

# WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHOULD CONSIDER IN ADDRESSING VAPING

## Prevention:

1. Each town has a Local Prevention Council that meets monthly during the school year to coordinate prevention education and awareness campaigns and activities. **Middle and high schools** should send a representative who can help connect school needs with community resources and share information.
2. **Parents** don't necessarily know what vapes LOOK like. Parents also DO NOT THINK that *their* kids are vaping; however, kids are vaping across all gender / economic / demographic groups, even in elementary school. Parents don't know how to talk to their kids about it. Some still believe that vaping is a safer alternative to smoking.
  - Share videos, factsheets and discussion tips for parents on a regular basis (available at [thehubct.org/nicotine-vaping](http://thehubct.org/nicotine-vaping), updated frequently from CDC, Surgeon General, etc.)
  - Consider a "Hidden in Plain Sight" activity where families explore a teen bedroom to see how vapes and drugs can be hidden. Positive Directions (Westport) can provide the program.
  - Students in some towns (e.g., Greenwich and Norwalk) are making videos to educate their parents.
3. **Teachers** should use consistent messaging.
  - The **Stanford University vaping curriculum** is available at [thehubct.org/nicotine-vaping](http://thehubct.org/nicotine-vaping).
  - Posters, brochures and factsheets are available on request from [ctclearinghouse.org](http://ctclearinghouse.org)
4. **Students** generally know a lot about vaping, including its risks, but remain curious to try.
  - It's important to **emphasize that the majority (about 70%) of high school students are NOT vaping**, rather than to use terms like "epidemic" that make it sound like everybody is doing it.
  - They need to learn **refusal skills** as well as **alternatives**.

## Consequences:

1. Schools should **publicize their vaping policies, including consequences, JRB referrals, etc., to students, parents, and SROs**. Some SROs have shared that they do not know their own school's policies.
2. **Students who are found vaping should be screened to identify the appropriate supports**. Some students may be casual / social vapers. Others may be addicted to nicotine (which is as addictive as heroin). Others may be addicted to marijuana, which is commonly vaped. Others may have a larger substance use problem or may be using vaping to cope with depression or anxiety.

3. In lieu of ISS or OSS, consider **restorative practices**, including health education, smoking cessation, alternatives. Programs available include:
  - a. INDEPTH is an alternative to suspension program for schools. After taking the program, 60% of students reported they were willing to quit using nicotine products. Schools can get trained FREE online. Materials are downloadable.
  - b. VapeEducate.com – online vaping education currently being tested in Stratford and considered in other towns
  - c. Freedom from Smoking (FFS)
  - d. “Vape Talk” downloadable conversation guide
  - e. Norwalk Public Schools recently piloted a Saturday program in conjunction with The Hub’s SMART Recovery teen support group

## Quitting Support:

1. Students who are addicted need support, not discipline. Taking a vape away from someone who is addicted is not a solution.
  - a. Truth Initiative has a program called “this is quitting” that some states are contracting with
  - b. CT Quitline (800 QUIT NOW) can provide support and Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRTs), such as patches. However, NRT doesn’t always work with teens.
  - c. Teen vaping cessation supports:
    - i. Text QUIT to (202) 804-9884 to receive messages
    - ii. Smokestoppers for Teens group at St. Vincent’s Medical Center, 203-576-5451
    - iii. SMART Recovery teen group in Norwalk
    - iv. MyLife.MyQuit
  - d. Federal resources:
    - i. Teen.smokefree.gov
    - ii. Therealcost.betobaccofree.hhs.gov



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