

# Certified Healthy Oklahoma

## Creating a Culture of Health Together

### Healthy and Safe School Environment

#### What is an electronic cigarette?

An electronic cigarette is a battery-operated device; some resemble a regular tobacco cigarette. The battery is used to heat a packet inside the device that normally contains nicotine and other chemicals to create a vapor that is inhaled by the user.<sup>1</sup>

#### How are students affected?

The percentage of middle school and high school students using electronic cigarettes has doubled between the years 2011-2012.

- In 2013, 7.8% of Oklahoma high school students and 2.7% of middle school students had used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days.
- More than 76% of middle and high school students who used e-cigarettes within the past 30 days also smoked conventional cigarettes in the same period.
- 90% of all smokers started smoking as teenagers.<sup>2</sup>

#### Why should YOU care?

Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. Many teens who start with e-cigarettes may struggle with “a lifelong addiction to nicotine and conventional cigarettes”.<sup>2</sup>

#### Can using electronic cigarettes hurt YOU or those around you?

“E-cigarette vapor could be harmful to the user and people nearby who breathe in the secondhand vapor. It’s not just water vapor – it contains nicotine and toxic chemicals. Public health officials advise against using vapor products indoors, in cars, or around children because of potential health effects.”<sup>3</sup>

#### References

1. The Food and Drug Administration. News & Events. Electronic Cigarettes. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/newsevents/publichealthfocus/ucm172906.htm>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. E-cigarette use more than doubles among U.S. middle and high school students from 2011-12. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2013/p0905-ecigarette-use.html>, para. 3.
3. Flouris, A.D., Chorti, M.S., Poulantim, K.P., Jamurtas, A.Z., Kostikas, K., Tzatzarakis, M.N...Koutedakis, Y. (2013). “Acute impact of active and passive electronic cigarette smoking on serum cotinine and lung function.” *Inhal Toxicol*, 25(2), 91-101. doi:10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2012-050859.

### What My Friends Think

**Directions: Use these 3 questions to interview 3 of your friends or peers on the topic of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.**

1. Why do you think teens our age might use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs?
2. Why do you think teens our age would choose not to use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs?
3. What are some good things about being tobacco, alcohol and drug free?

*Look for lesson 7 on February 17th*



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