
Media Release



Clearing the air on vaping and young people September 14, 2023 - For immediate release

Youth are smoking less than before; however, e-cigarette use (vaping) is on the rise. According to the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, about 15% of Ontario teens report vaping, and 80% of them vape nicotine.

While vaping products were originally marketed as a way to quit smoking, the variety of appealing flavors, discreet designs, and accessibility of vape products have led to widespread popularity among youth and non-smokers. Current research around whether vapes actually help people kick their nicotine addiction remains inconclusive.

“Most vapes contain high levels of nicotine. The long-term effects of vaping are currently unknown, but we do know that nicotine addiction is real. Using nicotine during the adolescent years can have harmful effects on the teen brain, which continues to develop until about age 25,” says Dr. Glenn Corneil, acting Medical Officer of Health at the Timiskaming Health Unit. “Using nicotine during adolescence can negatively impact the parts of the brain responsible for learning, memory, concentration, and attention. It can also worsen symptoms of depression and anxiety, reduce impulse control, and cause behavioural problems”.

Just in time for back to school, Timiskaming Health Unit is launching “Clear the Air”, a campaign to educate youth and parents about the risks and consequences of vaping, and available supports for those looking to quit.

Vaping on or within 20 metres of school property is against the law. It can result in school suspension, a \$305 fine, and a possible court summons which means extra time away from school for students and work for parents/guardians. The fine for providing vape or tobacco products to someone under the age of 19 is \$490. Timiskaming Health Unit is actively working with our local school boards on progressive enforcement to help keep school environments smoke and vape free.

When asked, young people state they didn't know that vaping is harmful or that it contains nicotine and other toxic ingredients. It's time to clear the air! We encourage parents, teachers, and other caring adults to have a conversation with the young people in your life. Sharing the risks and consequences of vaping can help teens make informed decisions about their health.

For more information, talking points and quit resources visit:
<https://timiskaminghu.com/439/Youth-Tobacco-Prevention>

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