

# PARENTS: HOW TO TALK TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT VAPING



Did you know that more than 5,700 teens start vaping every day? Almost 40% of kids have vaped at least once. Marketing, peer pressure and misconceptions can influence a teenager to vape.

Talking with teens about difficult subjects can be awkward. However, most teens care about what their parents and other adults they respect have to say—even if it doesn't seem like it—especially when adults are also willing to listen. Know the facts about vaping and find the right moment to start the conversation with your teen.

Here are some tips that can help.



## **BE CURIOUS RATHER THAN JUDGMENTAL.**

Ask your teen what they know about vaping, what they have seen and heard, and what they think about it. Ask friendly, open-ended questions and let your teen do most of the talking. You might ask, "What do you think about this e-cigarette ad?" and "Have you seen kids vaping?" Don't worry if the conversation is short. The most important thing is to start it.

## **FIND TEACHABLE MOMENTS.**

Look for natural opportunities to discuss vaping. Examples might include seeing a vape store or ad, being around a person who vapes, or seeing a news story or social media post about vaping. You can ask about new vape products and what's popular with teenagers. Your teen is probably aware of what their friends are doing. This topic can spark a chat that leads to talking about your teen's experience with vaping. Start by listening to what your teen thinks before you share your own opinions and comments.

## **SHARE YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES.**

If you have smoked or vaped, discuss how you started and how it affected you. Hearing how you quit can serve as a powerful example.

### **TOP PARENTING TIPS**

- ▶ If you smoke or vape, take steps to quit. Visit [YesQuit.org](https://www.yesquit.org) to get started.
- ▶ Don't allow smoking or vaping in your home.
- ▶ Start talking about the dangers of vaping before your children enter middle school and keep the conversation going throughout their teen years.
- ▶ Stay involved and encourage teens to participate in positive activities where they have positive role models.



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VAPES  
DOWN

## **SHARE THE FACTS YOU'VE LEARNED.**

Express concern for your teen's health and development. Vaping exposes teens to dangerous and addictive chemicals.

- ▶ Some young people who vaped even for a short time have also had serious lung damage.
- ▶ E-cigarettes contain hazardous chemicals including benzene, formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide, and cadmium.
- ▶ Nicotine, a main chemical in vapes and other tobacco products, is highly addictive and can affect brain development.
- ▶ One e-cigarette pod contains about the same amount of nicotine as 20 cigarettes.

## **HELP THEM QUIT WHEN THEY'RE READY.**

Teens need to know you're there to help rather than criticize. If your teen wants to quit, call the Texas Tobacco Quitline at 1-877-YES-QUIT or talk to their medical provider. Let them know you are proud and ready to help.

## **HELP THEM MAKE A PLAN.**

Teens may feel peer pressure to vape with their friends. Remind your teen that they always have the power to stand up for themselves and walk away. One way to help them resist is to discuss in advance how they can respond. You can help practice what to say. Here are a few ideas:

- ▶ Look your friend in the eye and just say, "No thanks." Be confident.
- ▶ "Sorry, if my mom finds out I'm grounded for a month."
- ▶ "I'm on the basketball team, and coach says 'No vaping.'"
- ▶ "We know vaping is bad for us, so what's good about it?"

## **BE AN EXAMPLE.**

Live a tobacco- and vape-free life your teen can model. If you want help quitting, call the Texas Tobacco Quitline to receive free help, or talk to your medical provider.

Adolescence is the typical time kids start smoking or vaping. As you know, it's very addictive and dangerous. Help teens avoid addiction now so they won't have to quit later.

### **More resources on how to talk to teens:**

- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – E-Cigarettes: [Talk to Youth About the Risks](#)
- ▶ U.S. Surgeon General's Office – [How to Talk with Young People](#)
- ▶ National Cancer Institute's Smokefree Teen – [How to Quit Vaping](#)