

# Vaping and Youth: What Parents and Caregivers Need to Know

It is unsafe for kids, teens, and young adults to use e-cigarettes (also known as vapes) and other tobacco products. It's never too early or too late to talk with your kids about the risks of using these products.

## What Can You Do as a Parent or Caregiver?

Parents and caregivers have an important role in addressing youth tobacco use.

- Talk with your child or teen about the risks of tobacco use, including vaping.
- Set a good example by being tobacco-free.
- Help your kids recognize social pressure to vape—real or perceived. Talk with them about connecting with peers in ways that don't involve unhealthy behaviors like vaping.
- Teach your kids healthy coping strategies to address stress and anxiety. These include recognizing and managing stressful feelings, staying active, using relaxation techniques, practicing self-care, and building a support system.
- If your child vapes, encourage and support them to quit. Talk to their health care provider, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW, and visit [teen.smokefree.gov](https://teen.smokefree.gov) for more help.
- Learn more about the risks of vaping for young people and access a list of free resources at [CDC.gov/Vaping](https://CDC.gov/Vaping).



## What Are E-Cigarettes, or Vapes?

E-cigarettes are devices that heat a liquid into an aerosol, which a person breathes in. The aerosol usually contains flavoring, nicotine, and other harmful and potentially harmful chemicals in it. These can include cancer-causing chemicals and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.

Vapes come in many types, including disposable, rechargeable, and refillable devices. They are available in flavors that appeal to young people, like fruit, candy, menthol, and mint. Some companies design and sell vapes to deliver cannabis.

Youth may use different terms for vapes or refer to them by their brand names.

To learn more, visit [CDC.gov/Vaping](https://CDC.gov/Vaping).

## What Do Vapes Look Like?

Vapes come in many shapes and sizes and are often brightly colored. Some look like ordinary products, such as pens, USB flash drives, or toys, which makes them easy to hide. Some vapes have digital display screens that offer games, touch screens, and personalized wallpaper. Others gamify vaping with animations or reward systems, such as points and rankings. These features may make the products especially appealing to youth.



## What Are the Risks of Vaping for Youth?

E-cigarettes typically contain nicotine, which is highly addictive.

- Nicotine can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25.
- Using nicotine during adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.
- Youth use of nicotine can lead to nicotine addiction and may increase the risk for future addiction to other harmful substances.
- Youth commonly report using e-cigarettes because they feel anxious, stressed, or depressed. Nicotine addiction or withdrawal can contribute to these feelings or make them worse. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms may drive youth to use tobacco products to relieve the symptoms, which can lead to a cycle of nicotine dependence.
- Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include irritability, restlessness, feeling anxious or depressed, trouble sleeping, problems concentrating, and nicotine cravings.



## What Other Tobacco Products Do Youth Use?

E-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth since 2014. However, some youth also—or exclusively—use cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco, including nicotine pouches. About 30% of youth who report current tobacco use say they use more than one type of product. Youth who use multiple products are at higher risk for developing nicotine dependence. They might also be more likely to continue tobacco use into adulthood.

To learn more, visit [CDC.gov/Vaping](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaping).

