

## Youth Vaping Prevention: “Get Your Head Out of the Cloud” Messaging and Talking Points: 2020

### What is vaping?

- Vaping involves inhaling harmful chemicals that are produced by an electronic cigarette or vape device.

### Why is youth vaping an important subject?

- While many people may believe that vaping is just flavored steam and a safe alternative to cigarettes, most e-cigarettes contain high amounts of nicotine and harmful toxins and carcinogens. Vaping is highly addictive and can cause irreversible lung damage.
- And the health impacts are real. In addition to causing lung-related injuries, vaping has also caused many cases of seizures due to nicotine overdose in kids. Not only is nicotine addictive, it changes the adolescent brain affecting attention, learning, memory and causes other brain development problems.
- Despite being in the national news cycle, youth vaping continues to skyrocket.
  - 5.4 million kids currently use e-cigarettes<sup>1</sup> and nearly 8,000 kids start vaping every day.<sup>2</sup>
  - The use of e-cigarettes by teens has seen an exponential increase of 135% over the last two years<sup>3</sup>, equating to 2.4 million new teens using e-cigarettes.<sup>4</sup>
  - Youth who use e-cigarettes are 4 times more likely to try a cigarette and 3 times more likely to become addicted to nicotine.<sup>5</sup>
  - More than 27% of U.S. high-school students and 10.5% of middle schoolers currently vape as of 2019.<sup>6</sup>
- With the current pandemic, those who smoke or vape are at an exponentially higher risk of more severe symptoms from respiratory diseases like COVID-19. Now more than ever, it’s critically important to educate parents on the dangers of vaping.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Tobacco Product Use and Associated Factors Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2019](#). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. December 6, 2019; 68(SS12):1-23.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2018. Analysis by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit using SPSS software.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2017](#). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. June 8, 2018; 67(22):629-33.

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<sup>5</sup> Barrington-Trimis JL, et al. E-cigarette Use and Subsequent Smoking Frequency Among Adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 2018; 142(6):e20180486.

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<sup>7</sup> Lung.org. [What You Need to Know About Smoking, Vaping and COVID-19](#). March 27, 2020.

### Why are parents the target for this campaign?

- Compared to tobacco products like cigarettes and cigars, e-cigarettes are still relatively new to market. No vaping product has been approved by the FDA and there aren't any studies to show the long-term health effects.
- What we don't know about vaping could hurt or even kill our kids – that's why it's so important for parents to get the facts and talk to their children about the risks of vaping.
- Even though a growing number of youth are vaping, most parents with children between ages 10-14 don't think their kids are vaping.
  - There's a misconception that the "good" kids don't vape. But there's no one type of kid who vapes. In fact, kids who are unlikely to smoke cigarettes may be at risk to start vaping. Stress and peer pressure are universal and main motivators for kids to try vaping, so every kid (including athletes, social butterflies, and bookworms) is at risk.
  - And because many parents assume their kids are unaffected by vaping, they don't have proactive conversations with their children about the dangers of vaping, preventing them from doing it.

### What is "Get Your Head Out of the Cloud"?

- Parents may hear a lot about vaping, but many still aren't talking to their kids about it, have misconceptions about the dangers of vaping and often are in denial that their kid may have tried it. What they need to do is see the urgency of the epidemic and have ongoing and proactive conversations with their kids about the risks of vaping.
- "Get Your Head Out of the Cloud" is a youth vaping awareness campaign from the American Lung Association and the Ad Council.
  - The purpose of this campaign is to serve as a wake-up call to parents of 10- to 14-year-olds to the facts about vaping and help break down the barriers so they can have ongoing and effective conversations with their children to prevent them from starting vaping.
  - Parents of 10 to 14-year-olds play a crucial and influential role in a child's life and have the power to intervene and educate around important choices.
  - In order to keep middle schoolers and others from vaping, we need parents to be equipped with the tools to take an active role in preventing their kids from vaping through conversation.

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- To provide parents with a simple roadmap to addressing the problem with their kids, “Get Your Head Out of the Cloud” has free educational resources including a conversation guide on our website, [TalkAboutVaping.org](http://TalkAboutVaping.org).
- Assets for our campaign, including TV, radio, print, billboards, out of home and digital are being distributed to platforms across the country where they will run in donated space in time.
- The creative was developed pro bono by advertising agency Hill Holliday.

#### **Additional Efforts from American Lung Association to End the Epidemic**

- Launching in tandem with the American Lung Association’s *End the Youth Vaping Epidemic* initiative, we plan to drive increased awareness around vaping timed with Back to School season in August and September.
- The American Lung Association’s campaign includes the Ad Council campaign, our Vape-Free Schools Initiative, research and advocacy.
  - The Vape-Free Schools Initiative focuses on schools, where kids are most likely to try vaping or be influenced by their peers. The Vape-Free Schools Initiative will help schools navigate the public health crisis of youth vaping by equipping school personnel with training to implement INDEPTH®, an alternative to suspension and Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T®) a vaping/tobacco cessation program.
- A targeted advocacy plan will be implemented to impact tobacco policies, including e-cigarette policies, at local, state and federal levels.
  - The plan will urge the FDA to exercise robust regulatory authority over all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and youth directed e-cigarette marketing.
  - The Lung Association advocates for the passage of the “Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act” which prohibits all flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. The American Lung Association will join forces with community partners to work on state and local legislation that supports a tobacco-free generation.
- The American Lung Association has committed to invest \$2 million toward research to understand the alarming effects of vaping on kids and find a solution to vaping related lung injury.
  - Through our Awards & Grants program, we are funding several independent research projects that will study the impact of vaping on lung health and examine how to reduce adolescent vaping and smoking of tobacco and cannabis products. The American Lung

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Association is also partnering with Northwestern University in a \$25 million National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded grant to study the longitudinal lung health of millennials, including the long-term impact of vaping. Through an additional and unique partnership with NIH's National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute we will enhance the study's infrastructure, healthcare utilization and examine early lung injuries due to vaping.

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