



American Heart Association.

# The Ugly Truth About Vaping

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the US. 104,000 Washington youth alive today will ultimately die prematurely from smoking.

For many it starts with vaping — **nearly 15% of 12th graders in Washington State reported using an e-cigarette in the last 30 days.**

## WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

E-cigarettes (vape) are devices that are designed to deliver nicotine, flavorings and other additives. The user fills an e-cigarette with a liquid, which is heated by the device to produce an aerosol. The user inhales the aerosol into their lungs.

## E-CIGARETTES ARE HARMFUL

**Not nicotine free or "safe"**  
Most deliver nicotine, a highly addictive drug that can harm brain development

**Not "just water vapor"**  
E-cigarette aerosol consists of fine particles containing toxic chemicals, linked to heart and respiratory diseases and cancer.

**A dangerous stepping stone**  
Using them in middle or high school makes a student more likely to smoke other tobacco products.

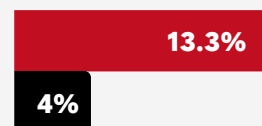
**A slippery slope**  
Nearly 20% of kids who try an e-cigarette become regular users.

## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

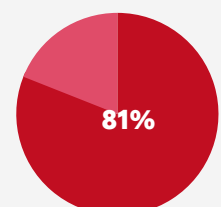
Along with long-term health effects the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey uncovered correlations with mental well-being concerns.

**2.5 times, 4 times more likely**

Youth who vape are over **2.5 times** more likely to report contemplation of suicide and over **4 times** more likely to have attempted suicide.



10th graders who report depression use e-cigarettes at a rate of **13.3%** compared with **4%** for those who do not have depression.



**81%** of youth in a recent study reported starting vaping to decrease stress, anxiety or depression. Multi-tiered support is needed to address root causes.

*"I see so many kids my age vaping or using other forms of tobacco. We shouldn't overlook the fact that the tobacco industry has lured so many young people to try vaping with attractive flavors they've marketed to kids. To keep more teens from vaping or smoking, Washington should permanently remove flavored tobacco products including e-cigarettes, from being sold in our state."*

*- Eitan Mour, age 16, Issaquah*

# How is the American Heart Association making an impact?

As a relentless force against vaping, we're doing the important research, advocacy and education to turn the tide on this dangerous epidemic.



## BANNING FLAVORED TOBACCO SALES

To keep teens from starting to smoke or vape, we're working to ban the sale of flavored tobacco products. Flavoring lowers barriers to use, specifically appeals to a younger demographic and lures individuals who may not have otherwise taken up the habit.



## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Kids Heart Challenge (elementary school) and American Heart Challenge (middle and high school) programs are designed to help educators and parents develop happy, healthy students. We provide education on the impacts of vaping and tools to support mental and physical well-being in students, families and staff. Last year, over 72,000 Washington students received prevention education.



## ADVOCACY

Our advocacy efforts have led to higher tobacco taxes to reduce use, funding for cessation and prevention programs, strong clean indoor air laws and increased the purchase age restriction to 21. We continue to advocate, especially for increased cessation and prevention funding.



## LEADERS FOR A RESILIENT GENERATION

The American Heart Association's Leaders for a Resilient Generation National Council, focuses on improving youth health in at-risk communities. The council proposes community solutions to combat barriers to youth health including mental well-being, nutrition insecurity, physical activity and tobacco and vaping.



## FUNDING RESEARCH

Nationally we are funding research to learn more about how vaping impacts health and how to provide effective cessation for youth.



## SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

We're influencing school districts to update tobacco policies to a more comprehensive, supportive approach focusing on cessation strategies rather than punishment.

## How you can help

We need investors to help drive these important efforts. With 138 middle schools in King and Pierce counties, the ultimate goal is to reach each one. It starts with an investment to reach the first 10 schools with our American Heart Challenge program.

**Contact Us:**

**[puget.sound@heart.org](mailto:puget.sound@heart.org)**

### Funding would support education events and materials including:

- Forum for superintendents, principals, and educators on how to address vaping in schools.
- Materials for teachers and staff to use to share the truth about vaping and to support mental well-being.
- Increased capacity for staff to advocate for policy change and sustainable funding, evaluate programs, provide consumer education, and build connections to community resources.

### Small steps allow us to build this movement for a resilient generation:

- Join us to advocate for policy and funding changes and recruit others to help.
- Attend a school Kids Heart Challenge/American Heart Challenge rally to see the work firsthand.
- Introduce the American Heart Association to principals of middle schools, or superintendents.
- Identify potential funders and introduce the American Heart Association.