

KNOW! How to Help Young People Quit Vaping

Vapes and e-cigarettes pose significant risks to young people who use them. A previous Know! Tip provides general information about vaping and how to start a conversation about the health risks in order to prevent vape use. Although preventing vape and e-cigarette use before it starts is the goal, many young people are already vaping. You may not want to believe that a young person in your life may be using vapes or experiencing nicotine addiction. Unfortunately, vaping device usage among young people is more common than you may think -- about [1 in 5](#) high school students vape. If you notice the warning signs of vape use, try not to assume that it is just a phase. Nicotine is highly addictive and most people do not just grow out of an addiction.

When you know that a young person in your life is vaping, it's time to consider how you might be able to help them quit. Almost [two-thirds of students](#) who use tobacco products are seriously thinking about quitting. Quitting is difficult alone, but as a caring adult, you can help the young people in your life by offering support and resources. While they may not be ready to quit, it's important to start the conversation and keep talking.

KNOW! The Warning Signs

The following are some [indicators](#) that a young person in your life may be vaping from the Partnership to End Addiction:

Equipment

You may find devices that look like flash (USB) drives, e-liquid bottles, pods/ cartridges (that contain e-juice) or product packaging. Aside from leaf marijuana, gel jars that contain highly concentrated marijuana extract (dabs), small tools to scoop dabs and cartridges that contain THC oil or wax (a yellowish-brown substance) are signs of vaping marijuana.

Online Purchases / Packages in the Mail / Store Purchases

Be on the lookout for purchases made online and charged to your credit card or unusual packages that arrive in the mail. Kids also buy them at big box stores, gas stations or from friends.

Scent

While the smell from vaping is faint, you may catch a whiff of a flavoring where there appears to be no other source. For example, if you smell bubble gum or chocolate cake, take note. It might be a flavored nicotine vaping product. Marijuana vapes can produce a skunk-like smell.

Increased Thirst / Nosebleeds / Interest in Stronger Flavors

Some of the chemicals used in e-juices dry out the mouth and nose. As a result, some kids drink more liquids, have nosebleeds and may show a desire for stronger flavors (when the mouth is dry, flavor perception is reduced).

Decreased Caffeine Use

Some teens and young adults who vape nicotine develop a sensitivity to caffeine because both nicotine and caffeine are stimulants. Taking multiple stimulants can result in feelings of anxiety. If your child drank caffeinated energy drinks and has cut back or quit, it may be because of vaping.

Vaping slang

You may see vaping slang in text messages or hear young people using it when they talk. Familiarize yourself with common vaping lingo with this [resource](#) from Truth Initiative.

Social Media and Online References

Kids often talk about vaping on social media. Pay attention for pictures or references on their Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter, and other social media accounts. Take note of popular vaping terms in their online searches.

Appearance and Behavior Changes

Vaping nicotine may lead to anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating and loss of appetite. Vaping marijuana can result in bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and thirst, increased appetite and shifts in behavior and mood. Sometimes, there is a noticeable change in friends and a decrease in activities that were once enjoyed.

Physical Symptoms

Physical side effects of vaping may include trouble breathing, headaches, cough, dizziness, sore throat, chest pain and allergic reactions such as itchiness or swelling of the lips. More severe effects include worsening of asthma symptoms, lung disease or failure and heart disease.

KNOW! How To Help

Starting the conversation about quitting is difficult. It's important to take vaping seriously as a health concern while maintaining an open and empathetic line of

communication. Use the following tips to help guide you through a conversation with your loved one about quitting vaping:

Before You Talk **Know The Facts**

Caring adults need to be aware of the dangers of vaping and e-cigarette use. Knowing the dangers allows you to share the harms of vaping with a young person in an informed way. We know that vapes are [harmful](#): nicotine in any form is highly addictive and the aerosol inhaled while vaping contains known carcinogens and toxic chemicals, as well as potentially toxic metal nanoparticles from the device itself.

Consider Their Perspective

Try to put yourself into the young person's shoes. Think about the obstacles, pressures, and social environment in their life. By relating to them and preparing to communicate with empathy, you can better support them in their quitting journey.

Take It Seriously

Vaping is serious and worthy of concern. Just about all vaping products contain nicotine, a highly addictive drug, and the negative health effects are broad and can be serious. The [vast majority](#) of people with nicotine addiction started using a nicotine product before age 21. If you believe your loved one has tried vaping or is vaping regularly, it is definitely an issue worth addressing.

Practice What You Will Say

If you know a young person in your life is vaping, it can be difficult to know what to do next. You may want to jump in immediately to help them quit. However, it is important to prepare yourself for having a conversation about quitting. It's helpful to know what you plan to say before you say it. Practice in front of the mirror or with a partner, and consider how you plan to react to various questions or comments that may come up in the conversation.

Go Easy On Yourself

When it comes to vaping, caring adults are working against strong forces. This includes limited government regulation, clever advertising and marketing and young people's natural tendency to try risky things. Kids of all backgrounds, and many who have never before used an addictive substance, have been lured into vaping. With patience, love and the right interventions, you can help your loved one quit and get back to living a healthy life.

While You Talk

Take A Health Approach

It is important to think of youth vaping as a health rather than a discipline problem. If you discover that your teen is vaping, address it as you would any other risk to your child's health. Try to resist the urge to lecture, yell or punish your child. It is important to keep the lines of communication open, show your child that you are concerned about their health and safety, and keep the discussion from dissolving into a useless standoff.

Show That You Understand The Pressures

The tobacco industry is targeting teens. So, it makes sense that teens have gotten mixed messages that can't be undone in a single conversation. Show that you understand the pressure they may be getting from friends and social media to vape. Make it clear you want to work with them to get to the truth and make healthy decisions.

Let Them Lead

Encourage your loved one to talk about their thoughts and feelings about vaping. Listen until they are done, and try to wait three beats after they stop talking before you start. Try an experiment. For every one thing you say, pause and let your loved one say three things. It's a good way to make sure you don't do all the talking.

Notice Their Needs

Many young people vape as a coping mechanism. It's important to address potential underlying mental or emotional problems that might contribute to the desire to vape or use other addictive substances. The good feeling they experience while vaping may be filling some unmet need. If this seems to be the case, talk to them about what that need is and what else could fill that need other than vaping. You can provide help in addressing the underlying issue and work with your loved one to build healthy coping mechanisms.

Help Them Find Their "Why"

Getting your loved one to quit vaping isn't about telling them why you want them to stop. It's about helping them find their own motivation. While you talk, help them to identify reasons why they might want to quit vaping. Start by helping them get clear about how they think about vaping. Ask open-ended questions to explore where they see themselves in the future. Help them connect their "why" with the things they care about.

Weigh The Perceived Pros And Cons

Help your loved one explore both sides. Ask them: What do they get out of it? What does it feel like? Does it

help them interact with friends more comfortably? Help them manage stress or anxiety? Then, once you're clear on this side of things, ask what things about vaping are not so great. Do they get withdrawal symptoms? What do those feel like? Do some of their friends disapprove of their vaping? Do they feel out of control? By exploring all sides, you'll show your loved one you're open to understanding their whole experience.

After You Talk

Show Your Appreciation

As much as this is a difficult conversation for you, it is likely more difficult for your loved one. Thank them for their willingness to participate in the conversation.

Be Positive And Supportive

Quitting nicotine is hard, and often takes more than one attempt. Offer your encouragement and affirm that you are proud of them for their effort. Ask how you can help them and how you can best celebrate their accomplishments.

Understand The Challenges That Will Come With Quitting

It is very difficult to quit vaping, and youth are especially vulnerable to the addictive pull of nicotine. While some may be able to quit unaided, many young people who try to quit will experience withdrawal symptoms, including anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating and loss of appetite. Despite limited research (due to the fact that vaping is a relatively recent phenomenon), the most effective approach to helping a young person quit is through counseling, family and peer support.

Provide Tools And Resources To Quit

While research on quitting e-cigarettes is in early stages, solid research on how to help people successfully quit traditional tobacco products already exists and [many of the best practices](#) can apply.

Connect With Cessation Help

You are not alone in helping your loved one quit vaping. Talk to your doctor or another health care professional about how to quit vaping. Ask how they might be able to help you. They can offer support and resources.

Another option is talking to a tobacco cessation counselor. Get free, personalized support from an expert. Call [1-800-QUIT-NOW](tel:1-800-QUIT-NOW) or [1-877-44U-QUIT](tel:1-877-44U-QUIT) to talk with a tobacco cessation counselor. You can also chat online using the National Cancer Institute's [LiveHelp](#) service.

Follow up

Talking about quitting vaping isn't a one and done conversation. Ongoing follow-up and support are essential for helping the young people in your life, even if they aren't yet ready to quit after one conversation. Keep talking, check in with how your loved one is doing, and return to the conversation. You are at the beginning of a difficult process that requires your commitment and follow through to be helpful.

Even if your loved one is still not interested in quitting, you've planted an important seed. Nicotine is an addictive chemical, and quitting can seem really overwhelming.

Feel free to check out these resources!

- [BecomeAnEX Smoker](#)
- [Help! I Want to Quit Smoking!](#)
- [How To Quit Vaping](#)
- [Lung HelpLine and Tobacco QuitLine.](#)
- [N-O-T: Not On Tobacco](#)
- [quitSTART](#)
- [Regional Quitlines](#)
- [SmokefreeTXT for Teens](#)
- [This is Quitting](#)
- [Quitlogix](#)

The Know! Tips newsletter is made possible through partnership with the [Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#)

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