

# THE RISKS OF VAPING

STORIES  
FROM  
**REAL  
TEENS**

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DANGERS OF  
**NICOTINE  
ADDICTION**


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SUPPORT  
FOR QUITTING

**POSTER PROJECT**



# The Scary Truth



**Nicotine addiction can happen faster than you think.**

**Y**ou may have heard about e-cigarettes, and even heard from other kids that using e-cigarettes (also known as **vaping**) is a safer alternative to smoking conventional cigarettes. But the truth is that vaping exposes you to lung-damaging chemicals and can lead to a severe health problem: **addiction**. And if you think that getting addicted could never happen to you, think again. You're actually more vulnerable than adults to

addiction because **your adolescent brain is still developing**.

## **NICOTINE DANGER**

You may have seen some kids using a vape product like Juul or Puff Bar. Maybe you've even thought about trying vaping, whether from curiosity or boredom, or because you feel peer pressure. You may have heard that it's no big deal to vape once in a while. But vaping even "just a little" can open the door to addiction.

That's because the liquid inside most vapes contains **nicotine**, the same highly addictive chemical in tobacco cigarettes. This liquid also contains flavorings and other chemicals. Instead of producing smoke, the device creates an **aerosol** for a user to inhale that resembles a **vapor** (that's where the term "vaping" comes from). You can't always rely on a label to tell you exactly what's in a vape. Some vapes claim they are nicotine-free, but they actually contain nicotine.

Photo: Chalabala/Getty Images

# About Vaping

Nicotine reaches your brain within 10 seconds when you vape. It triggers a surge of **dopamine**, a brain chemical that makes you feel good. When you expose your body to nicotine, it can change the way your brain works, causing you to become addicted and crave more nicotine. The drug can also cause long-term changes to your brain, affecting your memory and ability to focus and learn—which all promote addiction.

Some vapes, including the Juul brand, contain as much nicotine as a whole pack of cigarettes. In fact, teens who vape can get addicted to the drug more quickly than if they smoked cigarettes.

## TOXIC CHEMICALS

The vapor in e-cigarettes also exposes you to **toxic chemicals** like formaldehyde, acrolein, and acetaldehyde, as well as **harmful metal particles**: nickel, lead, chromium, tin, and aluminum. Inhaling those substances can cause irreversible lung damage.

How do you know if you're getting addicted? You may feel the need to vape as soon as you wake up. You might have trouble focusing in class or having fun with friends because you're distracted by

the urge to vape.

The good news is you can avoid nicotine addiction. The most effective way: **Never start vaping in the first place.** If you do vape, quitting can be hard, but not impossible. Don't be afraid to ask your parents, teachers, or doctor for help. Also use

the resources on the back cover of this magazine for quitting support.

It may take several tries, but you can quit. In fact, more teens are going public with their decision to stop vaping (see below). Your brain, your body, your family, and your future deserve it.

## "I Was Addicted": Real Teen Experiences



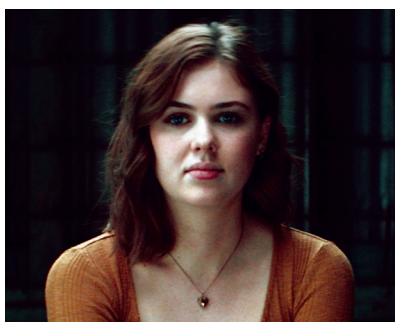
**FELT ALONE AND SAD AFTER VAPING**

"It was making me feel less than who I was. My confidence was just dropping."  
—Katelyn, 20, FL



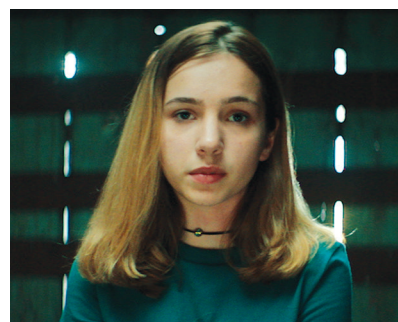
**VAPED BECAUSE HIS FRIENDS DID**

"It was not helping me cope, it was canceling out my ability to cope."  
—Isaak, 19, CO



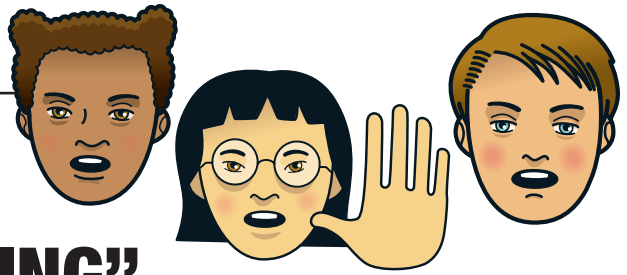
**STARTED A SUPPORT GROUP TO HELP OTHER KIDS QUIT**

"I would leave class and use it. I was always craving more and more."  
—Chloe, 17, TX



**FELT ANXIOUS ALL THE TIME**

"It made my anxiety so bad I couldn't even leave the house. I was scared to go to school."  
—Kd-jo, 11, NY



# SPREAD THE WORD: “VAPING’S NOT OUR THING”

You have the power to get other teens to avoid or quit vaping!

Create a poster to convince teens of the serious health risks of vaping. Combine persuasive techniques with scientific facts or statistics.

Hang your posters up around school or your neighborhood to spread the word.

## GET CREATIVE

Here are some format ideas.

- **Art** poster, illustration, digital drawing
- **Infographic** poster with captions, annotated illustration

## GET INFO

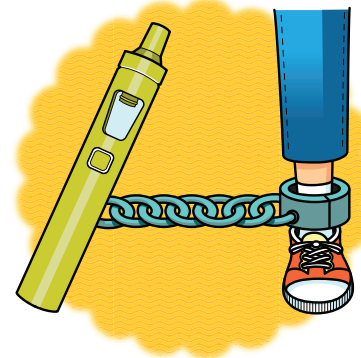
Use these videos, digital activity, and articles to find facts and stats about e-cigarettes to use in your poster.

- **Grades 6–8** [www.scholastic.com/vapingrisks](http://www.scholastic.com/vapingrisks)
- **Grades 9–12** [www.scholastic.com/teenvapingrisks](http://www.scholastic.com/teenvapingrisks)

## Signs of Vaping Addiction

Answering yes to any of these questions means it’s time to get help quitting. Do you or someone you know...

- Need to vape as soon as you wake up or during class
- Feel anxious or irritable when you want to vape
- Have trouble concentrating or sleeping
- Keep vaping even though you know it’s bad for you
- Find yourself reaching for your vape without thinking about it
- Go out of the way to get e-cigarettes
- Get interrupted by thoughts about vaping throughout the day



## HOW TO GET HELP

- Talk to your doctor about treatment options
- Visit [teen.smokefree.gov](http://teen.smokefree.gov) and [teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping](http://teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping)
- Ask a trusted adult or friend for support
- Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**
- Text **DITCHJUUL** to **88709**