

Let's Clear the Air

**Smokefree
and Vapefree**

**A summary of information for schools
and youth health providers in Te Taihū**

Produced by Smokefree / NMH Public Health
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Introduction

This resource provides a broad range of information on youth vaping and ways to support the vapefree and smokefree kaupapa at schools. It is designed for staff, parents and students and includes content from the Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Agency / Te Hiringa Hauora, ASH and partner agencies across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Please note: As youth vaping is an evolving issue, we encourage you to seek information from reputable New Zealand and international websites, when including consideration of vaping in your teaching and learning programme.

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The current landscape: vaping and rangatahi

Vaping (e-cigarettes) first began to appear on the Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) market in the mid-2000s. However, they have become more commercially widespread in the last 5-7 years.

In response to the changing context of e-cigarettes in NZ, ASH began monitoring youth e-cigarette use from 2014 and their trend data covers the same period in which adult smoking has continued to decline and e-cigarette use increase. The only exception is 2020 when the Survey was suspended due to Covid-19.

In 2021, in response to a rapidly changing regulatory environment and increased public profile of teen vaping concerns, ASH expanded the Survey questions on e-cigarette/vape use even further, giving it similar emphasis to smoking in the questionnaire. Questions on e-cigarette/vape use have been sourced from international survey examples and with the input of the New Zealand Youth Tobacco Monitor (NZYTM) Scientific Advisory Group. We have used both “e-cigarette” and “vape” in relevant questions.

Key findings from the **ASH Year 10 Snapshot Survey 2021** are as follows:

Daily smoking decreases and daily vaping increases

- Daily smoking rates have decreased significantly (to 1.3%) in 2021 from about 2% between 2015-2019
- Daily vaping rates increased significantly (3.1% in 2019 to 9.6% in 2021)



Daily smoking rates significantly decrease for Māori students – particularly Māori girls; daily vaping rates increase for all ethnicities

- Daily smoking rates for Māori students have decreased significantly for the first time since 2015 (from around 5-6% between 2015-2019 to 3.4% in 2021)
- Daily vaping rates increased significantly for all ethnicities (Māori, Pacific, Asian, NZ European), particularly for Māori (from 5.9% in 2019 to 19% in 2021), Pacific (3.9% in 2019 to 11% in 2021), and NZ European (from 2.6% in 2019 to 7.8% in 2021)
- The biggest increases in daily vaping were seen for Māori girls (5.2% in 2019 to 21% in 2021), along with Māori boys (6.3% in 2019 to 17% in 2021) and Pacific girls (3.1% in 2019 to 11% in 2021)
- These three groups (who have historically high daily smoking rates) also showed significant decreases in daily smoking, again particularly for Māori girls who had the biggest decline in daily smoking of any group (6.8% in 2019 to 3.7% in 2021). Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%; daily vaping rates for daily smokers increased to 80%



The current landscape: vaping and rangatahi cont.

Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%.

- Daily vaping among those who have never smoked is still relatively low at 3%.
- Daily smokers reported increased rates of daily vaping. This was a particularly large increase – 30% in 2019 to 80% in 2021.

The most common source of vapes is from friends

- Among daily vapers, the most common source of vapes was either bought from friends (23%) or given by friends (23%), followed by “some other way” (17%)
- For all vape users, the most common source was given by friends (43%) followed by “some other way” (17%)
- The least common source of vapes for all vape users was “buying online” (1.7%) or purchasing from a “supermarket, dairy, petrol station, convenience stores or other shop” (2.1%).

The most common reason given for vaping was “just to give it a try”

- The most common answers for all vape users was “just to give it a try” (40%), followed by “I enjoy it” (15%)
- For daily vapers “I enjoy it” was most common (31%) followed by “other reason” (24%)
- Among daily smokers who vape, a significant proportion vaped to “quit” or “cut down smoking cigarettes” (16.1%).

The most commonly used vaping device was a reusable tank/reservoir product, and the majority of participants vaped with nicotine.

- The majority of daily vapers most often used a reusable tank/reservoir device (64%) or reusable cartridge device (21%); this was also the case for all vape users (reusable tank/reservoir (47%), reusable cartridge (20%))
- 20% of all vape users were uncertain as to the type of device they used most often, compared to 6.8% of daily vapers
- The majority of students usually vaped with nicotine, though it was more common for daily vapers (89%) and daily smokers (87%) than all vape users (69%).

Order of initiation

- For students that had tried both vapes and cigarettes, it was more common for those that smoked daily to have tried cigarettes first (64%) than vaping (29%)
- However, those that vaped daily were more likely to have tried vaping first (61%) rather than cigarettes (33%).



Key messages



Key messages and tips for all audiences, including young people

- The best thing you can do for your health is be smokefree and vape-free.
- Vaping is not for children, young people or non-smokers.
- Vaping can help some people quit smoking.
- Vaping is not harmless but it is much less harmful than smoking.
- If you have questions or concerns about smoking or vaping, you might like to discuss them with a school nurse or doctor.

Key messages and tips for parents

- Explain that vaping is potentially less harmful than smoking, but only for smokers who want to quit.
- Vaping is not for non-smokers, especially children and young people.
- Explain that some vapes contain nicotine and that nicotine is a highly addictive substance which is very hard to stop once you've started.
- Vaping can also have an adverse effect on their physical activity and sports, and their overall health and wellness.

Key messages and tips for schools

- The role of schools is to empower students to make informed decisions on vaping by engaging them with the facts.
- Explain that vaping is potentially less harmful than smoking, but only for smokers who want to quit.
- Vaping is not for non-smokers, especially children and young people.
- Explain that some vapes contain nicotine and that nicotine is a highly addictive substance which is very hard to stop once you've started.
- Vaping can also have an adverse effect on their physical activity and sports, and their overall health and wellness.



Laws, regulations, policies and enforcement at school

The Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Vaping) Amendment Act 2020 (the Amendment Act) prohibits smoking and vaping in schools, kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo and early childhood education and care centres (including their grounds and buildings). This means they are smokefree and vapefree at all times. School management and boards must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that no person smokes or vapes in any part of the premises, whether inside or outside, at any time of day. This applies to everyone who comes onto the grounds, as well as in the buildings – for example parents and caregivers, teachers and kaiako, contractors and workers, students, or the community using the grounds at the weekend.

Signage

From 11 May 2021, schools, kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo and early childhood education and care centres must display notices stating that smoking and vaping within the premises is forbidden at all times. Notices must be prominently displayed at or immediately inside every entrance to the premises, and every entrance to every building or enclosed area on the premises, excluding buildings and areas not usually in use. These locations are the same as previously required for Smokefree notices under the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990. The 'No Vaping' notices are intended to be displayed along with existing 'No Smoking' notices. All schools, kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo and ECEs were sent 'No Vaping' stickers in May 2021. ***If you need more Smoke-free and No Vaping resources, please order through the Smokefree website.***

[Kaua e momi haurehu/auahi kore and No vaping/Smokefree stickers | Health Promotion Agency Smokefree](#)

Compliance

The following list will aid you in checking your compliance:

- Prominently display “No Vaping” signs at every entrance to the premises, and every outer entrance to every building.
- Take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the families of your students and other visitors know about the new requirements, for example by talking to them or including a section in a newsletter. ***Related content can be drawn from this pānui.***
- Take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure other users of your site know about the new requirements, for example by including a vapefree statement in a contract or lease for those using, hiring or managing your grounds.
- Think about reasonably practicable steps to take if someone does smoke or vape on site, for example a simple complaints procedure or action plan.





Laws, regulations, policies and enforcement at school



Fines

The management of schools, kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo and early childhood education and care centres may be fined up to \$4,000 for not complying with the Act.

Policies

Individual schools, kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo and early childhood education and care centres can decide on whether or not to have a vaping policy. Most will already have a Smokefree policy, and find the easiest way is to amend this to include vaping. **For an example of a Smokefree and Vapefree Policy click here. [SF and VF schools policy.pdf \(smokefree.org.nz\)](#)**

As part of your policy, consider your school procedures and rules. While the law applies to school buildings and grounds, you may want to extend 'No Vaping' (or Vapefree) to include time when staff and students are off-site or on trips during school times.

Consultation on a draft policy and communication within the school are excellent ways to ensure buy-in and understand how vaping is perceived in your community. It may be that members of your parent and teacher community are vaping to quit smoking. Most years approximately 13% of Aotearoa New Zealand's 480,000 smokers (New Zealand Health Survey, 2019) will quit or start a quit attempt. You can acknowledge this in your policy while ensuring that the school remains vapefree, and young people are protected from unintentional role-modelling.



Supporting students and school staff

Give students the legal facts

Reinforce the law to students that it is illegal to sell or give a vaping product to someone under 18, and that it is prohibited to vape on school property or grounds 24/7.

Ensure the students are aware of your school's policy, rules and procedures regarding smoking, vaping and other prohibited substances.

Give students the health facts

In New Zealand vaping is only recommended as a way to quit smoking, and is not for young people. Vaping is not harmless. Educate students on vaping just as you would with other programmes that focus on reducing harm from the use tobacco, alcohol or drugs.

Discuss how what we don't know, is as important as what we do. Vaping contains unregulated chemicals and flavours whose long-term effects are unknown. Breathing in anything can have side effects. Learn the side-effects of vaping.

Discuss how vaping contains nicotine which can have some negative effects on brain development in adolescents. Nicotine is highly addictive which, although it helps to quit smoking as it replaces the nicotine with less of the toxins in cigarette smoke; it is not harmless if you don't smoke. Learn about nicotine and vaping.

Help them use the facts

Conversations that empower students to come to their own conclusions help students feel respected and in control. Research together, ask questions and listen to their answers.

Tūturu is a whole-of-school approach to student wellbeing that prepares students for a world where alcohol and other drugs exist. It is evidence-based, and uses approaches that improve wellbeing, develop critical thinking, and

reduce harms from alcohol and other drugs. Learn more about Tūturu at www.tuturu.org.nz

Use reputable sources

Use the teaching and learning activities from Staying Smokefree to promote self-reliance, understanding and dealing with peer pressure and addiction. Swap out 'tobacco' and 'cigarettes' for 'vaping', where appropriate.

Use these teaching resources and activities for vaping education at junior and senior secondary school levels. **[Thinking-critically-about-energy-drinks-vaping.pdf \(tuturu.org.nz\)](#)**

Support to quit

Provide support for students who are wanting to quit vaping, or vaping to quit smoking. The best idea is for the individual student to get advice from a health professional, such as a doctor, public health nurse or Youth AOD clinician.

Support for staff

Have staff complete the Vaping Facts quiz, **[Take the quiz | Vaping Facts](#)**. Copy the questions as a handout so staff can record their answers without explanations to check their baseline knowledge.

Ask staff to look through the **[Vaping Facts](#)** website. Doing it in a staff information session means they can learn it there and then, rather than in their own time which many do not have. This page explains the key differences between vaping vs smoking.

Have staff go through the quiz again using the online version, so the answers and explanation come up. Hopefully following their learning and discussion session, all their answers are correct.



Support and tips for parents

Know the facts

The **Vaping Facts** website has easy to understand information about vaping, and the most up-to-date, relevant research about vaping and smoking in New Zealand. It is brought to you by the Ministry of Health and Te Hīringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency.

Find the right moment

Take advantage of situations where you can talk about vaping. Opportunities may present themselves, for example when you:

- see someone vaping
- get information from school about vaping
- walk past a vape shop
- hear or read a media item on vaping.

Have conversations

Ask open ended questions. It shows you are interested in them, it helps them talk, express themselves, and figure stuff out, and it helps you

know how to help them. Here are some examples that you could adjust according to the situation, the age of the teen, and the relationship you have with them: **Useful Questions to ask sad/worried/mad kids and teens: — Developing Minds**

Be patient and prepared to listen

Ask what they know about vaping, clear up any misconceptions they might have, and offer the information you read on the **Vaping Facts** website.

Talk about the different factors that might entice teens to try it, for example, wanting to fit in, curiosity, stress. Talk through, and practise together, effective ways to respond if they ever feel pressured to try it.

If your teen is vaping, try to understand why they are vaping by asking questions like “What do you enjoy about vaping?” Or “How does vaping make you feel?” Understanding this might help you to understand their needs and discuss other ways to meet those needs.





Support and tips for parents cont.



Convey your expectations

Let them know your understanding of the risks, but also why a person might vape. If your child is vaping or has vaped, find out why. Discuss options for dealing with the factors that motivated them to vape.

Share why you don't want your child to vape. Talk about the risks of vaping and the negative impacts of nicotine addiction on their health, finances, and relationships (**Nicotine and vaping | Vaping Facts**). Let them know you care about them and their health and wellbeing. The risks associated with long-term vaping are unknown. While vaping is less harmful than smoking it is unlikely to be totally harm free. Ideally, smokers who are vaping to quit should look to eventually stop vaping too. If your child isn't a smoker wanting to quit, it is unwise for them to start vaping. Read about the **risks of vaping**

Useful websites

The New Zealand Drug Foundation's conversation planner is a useful guide for how to have supportive conversations with your child about substance use. The **New Zealand Police Managers' Guild Trust** website has some useful information on teen safety as does **KidsHealth**.

Find time to talk

Talk to your children about vaping. This [How to talk to your teen](#) page has useful tips on finding the right moment, what to ask and how to respond.

Treat vaping situations (such as vape shops or advertisements) as learning opportunities to ask them what they know, what they think, and how they feel.



Education on vaping

Schools can respond to the rapid rise in vaping by including lessons about reducing harms from the use of vaping products. As a nicotine containing substance, treat vaping products much like any other substance that would be included in teaching and learning programmes focused on reducing harm from the use of alcohol and/or other drugs. That is, use the same sorts of activities that are used for learning about AoD, and swap AoD for vaping products.

Engage students in thinking critically about the ways they are currently being aggressively marketed to by the companies making these products. It would appear that without the marketing and deliberate design of many vaping products and merchandise as lifestyle products, that the issue would not have grown as quickly – if at all (given e-cigarettes have been around as smoking cessation aids for some time.)

- Excerpt with permission from The New Zealand Health Education Association's article on vaping in the December 2019 issue of Hauora Matters.

Reputable resources

The New Zealand Health Education Association have a helpful resource Alcohol and other drugs: A resource of teaching and learning activities for teachers of students in Years 9-11. (<https://healtheducation.org.nz/resources/>). This page offers some ideas for teaching and learning activities. These are not fully developed and teachers are directed to resources in Tūturu for details about the teaching and learning process.

Tūturu also have a useful resource for thinking critically about how the marketing of energy drinks and vaping products affects the wellbeing of young people.

Teaching and learning ideas

Here is an overview of ideas for teaching and learning about vaping.

What's the health and wellbeing concern about vaping?

- Use te whare tapa whā to unpack why the harms from vaping are cause for concern
- Learn more about what vaping is and how a vape works, why they were first developed and how they differ from tobacco cigarettes.
- What are the cultural implications of vaping products for indigenous people? How does this relate to how cigarettes were introduced to indigenous populations?

Why has vaping by young people increased?

- Advertising of vaping products was banned in New Zealand from 25 November 2020. But before then, there was a lot of advertising. Analyse advertising online, on TV and radio, in dairies and service stations.
- What does the imagery and the advertising messaging suggest about who these products are being marketed to, and for what purpose?
- Why can young people get vapes, when it is an R18 product and it's illegal to sell or give one to someone under 18?



Education on vaping cont.

- Think about where vaping products are sold in dairies and supermarkets, and the placement of vaping product shops near schools and shopping areas. How do you balance the needs of smokers looking to quit by vaping, against children being able to see them?

What are the laws and regulations on vaping?

- Use "The Facts of Vaping" website to find out about current New Zealand laws and regulations.
- What are your school's regulations?
- How well are these current regulations known and enforced?
- What's your evidence for this?

What actions can we take to reduce harm?

- Discuss things we can do personally. Our own values about substance use; our knowledge for managing stress and reducing harm; our own support for health and wellbeing.
- Discuss things we can do interpersonally. How we communicate with and support friends and others.
- Discuss things we can do as a community and society. Laws and policies; support systems; promotion of attitudes and practices that support wellbeing.
- Critique 'The Facts of Vaping' website and its usefulness for young people in New Zealand.

What could be the consequences of the status quo?

- What do students see will be the consequences for wellbeing if vaping products are used as lifestyle products and by non-smokers?
- Here is an overview of ideas for teaching and learning about vaping for senior secondary school students or where more amount of time is available.

What's the health and wellbeing concern about vaping?

- Access up-to-date research from reputable online sources to check out myths about vaping harms and benefits, and what effects are supported by research.
- Consider including information about the benefits of vaping as a way to help people stop smoking.
- Review New Zealand and international data about the rates of vaping product use by young people.
- Critique the New Zealand Ministry of Health statement about vaping in relation to the issues about young people.
- Conduct your own school survey about the use of vaping products and students' attitudes to vaping. Do they know what are in vapes? Do they know vapes are highly addictive? Why do they vape? Do they know people use vaping to quit smoking?



Education on vaping cont.

Why has vaping by young people increased?

- Conduct critical thinking activities to investigate how vaping products are being marketed to young people. Check out the [Tūturu resource about how marketing energy drinks and vaping products affects the wellbeing of young people](#).
- Investigate who owns the companies producing vaping products. If sometimes it's the tobacco companies, why are they producing vaping products?
- Add to the school survey questions about vaping advertising. Where have they seen advertising? If they use vaping products, where do they get them from?

What are the laws and regulations on vaping?

- Find out about the New Zealand laws for vaping.
- How easy do you think it will be to reverse the trend of vaping among young people in New Zealand? Why?
- Why can making new laws become complicated? Study 'The Facts of Vaping' website section on vaping law and policy and the variety of factors that need to be considered. Bear in mind that vaping can help people quit smoking and support New Zealand to becoming Smokefree in 2025.

What actions can we take to reduce harm?

- Design, plan, and implement a health promotion process for your school that includes a range of activities involving all students, as well as specific support for some students.
- Empower all students to take a stand against the use of vaping products (as lifestyle products) so they can take action personally and in relationships with others.

What could be the consequences of maintaining the status quo?

- Think about the bigger picture of substance use and misuse. This includes all alcohol and other drug use.
- Discuss why it is that communities or societies seldom manage to sustainably reduce (or eliminate completely) substance abuse issues?
- Debate who is 'at fault'. Individual people? The law? The people who produce and market alcohol and other drug products? Others?
- Is the issue a legal matter, or a health and wellbeing matter?



Resources

Vaping Facts

[ASH Year 10 Snapshot Survey 2021](#)

[Vapefree schools | Vaping Facts](#)

[Vaping and schools | Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency \(hpa.org.nz\)](#)

[Smokefree and Vapefree schools policy document | Health Promotion Agency Smokefree](#)

[Smokefree at school | Health Promotion Agency Smokefree](#)

[How to talk to young people about vaping | Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency \(hpa.org.nz\)](#)

www.tuturu.org.nz/

[Thinking-critically-about-energy-drinks-vaping.pdf \(tuturu.org.nz\)](#)

[Hā Collective \(hacollective.co\)](#)

[Tobacco Prevention Toolkit | Tobacco Prevention Toolkit | Stanford Medicine](#)

[The New Zealand Drug Foundation's conversation planner](#)

[Useful Questions to ask sad/worried/mad kids and teens: — Developing Minds](#)

[Kaua e momi haurehu/auahi kore and No vaping/Smokefree stickers | Health Promotion Agency Smokefree](#)

