



# VAPING, VAPE PENS & E-CIGARETTES

## A PARENT'S GUIDE

### WHAT IS THE APPEAL FOR TEENS?

Teens give a variety of reasons for vaping, and most of those reasons are directly related to how they are marketed.

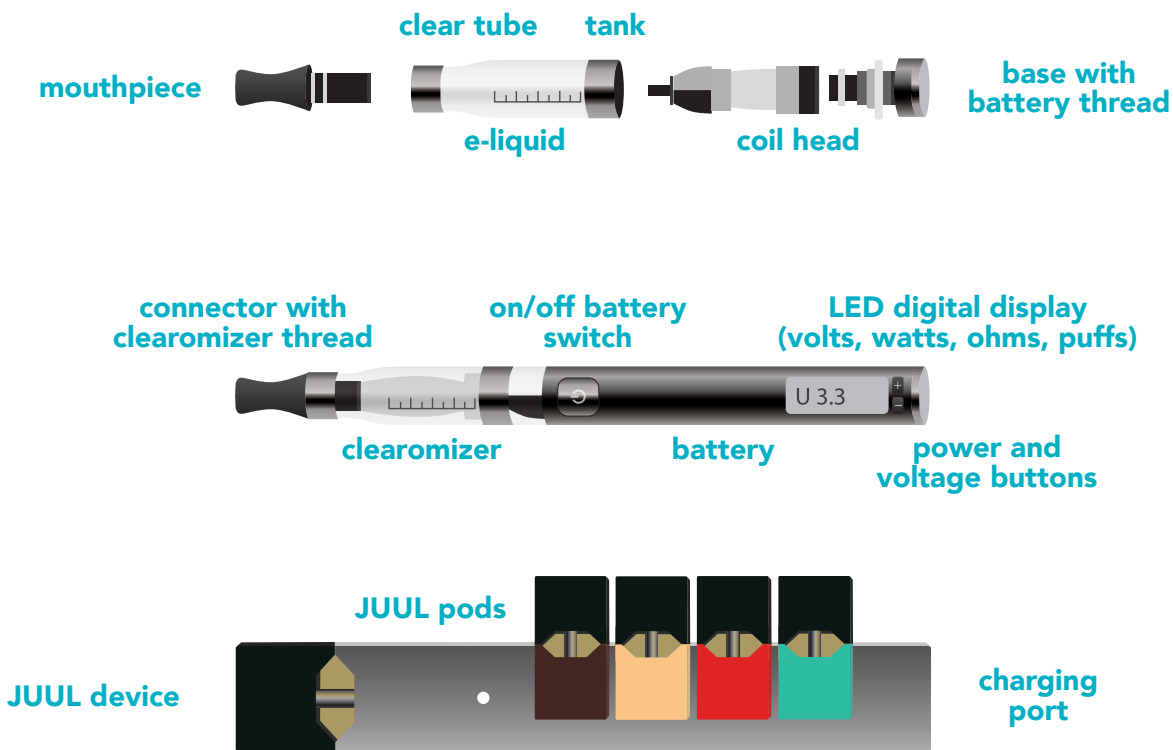
- ▶ Teens believe it is “trendy and cool,” unlike cigarettes which are “gross.”
- ▶ Youth want to try the “fun flavors like cotton candy, crème brulee and sour gummy worms.”
- ▶ Students say they get a “fast buzz” and that it is “discreet, easy to hide, and has no smell.”
- ▶ Students feel it “reduces anxiety and stress” even though it’s as addictive as regular cigarettes.
- ▶ Teens think “it’s like vaping water and it’s harmless” when the vapor actually has carcinogens.

### WHY SHOULD PARENTS BE CONCERNED?

Experts warn that vaping could put a whole new generation of youth at risk for nicotine dependence as well as a host of other health concerns:

- ▶ **Vaping increases likelihood of traditional cigarette use among teens.** More than half of first time users (ages 12 - 17) had never smoked traditional cigarettes; yet, 30% of these first time teens are more likely to start smoking cigarettes within 6 months. (Duran, 2018, LeadingEfforts.org).
- ▶ **Teens who vape are more likely to use marijuana.** One in four (27%) teens who vape go on to use marijuana, as compared to only 8.7% of non-vaping teens, indicating a strong association between vaping and future marijuana use (Pediatrics, April 2018).
- ▶ **Long-term health risks remain unknown.** Studies show it takes 15-20 years to determine if a product increases a person’s risk of cancer. Since vaping is relatively new on the scene, there hasn’t been enough time or evidence to truly determine its long-term health risks.
- ▶ **Purchasing vaping products underage is illegal.** In many local communities and some states, the age to purchase tobacco and vaping products is 21, and it is 18 across the rest of the county. Underage teens may turn to the internet to buy these devices and/or use fake IDs to purchase them.
- ▶ **Vape pens can be used for marijuana.** The nicotine solution can be substituted for hash oil. Inhaling marijuana this way intensifies the high because the active compound THC is found in higher concentrations. This leads to greater side effects and risk of addiction. (RaisingTeensToday.com)
- ▶ **Vaping can impact school performance.** Teens who vape have more disciplinary issues, and regular marijuana use decreases cognitive abilities (National Academy of Sciences, Feb 2016).

Community – The Anti-Drug Coalition is a 501(c)3 nonprofit working to reduce the use of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs among our youth. We strive to make the drug-free choice the easy choice.



**Troubling paradox:**

**While switching from regular cigarettes to vaping may decrease short-term health effects in adults, for teens, vaping has become a gateway to tobacco smoking.**

**WARNING SIGNS**

Signs your teen may be vaping:

- ▶ Unexplained sweet scent
- ▶ Pens and USB drives that don't look "normal"
- ▶ Skipping caffeine
- ▶ Nosebleeds (caused by a dehydrating chemical stripping moisture from inside the nose)
- ▶ Bloody sores in the mouth
- ▶ Smoker's cough
- ▶ Increased thirst
- ▶ Unfamiliar batteries and chargers in your teen's possession
- ▶ Discarded JUUL pods

**ONLINE RESOURCES JUST A CLICK AWAY**

For tips on how to talk to your teen, excellent resources are just a click away:

- ▶ [CommunityTheAntiDrug.org](http://CommunityTheAntiDrug.org)
- ▶ [LeadingEfforts.org](http://LeadingEfforts.org)
- ▶ [StandStrongCoalition.org](http://StandStrongCoalition.org)
- ▶ [DrugFree.org](http://DrugFree.org)

**WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?**

With the cloud of uncertainty around vaping, it's important for parents to be vigilant. Talk to teens often about how their choices could affect their performance in school, extracurricular activities/sports, future goals, and their health in both the short and long run.

**It's not one 60-minute conversation.**

**It's 60 one-minute conversations.**