



While cigarette smoking in America is at an all time low, vaping is on the rise, particularly for young adults. Adults, especially parents and other guardians, are often confused as to whether vaping is, in fact, a 'safer' alternative to smoking, and there is increasing concern about how vaping should be addressed with kids who are experimenting or addicted. This month, we sat down with John Bennett from **Kids Escaping Drugs** to discuss why vaping is such a growing problem and how adults can intervene to help the children in their lives.

Vaping and Smoking Cessation

Many adult smokers see vaping as a helpful tool to help quit tobacco, and they utilize it as part of their smoking cessation plan. "Vaping is safer than smoking, but certainly not safe," Bennett says. "91% of vaping solutions that say there is no nicotine actually do have nicotine." He traces this back to the fact that the government only regulates companies that emerged after 2015—other companies are grandfathered in, and their product ingredients are relatively unknown. In fact, NY Quits Hotline, a partner of C&FS EAP, solely recommends nicotine replacement therapies or non-nicotine oral medicines over e-cigarette use.

While adult smokers see vaping as a path towards quitting, Bennett emphasizes that young people don't feel the same way. Most young people do not report using e-cigarettes to quit smoking—in fact, increasing numbers of high school students are introduced to nicotine through vaping, not rcigarettes. "While vaping may serve a purpose for the adult smoker trying to quit," Bennett says, "the bigger problem is that young people are vaping without knowing what they're getting themselves into. Kids as young as 11 years old are addicted to nicotine but don't even know it. When the vaping

fad dies, the nicotine addiction will remain."

Starting the Conversation about Vaping

1. Get informed. There aren't years or research around vaping, but there are more and more community resources to help adults and youth understand the consequences of vaping. **Kids Escaping Drugs** offers a Vaping Education Program in which they educate teens and parents about the rapid evolution of the vaping industry—see below for more information.

2. Don't wait. Even if you aren't sure whether your child has tried vaping, have the conversation with them now. "Use an article or a TV show that deals with vaping to create the opportunity for a natural conversation," Bennett advises. If you are uncomfortable having the conversation, utilize your pediatrician as a resource or make an appointment with C&FS EAP to discuss how to have the conversation in a caring and pro-active way.

3. If your child is already addicted to e-cigarettes, support them in reducing usage. Some pediatricians won't recommend nicotine cessation products to young people, but they will recommend other cessation strategies, including reducing nicotine or reducing the locations that vaping is allowed. Whatever the plan is, actively support it and be a positive influence in their tobacco cessation journey.

Kids Escaping Drugs Face2Face Vaping Education Program

The Vaping Education Program through Kids Escaping Drugs examines various vaping products on the market, how these products are marketed to kids and teens, and the growing health and safety risk associated with their use. The program will educate participants about the potential dangers and consequences of teenage vaping. You can pre-register for a 40-60 minute, group classroom style presentation for kids and teens ages 10-18—parent/guardian attendance is required. For more information, or to register for an upcoming program, please contact: John Bennett or Rachel Cummins at:

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