



PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Youth Vaping Resource Guide

October 2026

Prepared by

Division of Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention
SmokeFreePhilly.org



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WHAT IS KICK THE VAPE?

Kick the Vape includes several activities from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to help young people stop vaping. The Don't Get Finessed media campaign connects teens and young adults to the Truth Initiative's EX Program, which offers support to quit vaping. The Kick the Vape website has facts about vaping and health, tips for quitting, and how to take action against youth vaping.

This guide is designed for professionals who work with youth, as well as parents and caregivers, and offers practical strategies for:

- Educating youth about the risks of vaping
- Resources for helping youth who vape and are looking to quit
- Screening youth who may be using vapes or other tobacco products
- Talking with youth who are at-risk to begin vaping or are currently vaping

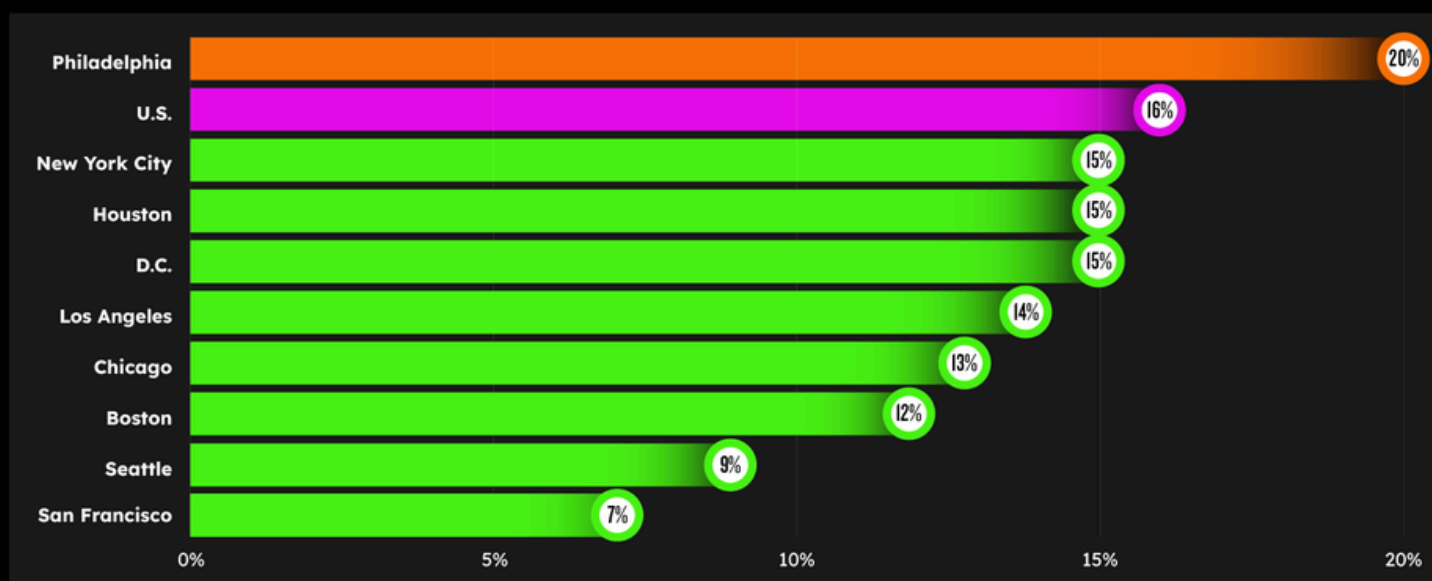


BACKGROUND

In Philadelphia, most young people who use tobacco use vape products. Vape use among Philadelphia high school students has increased 300% between 2017 and 2025. This isn't an accident: tobacco companies attract youth to vaping by sponsoring concerts and festivals, running bright, eye-catching ads, offering fruit and candy flavored vape products, and designing vapes to look like everyday objects or have game-like features.

PERCENT OF YOUTH WHO USED AN E-CIG (VAPE) IN THE LAST 30 DAYS

By City, 2025



Prepared by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health; Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS)

VAPING & YOUTH HEALTH

Vaping devices come in various forms. They produce a vapor made of nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. Some of these devices are easy to conceal, share and sell-even in school settings-and can be the size and shape of a flash drive, but may contain far more nicotine than a pack of cigarettes.



VAPING RISKS

Multiple studies show that youth who vape are much more likely to go on to smoke regular cigarettes.



BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Children and teens are at higher risk of nicotine addiction than adults because their brains are still developing.



FALSE CLAIMS

Some devices claim to be "nicotine-free" but still contain nicotine.



PHILADELPHIA TOBACCO USE

Total tobacco use, including vapes, cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, has actually risen in Philadelphia in recent years, after many years of decline.



BIG TOBACCO

Big tobacco companies, who have a long record of targeting our children, have been investing in vape companies and heavily promoting these products to youth.

REPORTING TOBACCO SALES VIOLATIONS

There are several ways a retailer can be in violation of Philadelphia tobacco sales laws:

- Not checking ID
- Not posting an age warning sign
- Selling tobacco without a current tobacco retailer permit
- Selling tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, or accessories to a minor under 21 years of age
- Selling “loosies” or out-of-package cigarettes/cigars without a UPC not meant for individual sale

To report sales violations, call or text “SALES” to 1-888-99-SMOKE (76653) or visit [Smoke Free Philly](#) to report violations online.



I WANT TO EDUCATE YOUTH ABOUT VAPING

American Lung Association's [Vape-Free Schools Initiative](#) provides educators with the knowledge and skills to address youth vaping in their schools and communities:

Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health (INDEPTH)

Age range: Teens Cost: Free facilitator training

This program offers an alternative to suspension for tobacco use. Any adult can become an INDEPTH facilitator by taking a one-hour training course. After finishing the training, facilitators receive a guide to help set up and run the INDEPTH program at their school or youth organization. Access the program outline [here](#) and register for the program [here](#).

Not on Tobacco (N-O-T) Program

Age range: Teens Cost: \$400 facilitator training

This program is based on Social Cognitive Theory and is for people who have completed INDEPTH training. It takes a whole-person, teen-centered approach, and covers topics that matter to teens. To get the most out of INDEPTH, it's recommended that school and youth organization staff also train as N-O-T facilitators. Register for the program [here](#).

ACT to Address Youth Cessation

Age range: Teens Cost: Free

This one-hour, on-demand course is for health care professionals, educators, and community members who work with youth. It offers an overview of best practices for supporting teens who use tobacco, including vaping products. The training offers practical guidance for using the Ask-Counsel-Treat model to talk with teens about tobacco use. Register for the course [here](#).

Health Promotion Council's Advocacy Institute (Ai)

AGE RANGE: 7TH - 12TH GRADE COST: FREE

The Advocacy Institute empowers middle and high school students in Philadelphia and southeastern Pennsylvania to make smart choices about their health and advocate for healthier communities. In partnership with schools and community organizations, Ai delivers engaging, age-appropriate programs, including:

- **#RealTalkTobacco:** A 10-week, evidence-informed program that provides youth with knowledge and skills to make healthy choices, recognize tobacco industry marketing, and advocate for tobacco-free communities.
- **CATCH My Breath:** A four-week, evidence-based vaping prevention program that helps students understand the risks of e-cigarettes, build decision-making skills, and stand up to peer pressure to vape.
- **Real Talk-- The Truth About Vaping:** An interactive single-session workshop on vaping risks, nicotine addiction, and tobacco industry marketing. This workshop is ideal and flexible to be delivered in school assemblies, classrooms, and youth programs.
- **TRU Storms:** Ai is a [Tobacco Resistance Unit \(TRU\) group](#), hosting youth-led events that promote nicotine-free lifestyles.

Stanford Medicine's REACH Lab: Tobacco Prevention Toolkit

AGE RANGE: ELEMENTARY - HIGH SCHOOL COST: FREE

The Philadelphia School District has adopted this resource as supplemental material to support its students. It includes [You and Me, Together Vape Free](#), a vape-specific education curriculum, [infographics, flyers, and fact sheets](#), and an [alternative-to-suspension program](#).

Additional tobacco-related curricula include:

- [Healthy Habits, Healthy Planet](#)
- [The PRIDE Curriculum](#)
- [What's Menthol Got to Do With It?](#)
- [Un-PACK-ing Cigarettes](#)
- [Not So Sweet: The Hidden Risks of Oral Nicotine and Smokeless Tobacco Products](#)
- [Hookah](#)

I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT QUITTING OPTIONS

LOCAL CLINICAL SUPPORT

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)'s Adolescent Specialized Treatment and Recovery Team (A-START)

The Adolescent Specialized Treatment and Recovery Team (A-START) at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) provides treatment and support for adolescents and young adults with substance use disorder, including tobacco and nicotine use. Services include intake, evaluation, referrals, and ongoing medical care.

TEXT-BASED SUPPORT

Truth Initiative's EX Program

Age range: Teens Cost: Free

This resource sends daily texts with tips and support to stay nicotine-free. It also offers information on [health conditions and vaping](#), [stress management tips](#), [challenges that affect quitting](#), and [NRT and prescription medications](#). Joining the program also gives users access to a [community](#) that is free, anonymous, and available 24/7. Youth can sign up for the program [here](#) or text KICKTHEVAPE to 88709.

National Jewish Health's My Life My Quit

Age range: Teens Cost: Free

This resource lets users create a plan to quit, chat with quit coaches, track progress, and earn badges for reaching goals. It includes information on [vaping and brain health](#), [vaping and tobacco](#), and [vaping safety](#). Youth in Pennsylvania can sign up for the program [here](#) or text "Start My Quit" to 36072.

Pennsylvania Free Quitline

Age range: 18+ Cost: Free

Teens aged 18 and older can call the PA Free Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (English) or 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (Spanish) for free coaching and quit medications. Services are also available online [here](#).

MEDICATION (FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS)

Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) gives the body a steady amount of nicotine throughout the day, which helps reduce cravings. NRT comes in several forms, including gum, patches, lozenges, and nasal spray.

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that clinicians consider nicotine replacement therapy for youth with a moderate or severe nicotine addiction. Youth under 18 need a prescription from a health care provider to access NRT. For more guidance on giving NRT to youth, see [Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Adolescent Patients: Information for Pediatricians](#) from the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department.



I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT SCREENING OPTIONS

Screening resources are designed to identify whether youth are using tobacco products and to evaluate the extent and severity of their nicotine use, providing a foundation for appropriate intervention.

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that clinicians working with youth begin screening for tobacco use at age 11. Pediatric health visits offer a valuable chance to intervene and help prevent both the initiation and long-term use of tobacco.

The Ask-Counsel-Treat (ACT) model reduces the time and burden on pediatric health providers while increasing the likelihood of successful tobacco cessation among youth.

A.C.T. TO ADDRESS YOUTH CESSATION		
ASK	COUNSEL	TREAT
Screen for tobacco use with all youth, during every clinical encounter.	Advise all youth who use tobacco to quit and have them set a quit date within two weeks.	Link youth to behavioral treatment extenders and prescribe pharmacologic support when indicated. After the visit, follow-up to assess progress and offer support.

The American Academy of Pediatrics developed a [flowchart](#) to guide clinicians in using the ACT model during patient visits and an in-depth [guide](#) to address tobacco use among youth.

There are several screeners available to assess tobacco use in youth:

- [Hooked on Nicotine Checklist \(HONC\)](#)
 - Focuses solely on tobacco use
- [Screening to Brief Intervention \(S2BI\)](#)
 - Includes screening questions for tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, and other substance use
- [CRAFT 2.1+N](#)
 - Includes screening questions for alcohol, cannabis, and other substance use
 - Includes HONC screener for tobacco use

I WANT STRATEGIES FOR TALKING TO MY KIDS OR STUDENTS ABOUT VAPING

American Lung Association's Talk About Vaping

AGE RANGE: SCHOOL-AGED YOUTH COST: FREE

This guide, developed in partnership with child psychologists, includes strategies for having an effective conversation about vaping with teens. It covers what to do [before you talk](#), [while you're talking](#), and [after you talk](#). It also includes information on the [basics of vaping](#), its [dangers](#), and the [youth vaping epidemic](#).

Food and Drug Administration's Vaping Prevention & Education

AGE RANGE: TEENS COST: FREE

This digital resource includes [tips](#) on talking with teens about the risks of vaping and [information](#) on how to safely dispose of vapes.

Nevada State Division of Public and Behavioral Health's Let's Talk Vaping

AGE RANGE: TEENS COST: FREE

This resource was built for parents and caregivers and offers facts about vaping, tips for starting the conversation with your teen, and quit resources if they're already vaping.

Yale Medicine's How to Talk to Teens About Vaping

AGE RANGE: TEENS COST: FREE

Yale Medicine experts offer research-backed guidance for parents, from getting the facts straight to choosing the right time and tone for the conversation, so teens feel supported instead of judged.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EDUCATORS

- [Philadelphia School District's Office of Prevention & Intervention](#)
- [Empower Vape-Free Youth Campaign](#)
- [Schools Supporting Students to Quit Tobacco Use](#)
- [Conversation Card for Educators](#)
- [Guides to E-Cigarettes and Vapes Presentations](#)

PARENTS

- [How to Talk About Vaping](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Parents](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON VAPES

- [Vaping Lingo Dictionary](#)
- [Emerging Tobacco Products](#)
- [What you need to know about new synthetic nicotine products](#)
- [Where Do Youth Get Their E-Cigarettes?](#)
- [Lax enforcement of online e-cigarette sales puts youth at risk](#)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT, CONTACT:

Luke Butler, Youth Wellness Coordinator
luke.butler@phila.gov

Kara Sapp, Special Projects Coordinator
kara.sapp@phila.gov