

Smoking and Vaping

Information for Schools



This toolkit was created to support educators in teaching vaping related curriculum and to encourage honest and factual conversations with students on vaping. This should be combined with efforts to enhance youth's well-being and promote positive development. The toolkit was also designed to increase awareness of the legislation around smoking/vaping and cessation supports available to those who want to quit.

Prevention:

Background Information for Educators:

This [Educator Guide from OPHEA](#) includes why and how to talk about vaping with students as well as webinar links to help you learn more about vaping before you get started.

These Fact Sheets from School Mental Health Ontario provide an excellent overview of vaping, including curriculum links and best practices to support educators in having informed conversations with students about vaping.

[SMHO – What Elementary Educators Need to Know](#)

[SMHO – What Secondary Educators Need to Know](#)

Curriculum Resources:

Elementary (Grades 4-8)

- **Classroom lessons for grades 4-8:**
 - » Niagara Public Health [Grade 4-8 Lesson Plans](#)
 - » Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit [Grade 7/8 Lesson Plans](#)
 - » [Not An Experiment PowerPoint](#)



• **Classroom activities:**

These scenario-based videos and activities are designed to facilitate conversations about vaping with students and help students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to respond to situations involving vaping:

- » [OPHEA – Responding to Peer Influences \(Grade 6\)](#)
- » [OPHEA – Factors that Influence Personal Choices \(Grade 7-8\)](#)
Note: we do NOT recommend using the Conversation Starter Video 1: Making Safer Informed Decisions About Vaping as it implies vaping is an effective way to quit smoking
- » [Refusal Skills Activity](#)

Secondary (Grades 9-12)

- **Classroom presentation (PowerPoint with notes)**
 - » [Not An Experiment PowerPoint](#)



What the Health Unit can offer:

Wrap-Up session: After vaping has been introduced using some of the curriculum resources, if students have additional questions or you think a wrap up session would be beneficial, contact your school's Public Health Nurse.

Vaping Workshop (secondary students): An interactive ½ day youth engagement workshop for students to take action in your school. This trains a small group of students who then share their knowledge with the rest of the school community (peers, younger students, parents, admin). Contact your school's Public Health Nurse for more information.

Staff or Parent Presentation: A presentation delivered by public health staff to parent groups or staff, can be tailored to different audiences and needs.

Legislation:

Safe environments are key to healthy youth development. The Smoke Free Ontario Act (SFOA) prohibits the smoking of tobacco or cannabis and the vaping of any substance on school property including the grounds associated with the school, and public areas within 20 metres of any point on the perimeter of the grounds of the school. This includes inside vehicles. School employees are required to inform staff, students and visitors of the law, post appropriate signage and ensure compliance.

Smoke Free Ontario Inspectors from the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit will carry out inspections and respond to complaints regarding smoking and vaping on school property and within the 20 metre perimeter of public areas outside of school property.

The **fine** for smoking or vaping in prohibited areas is **\$305**.

The **fine** for selling or supplying (includes sharing) tobacco or vaping products with those under 19 is **\$490**.

The [“Smoke-Free” section of the health unit website](#) now has online forms to [request signage](#) or [report a school incident](#) directly to the enforcement team.

Creating **enhanced policies** that go beyond the provincial legislation and address visible tobacco or vaping products even when not in use can help to reduce the social influence of substance use. Connect with your school’s Public Health Nurse for more information.

Cessation:

Students who are looking for quit support can contact your school’s Public Health Nurse or their primary health care provider.

Here are two Health Unit approved apps that you can refer students to if they are not ready to reach out to a professional yet or want to get started in the meantime.

Quash App: this is for young people who may be interested in quitting vaping or smoking. It allows them to design and track their own quit process.

#StopVaping Challenge App: this challenges you to go as long as you can without vaping. It helps track cravings and moods, and allows you to earn badges and challenge friends.



For more resources on general substance use as well as social-emotional learning – contact your school’s Public Health Nurse or visit the educator’s section of our website: <https://healthunit.org/for-professionals/educators/substance-use-addictions/>