

OVX AND VKAT YOUTH EDUCATE ON TOBACCO AND NICOTINE PREVENTION

- Our Voices Xposed (**OVX**) and Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (**VKAT**) are Vermont's youth led movements dedicated to **preventing tobacco use statewide**.
- Since 2014, OVX and VKAT youth from across the state have joined together through the **CounterBalance campaign**, working to **reduce the harmful effects of tobacco products** among Vermont youth.

FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS ATTRACT AND HARM YOUTH

- When tobacco products and e-cigarettes are sold in **flavors teens love**, like cotton candy, bubble gum and peanut butter cup, they continue to be attracted to trying and using them.
- The truth about both flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products is they can contain nicotine, which is **addictive, toxic and can affect brain development**.
- There are more than **15,000 flavors** of e-cigarettes currently available.
- **85%** of e-cigarette users ages 12-17 **use flavored e-cigarettes**.
- **10% of Vermont youth** reported the **primary reason they use e-cigarette** products is because they are available **in many flavors**.
- When added to tobacco, **menthol flavoring makes it easier** to smoke and harder to quit.
- Teens who start smoking with menthol products are **twice as likely to become daily lifetime smokers**.

NICOTINE IS A REAL THREAT TO YOUTH

- One **5% e-cigarette pod** can have as much nicotine as **an entire pack of cigarettes**.
- Nicotine content in e-cigarettes have **more than doubled in 5 years**.
- Teens are nearly **7x more likely to vape nicotine** than adults.
- Nicotine exposure at a young age increases the risk of more **severe dependence on nicotine**.
- **Nicotine is highly addictive** and can harm adolescent brain development, which continues into the early to mid-20s.

LOOPHOLES IN FDA FLAVORED VAPING BAN LEADS TO INCREASE IN YOUTH USE

- FDA issued a ban on cartridge-based nicotine flavored vaping products, **with the exception of tobacco and menthol**. Since the flawed policy was adopted, sales of all menthol vapes have jumped by 52%.
- The new policy still **allows mint, dessert and fruit flavors to be sold** in disposable e-cigarettes and refillable pods and mods, prompting teens to switch to those devices.
- **Disposable e-cigarette use** by high school students **increased approximately 1,000%** in 2019-2020.
- **Puff Bar** disposable e-cigarettes, built for single use and exempt from the FDA's enforcement guidance on flavored e-cigarette products, have become the preferred brand.

JUUL CONTINUES TO BE POPULAR AMONG YOUTH

- JUUL **contains more nicotine** than the average e-cigarette.
- One JUUL pod contains the **same amount of nicotine in one pack of cigarettes**, or about 200 puffs.
- JUULs continue to be popular among youth because they **are easy to hide, sleek and make less smoke** than other e-cigarettes.
- JUUL **still has a menthol flavor**, which masks the harsh taste of tobacco and soothes the throat.
- Other popular e-cigarette brands include **Vuse, SMOK and Suorin**.

POPULARITY OF DISPOSABLES, NICOTINE POUCHES AND SYNTHETIC NICOTINE AND WHY IT'S ALARMING

- From 2019 to 2020 **disposable e-cigarette use increased from 2.4% to 26.5%** (almost 1,000%) among high school students. Among middle schoolers who use e-cigarettes, disposable use increased from 3% to 15.2% (almost 400%).
- **Disposable e-cigarettes heat up a pre-filled cartridge** that contains e-liquid, but are not refillable.
- **Puff Bar was the most popular disposable device** in April 2021 with 51.3% of the market share, followed by BIDI Stick with 24%.
- Disposable e-cigarettes can still be **sold with flavors**.
- Puff Bar sells 3 different devices **varying in the amount of prefilled nicotine** (1.8mL, 3.5mL, 6.5mL), how many "puffs" each device has (400, 800, 1,800), and an increasing battery life.
- Puff Bar has **up to 17 flavors for sale** on their website.
- Puff Bar uses synthetic nicotine in their products. From CDC: Whether derived from tobacco plants or synthetically developed in a laboratory, **nicotine is an addictive drug** with known adverse consequences for fetal development and adolescent brain development.

VAPING AND TOBACCO USE CONTINUE TO POSE HEALTH RISKS WITH YOUTH

- **More than 1 in 4 Vermont high schoolers** have used an e-cigarette product in the last month.
- Teens who first try tobacco using a vape are **four times more likely to try cigarettes**, compared to teens who don't vape, and teens who first try tobacco using a vape are **three times more likely** to be current cigarette smokers within two years.
- **LGBTQ students** are significantly more likely than heterosexual/cisgender students to **use an e-cigarette during the past 30 days**.
- **Nearly 80% of Black people** who smoke report using **menthol cigarettes**.
- The long-term **health effects of vaping are unknown currently**.
- **Vaping damages the lungs** and harms your immune system.

VERMONT'S TOBACCO LAWS

- Tobacco substitutes containing nicotine, including **e-cigarettes**, can only be **sold by a retailer who is licensed** or has purchased their products from a licensed wholesaler. The law effectively bans retail sales by mail, phone or internet.
- Tobacco substitutes containing nicotine, **including e-cigarettes**, are subject to a **92% tax** on the wholesale cost.
- Vermont raised **the age to purchase tobacco products to 21**. This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes and any other tobacco substitute that contains nicotine.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY TARGETS YOUTH

- E-cigarettes are often promoted as "**reduced risk**," "**smoke-free**," "**socially acceptable**" consumer products.
- Tobacco companies are **secretly advertising cigarettes on social media** platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter by paying social media influencers.
- Many e-cigarette brands **now are marketed with 'tobacco-free nicotine' or 'synthetic nicotine'** to circumvent local and federal tobacco control measures, such as flavored e-cigarette sales restrictions and the minimum tobacco purchasing age of 21.
- **All cigarettes** — including those marketed as "natural," "organic" or "additive-free" — **have harmful substances** such as heavy metals, tar and carbon monoxide. This means that inhaling burnt tobacco of any kind is harmful.