

Quit vaping guide for parents and carers



CHOOSE YOU

Helping you build healthy habits



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Welcome to the vaping guide for parents and carers. This guide offers you information and tips about young people and vaping.



As we don't provide one-on-one support for young people who vape, this guide has been created to help you talk to and support any young person who may need assistance to quit.

It's important to be informed before talking to young people; correct knowledge and information will help build trust, and you will feel more confident to have a conversation rather than relying on misinformation.

About Choose You

Before we go further, you might be asking: Who or what is Choose You? Choose You is a free to access, local service for people in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes, to help build healthy habits. Whether it's quitting smoking, reaching a healthy weight, or simply feeling healthier.

If you or someone you know is looking to quit smoking or stop using tobacco products, we're here to help. You are up to three times more likely to quit if you use a combination of stop-smoking medication with specialist help and support from a local service like Choose You.

Our friendly and experienced advisors can help you overcome the challenges of quitting and support you in building positive, healthy habits. We can also recommend nicotine replacement therapy options to suit individual needs.

We can support any young person who smokes tobacco products who lives, study or works in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes, and wants help to quit. If you'd like to refer yourself to Choose You, or discuss how we can support a young person to stop smoking, please visit www.chooseyou.co.uk or call us on 0800 013 0553.

Talking to young people

There are different reasons why young people try vaping. This includes feeling included amongst their peers who vape, peer pressure, curiosity, and to cope with stress. Some young people are more likely to vape if their family, parents and carers vape. Some young people misunderstand or are confused about the potential risks posed by vaping. It's helpful for you and the young person to explore the reasons why they started vaping; it can give you insight into how you can support them.

You can explain that under 18's shouldn't vape as their body and brain are still developing; the brain continues to develop into their mid-20s, and nicotine can interfere with that growth, which can affect memory, attention span, and the way they learn.

Vapes were invented to help adults quit smoking by providing an alternative to smoking tobacco. Vapes are used by adults to remain smoke free after they quit smoking. However, vaping is not risk free. It's important to remember that vapes are not designed to be used by anyone under 18 or for adults who don't smoke.

The message is clear: vaping is not safe for young people.



It's important to understand that nicotine is addictive, and they may go through withdrawal. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms happen when someone has regularly vaped and then stops. Since their body may have become used to it, quitting can make them feel uncomfortable for a while. They may feel cranky, restless, tired, or have trouble focusing. Some people get headaches or get the urge to vape again.

If the young person feels or becomes unwell, please seek medical advice from their GP as soon as possible.

Young people may not understand what vapes are or what they contain, making them unaware that vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive.

Some young people may need nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to manage the symptoms. NRT give the body a small amount of nicotine so the body can deal with the cravings; it's not a magic cure, but it can take the edge off cravings.



NRT products can be used by those aged 12 years and above. If you're talking to a young person between the ages of 12-17 and they feel they need support with this, they must talk to their legal guardian and speak to their GP, who may be able to prescribe this short term.

You must be over 18 to buy NRT products.



If the young person feels or becomes unwell, please seek medical advice from their GP as soon as possible.

Having a conversation

- ▶ set up a relaxed environment and thank the young person for being honest
- ▶ let them know they can talk to you, listen and avoid interrupting them
- ▶ ask what they know about vaping. This is a great way to start an open conversation. It doesn't have to be a long conversation, but be mindful that they might not be ready to talk about it; give them space if needed
- ▶ there may be reasons why they started vaping, explore their feelings, they may share they're stressed, upset, anxious, depressed or angry, which means you can focus on getting them the right support needed. They may need professional support and could benefit from speaking to a trained counsellor. If they don't feel comfortable talking, you can engage them in alternative activities to help them express their feelings; this could be drawing or art
- ▶ explain that it's important for them to understand why they want to quit vaping. Support them to create a list of why it's important to them. You can make this a fun and interactive activity! Explore this with them, you can revisit this if they are struggling, as this will help with motivation. It's helpful to focus on the positives
- ▶ a quit date is the day they wish to stop vaping. Explain to them what a quit date is and help choose a date with them. Here are some things to consider when choosing a date:
 - ▶ pick a day when they will be busy but not under pressure
 - ▶ avoid days when they are likely to be stressed
 - ▶ choose a special date, like a birthday
 - ▶ mark the date on a calendar



If they aren't ready to set a date, it's okay, take it slowly, they might just need more time to process everything.

Once the date is set, ask what support they need to help them on and around this date. It's helpful to write it down so you can refer to it. Would they find using flavoured chewing gum, hard boiled sweets, lollipops or mints helpful to keep their mouth busy?

- ▶ discuss what other things might be helpful for them, would a stress ball, tangle toy, puzzles or colouring books help keep their hands and mind distracted?
- ▶ ask what they would like to do; if they are struggling to think of anything, you could suggest walking or visiting local parks. This will help keep them busy and focused on something else and can be a welcome distraction
- ▶ ask if they would like to keep a diary or journal so they can express how they feel as they go through this journey.

We have a guide for young people; you can provide them with a copy, as this will help them with lots of extra information and tips.

It's important for you to know more about vaping and the law; you will find more information to help build your knowledge in this guide.



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What are vapes?

Vapes are also known as e-cigarettes. They are electronic devices that heat a liquid called e-liquid to create vapour that is inhaled.

Vapes don't burn tobacco and don't produce tar or carbon monoxide, which are two of the most toxic elements in tobacco smoke.

What are illegal vapes?

Illegal vapes are untested vapes or untested vaping products sold which do not follow regulations. This can include fake, or counterfeit vapes (false advertising), they can have no warning label, contain higher levels of nicotine and can be found in shops, markets and online. This creates an additional risk of harm to young people.

Some toxins in illegal vapes include cadmium, copper, lead, and many more, which are unknown, so they can contain anything.

Vapes are also known as e-cigarettes. They are electronic devices that heat a liquid called e-liquid to create vapour that is inhaled.



What is e-liquid?

Vapes contain e-liquid, which is the liquid the consumer inhales and exhales. E-liquids typically contain propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine, flavourings and nicotine.

Propylene glycol (PG) and vegetable glycerine (VG), both liquids, are often found in many food products and are a base for all e-liquids.

Flavourings are added to give the consumer a choice of flavours, such as strawberry, cherry, blueberry and many more.

Nicotine is also added to some e-liquids, and some e-liquids don't contain nicotine.

How young people access vapes

It's good to understand how young people access vapes. Did you know young people can access vapes by:

- ▶ purchasing themselves (illegal and underage sales)
- ▶ being bought or given from someone they know
- ▶ being bought or given from someone they don't know
- ▶ asking passersby outside shops
- ▶ someone selling on the street
- ▶ peers (selling/giving within schools/college)

They can also access them from online shops and food vans. This is why it's important to understand the law and what you can do if you know where they are getting them from.



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The law

It's illegal to sell vapes or vaping products to anyone under 18 or for adults to buy them on behalf of an under 18. This applies to family, friends, and strangers.

To legally buy or be sold a vape or vaping products in the UK, you must be 18 and over.

What you can do

If you think a business has broken the law or acted unfairly, you can report it to your local Trading Standards team. Trading Standards use the information given to them to investigate illegal business activity and can take businesses to court or stop them operating.

If you have any information about a young person being sold vapes, vaping products, illegal vapes, cigarettes or illicit tobacco, you can report this anonymously to **Keep It Out**. This website enables you to pass on information anonymously about local illegal tobacco sales, whether from a local shop, houses or other locations. Information provided should be anonymous; you do not need to provide your personal details.



Any information you provide will be treated in strict confidence and in line with data protection laws. Information will be shared with the relevant Trading Standards department and/or other Law Enforcement Agencies as deemed appropriate and will not be used for any other purpose.

Alternatively, you can report directly to your local Trading Standards, by visiting the [Choose You website](#).

Keep going and don't give up

Slip-ups are a natural part of the process; don't let them come between you and the young person you're supporting. They may need a short pause, and that's ok. Use the moment to reflect, regroup, and move forward. Each effort is a step closer to success.

Celebrate their progress, at the end of the month, encourage them to treat themselves with a new book, a fun activity, or something they've been wanting to do, or maybe donate the money to a charity of their choice.

Quitting vaping can be tough, but with the right plan and support, it can work. Good luck!



Further information

If you're looking for more information, here are some useful links:



Everything Ok?

Everything Ok? is a website designed to help you find the help and support you need when you have questions about your thoughts or feelings. For when you're wondering if everything really is ok, or not.

www.everything-ok.co.uk/smoking-vaping

Talk to Frank

Get real advice, facts, and support about vaping and its effects. Frank is there to help you make informed choices.

www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes#the-risks

Health for Teens

This website is for teenagers covering subjects that promote a healthy body and mind, and how to quit vaping.

www.healthforteens.co.uk/lifestyle/e-cigarettes/e-cigarettes-just-the-facts/

Childline

Get help and advice about a wide range of issues, call free on 0800 1111 to talk to a counsellor, send an email or log in for a one to one counsellor chat.

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/drugs-alcohol-smoking/vaping/

For more information, visit:
www.chooseyou.co.uk

Working together to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

