

September 21, 2022

Dear DTPA Parent & Guardians:

I write to share my recent concerns regarding students vaping and being in possession of vape materials at school. I have personally confiscated and observed these items in and around school grounds. Proper procedures have been taken to handle these issues with those involved, however, I am taking the time to ask for parental support in ending this behavior with our children.

As a parent, you hold a significant amount of influence over your child's actions. By talking to your child about vaping, you may help them choose to not vape or to try quitting. Before you begin this important conversation, look for opportunities to discuss vaping with your child in a calm and reasonable way.

When you think about it, there's likely no shortage of ways into this conversation. Look for news stories, letters from the school about vaping policies, ads, seeing someone vaping on TV or on the street or passing a vape shop. Be ready to listen rather than give a lecture. Similarly, be sure to focus on health and safety rather than threats and punishment.

Try using open-ended questions to get the conversation going, such as, "What do you think about vaping?" In these conversations, get their perspectives, acknowledge the potential appeal of vaping and help them weigh the risks against the perceived benefits. When answering their questions or comments, offer honest, accurate, science-based information rather than trying to scare them. Finally, try to have these conversations frequently, calmly and, if you can, before they try vaping.

Try to understand why

Most kids start vaping due to curiosity, because friends and family vape, the appealing flavors, to do vape tricks, or because they think it's cool or want to fit in. Over time, vaping can become habit-forming as kids use it to address other needs such as relief from boredom and anxiety. Some may become addicted to nicotine and continue vaping to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

If your child has already tried vaping, it helps to understand why. Consider asking questions like: "What do you enjoy about vaping?" or "How does vaping make you feel?" Answers to these questions highlight your child's needs that can be addressed in a healthier way. It is also important to challenge children on their perceptions of norms. Teens tend to overestimate how many of their peers vape and research shows that such overestimations increase the risk that they will vape to 'be normal' or just like their peers.

Set clear expectations

Share why you do not want your child to vape and indicate that you expect your child not to vape. If you choose to set consequences, be sure to follow through, and make sure that these consequences are not overly harsh, punitive or long-lasting. At the same time, try to encourage and reward healthier choices and ensure that your child has other means of having fun, feeling cool, fitting in, alleviating stress and addressing anxiety or depression.

Role play resistance skills

Teach your child skills to resist pressures to use. Children in middle or high school are likely to be in social situations where they are offered an opportunity to try vaping. You might ask, “What would you say if someone offered you their vape?” See how your child would handle the situation. Practicing something along the lines of “No thanks, I’m not interested,” said with direct eye contact and assertive body language can help your child be prepared.

Set a good example

Set a positive example by being vape- and tobacco-free. If you do vape or smoke, keep your equipment and supplies secured.

*Taken from the article, [How to Talk with Your Son or Daughter About Vaping - Partnership to End Addiction \(drugfree.org\)](#)

Helpful resources

You may find the below resources helpful when talking with your child:

[What-You-Need-to-Know-and-How-to-Talk-to-Your-Kids-About-Vaping-Guide-Partnership-for-Drug-Free-Kids.pdf \(drugfree.org\)](#)

[Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents \(surgeongeneral.gov\)](#)

Please contact the school if you have any particular concerns for your child and help from one of our school counselors will be made available. We are here to support you and your children thrive.

With Warm Regards,

Debra Tarver, Executive Director & Tiffany Sutton, Principal