Tobacco Facts: E-cigarette &vapor product use among Alaska youth

E-cigarettes are neither harmless nor healthy. They contain nicotine and chemicals, and can lead to addiction.

What are e-cigarettes?

- E-cigarettes are also known as e-cigs, vapes, vape pens, mods, tank systems, e-hookahs, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).[1] E-cigarettes include products like JUUL, Vuse, Suorin, and blu.
- These battery-powered devices produce aerosol by heating a liquid.[1] The aerosol is then inhaled and usually contains nicotine, as well as other chemicals and flavors.[1] Using an e-cigarette is often called "vaping" or "juuling."
- Introduced in 2015, JUUL e-cigarettes are now the most common e-cigarette in the United States.[2] They are shaped like a USB flash drive, and are easy to conceal.[2] The liquid nicotine in a JUUL is equivalent to a pack of cigarettes and comes in a variety of flavors that appeal to youth.[2]

Types of vaping devices

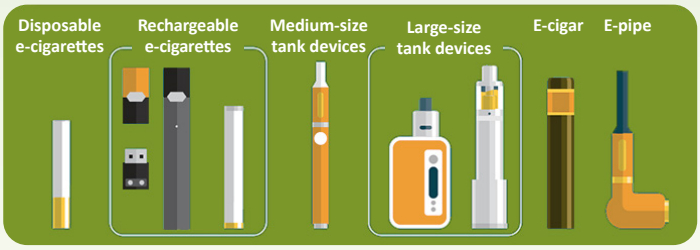


Image from CDC: Electronic Cigarettes, What's the Bottom Line?

What are the dangers?

E-cigarettes are particularly harmful to youth.

- The Surgeon General has declared e-cigarettes an epidemic among youth.[3]
- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is addictive and can harm the developing brain by negatively impacting memory, learning, and attention.[3]
- E-cigarette use among youth is associated with the use of other tobacco products, including regular cigarettes.[4]

Alaska high school students using e-cigarettes in 2017 16%

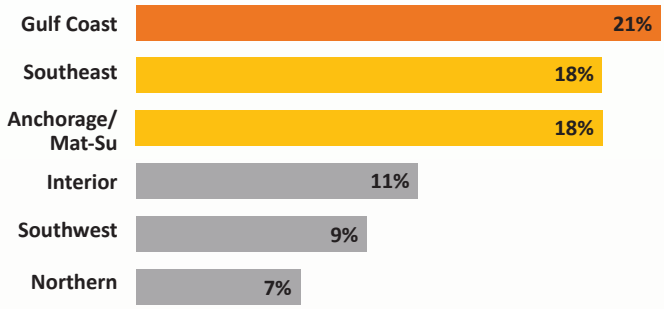
COMPARED TO

10% Alaska high school students smoking regular cigarettes

Many Alaska youth are using e-cigarettes.

- In 2017, 16% of Alaska high school students were using e-cigarettes.[5]
- This compares with 10% who were currently smoking traditional cigarettes.[5]

Current e-cigarette use among Alaska high school students varies widely by region.



Data Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2017

- More youth in the Gulf Coast, Southeast, and Anchorage/Mat-Su regions used e-cigarettes in 2017 than those in the Interior, Southwest, and Northern regions.[5]
- About half of Alaska high school students who smoked cigarettes in 2017 were also using e-cigarettes.[5] Among students who did not smoke, 11% were using e-cigarettes.[5]

Alaska high school students who smoke cigarettes are more likely to use e-cigarettes than their peers who do not smoke cigarettes.



Data Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2017

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What can we do?

Parents:

- Learn about the different types of e-cigarettes and how they are harmful.[3] Talk to your kids about the harms of e-cigarette use and the risk of getting addicted to nicotine.[4]
- Support tobacco-free policies that include e-cigarettes in schools and other public places.[3,4]
- Complete the YRBS parent permission form, if your student's school sends it to you. The YRBS is a survey that collects important information about youth health risk behaviors like e-cigarette use.
- Be a positive role model for your kids and other youth by being tobacco-free.[3] Set rules to keep your home and car free of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.[3]
- If you or an adult friend/family member use any form of tobacco including e-cigarettes:
  - Ask your provider for tools and resources to help quit.
  - Enroll with Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line to get help quitting: **www.alaskaquitline.com.**
- If your teen or a teen you know uses any form of tobacco including e-cigarettes:
  - Ask your child's provider for tools and resources to help them quit.
  - Encourage your teen to use these tools for quitting: www.teen.smokefree.gov/become-smokefree/tools-for-quitting.

Tobacco Program grantees:

- Provide evidence-based messages about what e-cigarettes are and their health risks.[4] Educate health professionals and youth influencers — such as parents, teachers, and coaches — about how to talk to young people about the risks of e-cigarette use.[4]
- Incorporate e-cigarettes into tobacco policies in communities, schools, and other organizations.[3,4] These policies include smokefree indoor air policies, retail licensing, retail age requirements and enforcement, and price and tax policies.[3,4]
- Support local groups like AmeriCorps or Teen Ambassadors to prevent youth tobacco use.
- Eliminate advertising and marketing by e-cigarette companies that targets youth.[3,4]
- Reduce youth access to flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.[3]
- Support the YRBS in your area. Improve the collection and sharing of data about e-cigarette use, related harms, and effectiveness of interventions to prevent use.[4]

School administration and staff:

- Learn about the different types of e-cigarettes and how they are harmful.[3] If you interact with youth in your role, talk to them about the harms of e-cigarette use and the risk of nicotine addiction.[4]
- Incorporate e-cigarettes into your school's or district's tobacco-free policy.[3]
- Support the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in your school and district. The YRBS is a survey that collects important information about youth health risk behaviors, such as e-cigarette use.

Helpful Resources:

- **Teen quit tools at Smokefree.gov: www.teen.smokefree.gov/become-smokefree/tools-for-quitting**
- **Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line: www.alaskaquitline.com**
- **Not Buying It! Youth prevention and education campaign: www.facebook.com/notbuyingit.alaska/**
- **Tobacco-Free Alaska: www.tobaccofree.alaska.gov**
- **Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program: www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Tobacco/**

References

1 CDC, Nov 8 2019. *About Electronic Cigarettes (E-Cigarettes)*. Accessed 11/14/19 via https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html.

2 Gentzke AS, Creamer M, Cullen KA, et al. *Vital Signs: Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2018*. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2019;68:157–164. Accessed 11/14/19 via http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6806e1.

3 *U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on E-cigarette Use Among Youth*. Dec 18 2018. Accessed 11/14/19 via https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/surgeon-general-advisory/index.html.

4 *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016. https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/2016_sgr_full_report_non-508.pdf (see page 7 "E-cigarette Policy and Practice Implications").

5 YRBS 2017 data are referenced in this document, as reported in *Alaska Tobacco Facts - 2019 Update*: Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

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