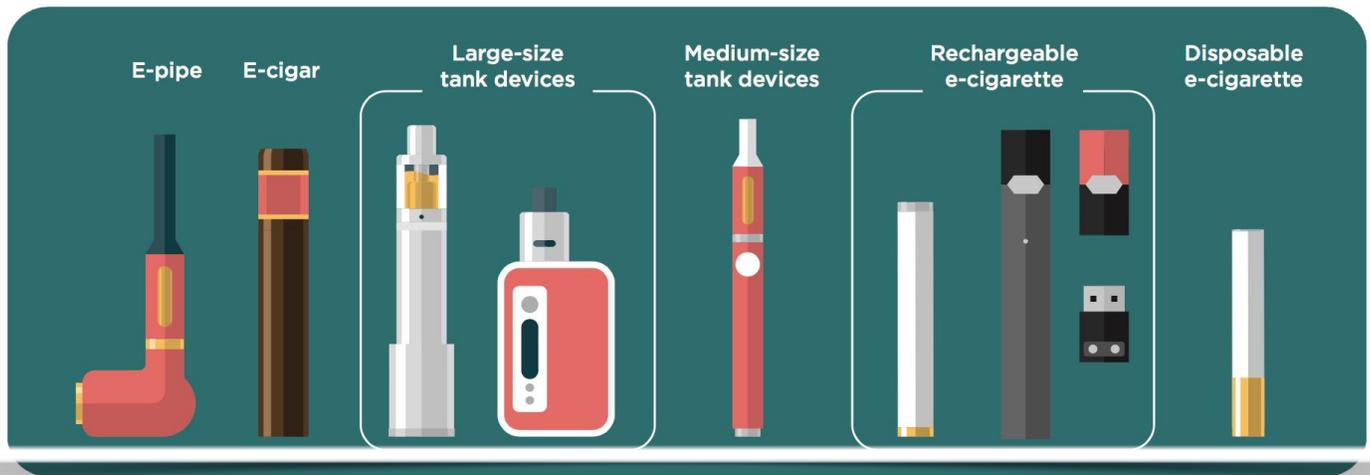


Electronic Smoking Devices



There is a new fad among middle and high school students that has been on the rise for the last eight years, one that has health risks and is against the law for anyone under the age of 21 –VAPING! Youth across Hawai‘i County are using Electronic Smoking Devices (ESDs) (also called e-cigarettes or vapes) at an alarming rate: 34% of high school students and 23% of middle school students, which is higher than the rest of the State at 25.5% for high school and 15.7% for middle school students, according to the 2017 Hawai‘i State Department of Health Youth Behavior Risk Survey (YRBS). This is a significant increase in youth use, even though it has been illegal in the State of Hawai‘i for youth to purchase or possess ESDs since 2016.

So, What Are ESDs?

Electronic smoking devices (ESDs) are battery-powered smoking devices that were originally designed to look and feel like regular cigarettes. They use cartridges filled with a liquid (e-liquid or e-juice) that contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. A battery-operated heating device in the ESD converts the e-liquid into a vapor, which the person inhales. That's why using an ESD device is known as "vaping." Common electronic smoking devices are: electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic cigarillos, electronic pipes, hookah pipes or hookah pens, box mods, and any e-liquid cartridge, bottle, or other component of the device or related product, whether or not it is sold separately.

There are over 700 ESD companies on the market which produce single-use disposable e-cigarettes, vape pens, box mods and many more fashionable devices. Regardless of their exterior design, all ESDs are constructed to heat e-liquid to produce vapor for inhalation. Many e-liquids contain nicotine, all contain the chemicals propylene glycol, vegetable glycerin, and other chemicals for flavoring. Some chemicals found in e-liquids are approved by the Food and Drug Administration as “generally safe for human consumption” (orally), however, these same chemicals have not been approved as safe when heated and inhaled into the lungs. Research shows that exposure to ESD vapor can lead to serious health risks such as respiratory tissue damage, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

E-liquids contain the highly addictive chemical nicotine. Among its effects on the body, nicotine interferes with normal brain and lung development, increases blood pressure, and can cause reproductive harm. Vapor from ESDs has been described as a “harmless water vapor” by the tobacco industry, however water is not an ingredient in e-liquids. ESD vapor also contains cancer-causing chemicals such as arsenic, benzene, cadmium, chromium, lead and nickel. In addition to exposure to toxic chemicals, adolescents who use ESDs, or are exposed to the vapor, have higher rates of asthma, and ear, nose and throat infections when compared to youth who are not exposed to the vapor.



Hawai'i State Law

Hawai'i State law prohibits the sale or furnishing of tobacco products including ESDs and e-liquids to anyone under 21 years of age. Under this law, which has been in effect since January 2016, youth and young adults under 21 cannot possess or consume tobacco products. There is a \$500.00 fine for anyone who furnishes tobacco or ESD products to anyone under the age of 21 (§712.1258 and §321.212 Hawai'i Revised Statutes).

TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT VAPING

With the tremendous increase of youth using ESDs and the intense marketing on local radio stations, it may seem that vaping is a safe alternative to combustible tobacco, but these products can cause negative health effects.

What can parents say to their pre-teens and teens about vaping?

- Instead of leading with facts consider starting with genuine curiosity, ask; “*What do you know about vaping/e-cigarettes?*” or “*Do you have classmates who vape?*” *Tip: do not accuse your child of vaping.*
- To get teenagers to take our concerns about vaping seriously, start by recognizing that they already may have first-hand observations or personal experiences to arrive at their own conclusions.
- Be positive, ask open-ended questions rather than repeat negative statements. For example: youth have various reasons for vaping, do you know why some of your peers choose to vape?
- Share YOUR concerns with your child, they will appreciate your care, even when speaking about products with potential harm.

For more information about ESD use in Hawai'i County please contact the Hawai'i Public Health Institute, Hawai'i Island Community Coordinator, Sally Ancheta at sally@hiphi.org or visit our website at hiphi.org