What are the facts about vaping?

These facts are for teachers and adults in the school. Evidence has shown that scare tactics do not work to prevent uptake of risky behaviours. This is for your information and to aid your discussions.

Are vapes dangerous?

E-cigarettes or vapes are a safer and cheaper alternative to smoking **for adults**. **They are a tool for adults to stop smoking.** We don’t know the long-term effects yet and they are unlikely to be harmless. What we do know is that vapes are much safer than cigarettes for adults who want to stop smoking.

Legal vapes in UK are a lot safer than smoking cigarettes. Vapes deliver the nicotine high without the dangerous chemicals like tar and carbon monoxide that are in tobacco smoke. The liquid in a vape is heated to create a ‘vapour,’ instead of being burnt like cigarettes.

Non-smokers shouldn’t start using vapes as most contain nicotine. Even though nicotine does not cause cancer, it is highly addictive, which can make it difficult to stop vaping. Vapes also cost money, and that can be used for treats.

What is in a vape?

We do know what is in a legal vape. The UK has very strict regulations about what can be in a legal vape. There are only up to 5 ingredients that are allowed: nicotine, propylene glycol (which is the same thing that is in asthma inhalers), vegetable glycol, water, and flavourings.

Legal vapes have a limit of 2% nicotine strength. This can also be labelled as 20mg/ml in liquid form. Any vape that is over 2% is not covered by the same UK protections.

Legal vapes have a maximum of 600 puffs.

Illegal vapes are available online and we do not know what is in them. Often, they are sold online from a supplier who has not been quality checked. They are likely to be much stronger than 2% nicotine and might contain ingredients that can cause health harms. The good news is that it’s easy to tell which vapes are legal or illegal. Legal vapes show they meet the national standard with a kite mark and have the CE sign.

Everyone seems to be vaping

Vapes have taken off in popularity in the past few years as a safer alternative to smoking. Disposable vapes are especially popular among young people as they are so easy and come in a range of flavours.

Even though it might seem as if most people vape, in 2024, 4.0% of year 8’s in Swindon report being regular users of vapes. Most children and young people who do not smoke but have used a vaping device report having done so to ‘give it a try.’

Is it illegal for children to vape?

It is not illegal for children to vape. It is illegal to sell vapes or e-liquids that contain nicotine to people under 18, and to buy nicotine containing vapes or e liquids for people under 18.

You can report the illegal trading of vapes to trading standards.

Advertising of all tobacco products is illegal, but if you see advertising for vapes that you feel is trying to encourage children and young people to try vaping, you can report it to the Advertising Standards Authority: asa.org.uk

Where can I get information and support?

There is a lot of information online and not all of it is accurate. To find out information that is accurate and support available either in person or self-help, have a look at the links below.

Health for Teens UK [Health For Teens | Everything you wanted to know about health](https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/)

Talk To Frank [Honest information about drugs | FRANK (talktofrank.com)](https://www.talktofrank.com/)

NHS Quit smoking - Better Health - NHS (www.nhs.uk)