



## Vaping Factsheet:

# For professionals working with young people



Westmorland  
& Furness  
Council

Working for **Cumberland Council** and  
**Westmorland & Furness Council**

## What is vaping?

**Vaping is not for children and young people. Vapes contain nicotine and are particularly dangerous for teens, whose brains are still developing. Teens who vape are at risk of developing nicotine addiction, mood disorders, difficulty paying attention, reduced impulse control and learning problems.<sup>1</sup>**

Single use Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs) retail for between £5 and £7 each. They consist of a tank of nicotine salt liquid and a lithium-ion battery in a brightly coloured sealed unit, which are similar in appearance to a large highlighter pen. They are designed to be thrown away once they run out of charge or e-liquid. The battery supplies energy to a coil, which heats rapidly. The coil is contained within a cotton wool wadding. The liquid from the tank soaks into the wadding and vaporises when the coil heats up. The devices are activated by a small sensor through the action of sucking air through the device. There are no other electrical components such as an on/off switch. These products are usually boxed and contain the disposable NVP inside a plastic wrapping.<sup>2</sup>



The main ingredients are vegetable glycerine and propylene glycol but most e-liquids also contain nicotine, which must be no more than 2% or 2mg per ml, as well as small amounts of flavourings and sweeteners.<sup>3</sup>

Some vapes can be refillable with cartridges containing e-liquid whilst others have a capacity of around 600 puffs and are disposable.



Source : Youth vaping, smoking & nicotine use (truthinitiative.org)

## What is Juuling?

Juuling refers to using a particular brand and type of e-cigarette called a Juul. Juuls are shaped like a USB flash drive and do not look like a traditional e-cigarette. Instead of needing a battery or special charger, Juuls can be charged by being plugged into a USB drive of any electronic device. The fluid that Juuls vaporise often contain fruit flavours or other flavours like mint to make it more appealing.

Many teens are under the mistaken assumption that Juuls do not contain nicotine and only contain water and flavouring however, Juuls contain nicotine and often contain more nicotine than traditional cigarettes.<sup>4</sup>

While the sale of Juuls to young people under the age of 18 years is restricted, it is possible to purchase Juuls online by ticking a box to state you are the correct age and because of these relaxed restrictions, Juuls are easy to obtain. Juuls also appear like a traditional flash drive, making them easy to hide and use in areas where Juuling is not allowed, such as a classroom.



Source : What is JUUL? (truthinitiative.org)

<sup>1</sup> California Department of Public Health 2018, Vapes Myths & Realities

<sup>2</sup> Vaping and e-cigarettes: The facts for Parents & Carers, Smokefree Sheffield in collaboration with ASH.

<sup>3</sup> SCOTSS Trading Standards, SCOTSS Product Safety and TARP Groups – Single Use Vaping Products project 2021.

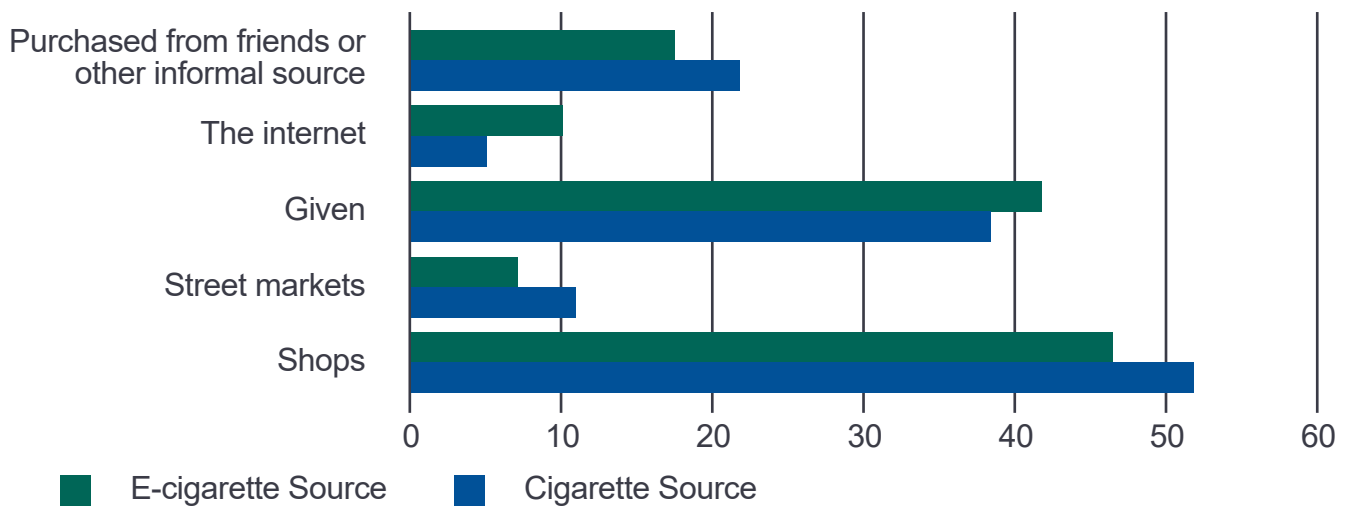
<sup>4</sup> www.therecoveryvillage.com

# What does vaping by children and young people look like nationally?

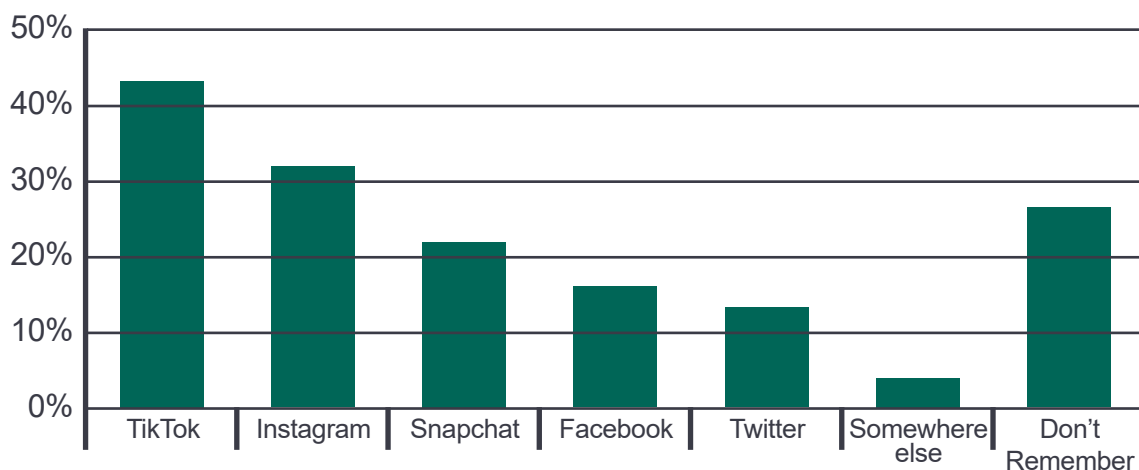
## ASH Smokefree GB Youth Survey on Vaping Prevalence ongoing Children & Young People 2022:

- Vaping by children and young people is on the rise: from 4% in 2020 to 7% in 2022.
- 10.4% of 11-15 year olds have tried vaping compared with 29.1% of 16 – 17 year olds.

### For 11 - 17 year olds, shops are still the most common route of purchase for tobacco and vapes



### 11 - 17 year olds who had seen e-cigarettes promoted online, where did they see them?



Source : Ash/YouGov Smoke GB Youth Survey 2022

## What does vaping by children and young people look like in Cumbria?

The Cumbria Children and Young People Survey was developed by the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) in partnership with Cumbria County Council. The purpose of the survey was to obtain pupils' views on aspects of health and wellbeing. A total of 5114 pupils took part from 43 primary school and 19 secondary schools.

### Primary Findings (Years 4 & 6):

- 5% of Year 6 pupils who responded reported having tried vaping and 4% said that their parents/carers knew they had tried it.
- 21% of pupils who responded reported that someone vapes indoors at home in rooms that they use.
- 18% of pupils who responded reported that someone vapes in a car when they are in it.

### Secondary Findings (Years 8 & 10):

- 33% of secondary pupils who responded said they had at least tried vaping.
- 26% of pupils who responded reported that someone vapes indoors at home in rooms that they use.
- 21% of pupils who responded reported that someone vapes in a car when they are in it.

## Trading Standards Intelligence

Trading Standards In Cumbria have confiscated around 5,000 Nicotine Vaping Products between 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023. Trading Standards and Cumbria Youth Substance Misuse Team have intelligence to show that young people are acquiring vapes through:

- Proxy sales by parents as a reward for attending school.
- Service providers such as barbers, hairdressers, nail salons and such like.
- From vans parked outside of schools.
- On-line – a lot of young people say it is really easy to purchase nicotine vaping products on-line.

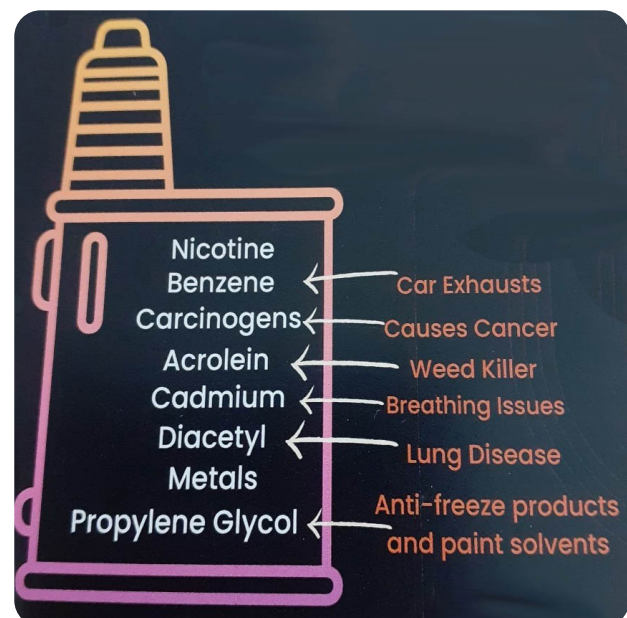
These can often be illegal vapes and the content of them is unknown but can include stimulants (such as caffeine or taurine) colourings and chemicals which are carcinogenic.

One of the bestselling types of disposable vapes are Elf bars. Elf Bars can usually be bought on offer at 3 bars for £12 and these are often advertised on TikTok.

## What are the risks?

The health risks of vaping include:

- A risk of addiction – vapes and Juuls contain nicotine which is highly addictive.
- Young people often share vapes which leads to a risk of cross-infection.
- Vaping can be a gateway to smoking cigarettes and cannabis.
- A narrowing of the pathways blood flow in your heart, increasing the risk of heart attacks.
- A risk of chronic bronchitis and long-term lung damage.
- Exposure to cancer-causing chemicals.
- Increased risk of strokes.
- 1 vape can contain the same amount of nicotine as between 20 and 50 cigarettes.
- Young people think that vaping is water vapour when in fact it is a harmful aerosol.
- A risk of potential impotence (boys).
- A risk of infertility (girls).



## What might you see in a young person who is vaping?

A young person, who is vaping might:

- Be coughing lots or have colds and throat infections.
- Have nose bleeds.
- Have slower brain processing, which could lead to a change in academic achievement due to “brain fog.”
- Experience teeth loss, develop a receding gumline and/or lip sores.
- Have diarrhoea, sickness and bad wind.
- Be experiencing poor sleep.
- Be jittery and struggle to concentrate as they are looking for their next fix.
- Have a weakened bladder.

Source : Furness Youth Work Partnership

## What does the law say?

- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to be sold any vaping products, shops that do can face prosecution.
- Any shop selling vaping equipment has the right to refuse to sell if they believe that a customer is underage.
- Parents or adults buying for underage children and young people (i.e., under 18) can be prosecuted.
- Advertising of all tobacco products is illegal.<sup>5</sup>
- Advertising of nicotine-containing vaping products is prohibited on broadcast media (TV & radio); in magazines and periodicals, in online media and in some other forms of electronic media (this includes social media).
- If you see advertising for vapes that you feel is trying to encourage children/young people to try vaping, you can report it to the Advertising Standards Authority [www.asa.org.uk](http://www.asa.org.uk).
- Non-commercial public health campaigns aimed at adults and promoting vaping as an alternative to smoking, are permitted.

## What is the impact of vaping on the environment?

- Single use vapes contain batteries and difficult to recycle plastics.
- Approximately 1.3 million disposable vapes are thrown away every week in the UK; this is enough to cover 22 football pitches.
- Disposable vapes that are thrown away go into landfill, they break down causing dangerous chemicals to pollute the soil and water.
- These chemicals can cause harm to humans, animals and the environment.<sup>6</sup>

## How to have conversations with young people about vaping

The NHS Digital Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England Survey, 2021 reported that:

- “Pupils were most likely to have obtained helpful information about drug use from parents (67%) and teachers (64%). Of the different forms of media, the internet was the most popular source of helpful information about drug use (54%), followed by TV (49%), then social media (47%).”
- “In terms of sources from which pupils have obtained helpful information about drinking alcohol, the NHS report showed that a large proportion of young people (77%) considered their parents to be a source of helpful information about drinking alcohol with teachers most commonly identified as a helpful source of information outside of the family setting (by 62% of pupils).”

Teachers and other professionals have a real opportunity to give some clear guidance and non-judgemental guidance or discussion around vaping.

<sup>5</sup> Vaping and e-cigarettes: The facts for Parents & Carers, Smokefree Sheffield in collaboration with ASH.

<sup>6</sup> Vaping and e-cigarettes: The facts for Parents & Carers, Smokefree Sheffield in collaboration with ASH.

## Group setting/tutor time/PSHE

### Suggested openers:

Ask young people what they know about vaping.

Split the group into 2 tasking them to look at the following questions:

- What are the rewards vs what are the risks?
- Who are vapes aimed at?
- Why would they be aimed at particular groups of people?

Facilitate a discussion between the groups, bringing in some of the facts you have from earlier sections. Have a look at the short clip from ASH in conjunction with SmokeFree Sheffield; this can be shared with the group and used as a prompt for further discussion:

### ASH resources on youth vaping - ASH

Discussions can move on to look at ways to stop vaping – what would you say or suggest to a friend who was addicted to vaping, to help them quit? Although this is an American site, young people can be signposted to check out Quit Vaping | Smokefree Teen for some useful suggestions and pointers, which they could pull together into their “top tips to quit.”

Always end with a safety message: reiterate that vapes are aimed at helping adult smokers stop smoking, they are not for young people and can be harmful in lots of different ways. If you don't smoke, don't start vaping.

Effects of a nicotine overdose can include:

- Nausea and dizziness
- Raised blood pressure and increased heart rate
- Irritability and anxiety

What should a young person do if this happens to someone?

They need to stay with them and keep a close eye on them and get adult help if they're at all concerned. Young people must ALWAYS call 999 if someone has seizures, convulsions or loses consciousness.<sup>7</sup>

Any concerns around a particular young person, following the group discussions, should be followed up with a 1:1 conversation. Organisational safeguarding policies/procedures should be followed as needed or a referral to the Youth Substance Misuse Team can be made.

<sup>8</sup> Tooled Up Quick Guide Vaping DSM Version May 23.

## Signposting & Resources

**FRANK**



**DSM** foundation  
The drug education charity



**HEALTHY  
SCHOOLS**  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH

Shop  
Parent Resources

**ash.**  
action on smoking and health



Smokefree  
Sheffield



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