



Signs of Teen Vaping

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Vaping has changed how adults address teens' use of nicotine products.

On the surface, you might already be able to see a few of the reasons why teens find vaping attractive:

- Vape products are often manufactured with fun flavors that mimic sweets such as fruit or candy.
- Vapes don't smell like traditional cigarettes or produce obvious tobacco smoke, making it easier to conceal their use.
- Vapes can produce vast clouds of vapor, leading to friendly teen competitions.

While vaping seems to be leveling off among teens, it is troubling that [one in five high school students admits to vaping](#).

Although your teen technically can't purchase nicotine products until they [age 21](#) in the United States, similar prohibitions haven't stopped teen smoking, drinking, or drug use.

Knowing what to watch out for with vaping helps you protect your kid from falling prey to the serious health issues that can arise from thinking that they are safe.

What Are the Dangers of Vaping?

Some teens aren't aware that their vape liquids contain nicotine, even ones that claim they don't. The majority of vape products contain some degree of nicotine, but the amount the [user takes into their body can be hard to determine](#).

There is also the risk that teens could encounter products containing THC, especially black market vapes. Parents and some teens might not always be able to tell. This places your teen at risk of developing an addiction when they think that they are being safe.

Although vaping doesn't create smoke, there are still serious concerns regarding what types of chemicals might be entering your teen's body.

Is It Safer Than Smoking?

Some vaping advocates say vaping is safer than smoking and can help smokers quit or prevent people from starting. That's only partially true if smokers also stop vaping.

Teens sometimes falsely believe that their devices create just water vapor. While there is water in vape juice, those clouds of vapor [contain many other toxic ingredients](#) that could harm your teen's health.

Marijuana vaping has [doubled among teenagers between 2013 and 2020](#). Long-term vaping of tobacco or marijuana can lead to an addiction that could [require professional treatment to overcome](#).

How Do You Know If Your Teen is Vaping?

In the past, parents could often tell right away if teens were using tobacco products since the smoke and smell are hard to cover up. Vaping is usually more discreet. If they avoid the urge to blow huge plumes of vapor, teens can even vape it in school or other public spaces without arousing much suspicion.

Here are some signs of vaping to make it easier to know when you need to step in and take action.

Scents Without an Obvious Source

Vaping liquids are usually flavored. Critics say this is to make them more addictive and advocate for only allowing tobacco or menthol flavors. Studies have shown that [64% of teens who use sweet vape flavors were still vaping six months later](#), almost 50% more than those using tobacco or menthol (43%).

If you're suddenly smelling a fruity, sweet scent in your teens' room when they aren't eating or using a candle, they might be vaping.

Excessive Thirst

The chemicals used to make vape fluids, especially marijuana ones, can dry out your teen's mouth. If your teens are thirstier than normal or complain that their mouths are dry, they might be vaping.

Changes In Your Teen's Health

If your teen vapes often enough, then you may also notice changes in their general health that seem to linger without any obvious cause.

They may start to experience [shortness of breath](#) much as they would with smoking, or they may begin wheezing or coughing as though they have allergies.

Vaping can also have a drying effect on your teen's nose. While some people experience an occasional nosebleed during the winter months, new or frequent nose bleeds could be a symptom of vaping.

Vape Supplies

Vaping products don't necessarily look like cigarettes. Some include a cigarette-type tube that heats up electronically but others resemble a keychain fob or computer flash drive.

They also include cartridges, pods, or bottles of liquid that may or may not be plainly labeled (brand names, flavors, nicotine percentage). If not (your teen could have removed any identifying information), make an extra effort to check out any mysterious items.

What Do You Do If You Suspect Your Teen Vapes?

The discovery that your teen is vaping is upsetting, especially since it may be harder to get them to stop. Vaping is easier to hide than smoking.

First, calm down so that you can talk to them rationally and avoid turning the discussion into a heated argument. Next, talk to your teen using loving guidance.

As you talk with your teen, remember to highlight the potential risks of continuing to vape. Then, ask them about their ability to stop. If your teen mentions being unable to quit, then you might need to help them get into a vaping cessation program.

The consequences of ignoring teen vaping can be huge. Help your teen stop their habit before it gets worse.

Remember, you are not alone. Vaping is a growing teen issue. Reach out to other adults or look into professional care options.

Sources

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About the Author

Stephen Bitsoli received his degree in English from Wayne State University in Detroit. The Michigan native is a professional writer and guest blogger and was a journalist for more than 20 years. Since 2016, he's used that experience and passion in writing well-organized, comprehensive, and comprehensible articles on the complex and changing world of substance abuse and treatment. He's won awards for his newspaper articles and was the top-ranked blogger at an international website in 2018. A lifelong reader, he enjoys learning and sharing what he's learned.

