healthcare literacy efforts. His passion and dedication led to his 2023 appointment as COO at The Breathing Association. His journey exemplifies the power of compassion and expertise in driving positive change for those in need.



## About The Breathing Association

At The Breathing Association, our goal is to help everyone “breathe easier.” Founded in 1906 by Carrie Nelson Black, The Breathing Association has a long history of educating and serving the community through prevention of lung health disease and the promotion of better lung health. Founded as The Columbus Tuberculosis Society, The Breathing Association has expanded its scope of services as new lung health concerns have arisen. Today, The Breathing Association provides support, lung therapy, tobacco cessation services, tobacco prevention programs, and health education for people with asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease. We address the causes and irritants of lung health disease by advocating for clean indoor air and clean outdoor air. We also provide heating and cooling assistance and medical supplies.

