

Vaping Facts

**For Community
Service
Organisations**

Vapes, also known as e-cigarettes, are battery-powered electronic devices which heat and aerosolise a liquid, called an e-liquid, which is then breathed in.

What can vapes look like?

Vapes can come in many different shapes and sizes and can even be disguised as everyday products such as highlighters, pens or USBs. If you are unsure whether something is a vape, take the cap off to see if the item has a mouthpiece.



What is in a vape?

Vapes are made up of a mouthpiece, battery, and e-liquid. The e-liquid contains many chemicals that can be harmful to someone's health. The main ingredients in vapes are propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine or glycerol. Other chemicals in vapes include chemicals commonly found in nail polish remover, weed killer, bug spray, and cleaning products. Often the ingredients listed on a vape do not encompass all that is in the e-liquid, with many vapes labelled as "nicotine-free" actually containing nicotine.

Nicotine

Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical that is found in many vapes. It plays a central role in the development of vaping addiction or dependence. When inhaled, nicotine triggers the release of dopamine in the brain - a hormone that generates feelings of pleasure and satisfaction. However, the more someone vapes, the more nicotine receptors the brain creates in anticipation for the dopamine release. This cycle results in short-lived bursts of satisfaction, followed by cravings for more and more nicotine when these effects wear off, resulting in someone experiencing cravings to vape.



Health effects of vaping

Vaping can have significant effects on mental and physical health. As a community service organisation, you may likely be just as invested in the mental health effects as the physical health effects, and providing the best support to your clients means understanding both.

Mental Health



- Unable to develop appropriate coping strategies
- Increase in depressive symptoms
- Higher number of suicide attempts
- Increased anxiety
- Amplify stress
- Negatively impacts learning
- Increase risk of addiction to other substances

Physical Health



- Harder to breathe
- Raises blood pressure
- Nausea, vomiting, dizziness
- Increased heart rate
- May trigger or worsen asthma
- Increased risk of lung disease, heart disease, and cancer

Quitting vaping is important

Quitting vaping might not always be seen as a high priority in community service organisations, especially if a young person is abusing alcohol or other drugs. However, quitting everything at once, including vaping, is easier than quitting one at a time as it retrains the brain quicker. Vaping causes an increased risk of addiction to other substances so may result in someone going back to other drugs or alcohol. It is encouraged for people to quit everything at once.

Quit supports

Quitting is not easy and a young person will likely need support. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) can help someone cope with nicotine cravings and withdrawals when quitting. Utilising both a slow and fast acting NRT is most beneficial. This can include using a NRT patch for 16 or 24 hours and the NRT gum or lozenges to help combat those intense, short-term cravings. There are also community supports that can help including:



Quitline 13 78 48
Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800



GP / Pharmacist
Headspace