

It's never too early to talk to your child about tobacco and nicotine dependency. Start by talking to your child about what dependency is and why tobacco is dangerous.

To help prevent your child from using tobacco, keep these helpful tips in mind:

- 1. Use everyday opportunities** to talk about tobacco (e.g. when you watch TV with your child or see advertising messages in stores)
- 2. Discuss ways your child can respond to negative peer pressure**
- 3. Talk about tobacco use and the body** (e.g. how to maintain good health and avoid substances that might harm the body)
- 4. Encourage your child to get involved in activities that prohibit smoking and vaping**, such as sports
- 5. Emphasize what your child does right, rather than wrong. Self-confidence is a child's best protection** against negative peer pressure

Grades
K-5



begin the conversation

Grades
6-8

Your pre-teens will be exposed to many new things in middle school; some good and some not so good. Vaping and smoking will inevitably be a topic your pre-teen will face,

continue the conversation

so it is important to continue the conversation with them about the risks of tobacco use.

- 1. Have ongoing conversations**
- 2. Be equipped with the facts**
- 3. Try to understand why your pre-teen may consider using; always ask questions**
- 4. Convey your expectations and be specific**
- 5. Role play refusal skills**
- 6. Be a good role model; if necessary, address your own tobacco dependency and be transparent**

Grade
9+

own the conversation

Tobacco marketing, social media, and negative peer pressure can be very influential in a teen's life.

Be prepared to answer questions that your teen may have about tobacco. Here are some helpful answers for those difficult questions:

- 1. "Isn't vaping safer than smoking cigarettes?"** Your child may be exposed to less toxic substances when vaping (as compared to smoking), but **there are still significant concerns**. "Safer" does not mean that it is safe.
- 2. "It's just flavoring, so what's the big deal?"** Relatively **little is known** about flavoring chemicals and their long-term effects on the body. Many e-liquids contain more than just flavorings, such as nicotine, fine particles, metals, and other toxins.
- 3. "Everyone is doing it, so why do you care?"** You can say, "I know you may say this because of what you see in school or even on social media, but **the majority of students aren't vaping**. While it may be a popular activity for some kids, it doesn't mean that it's safe."
- 4. "I don't know what to say when other kids offer their vape to me to try."** You can say, "**Let's figure out what you may be comfortable saying.**"
- 5. "Doesn't vaping help people quit smoking cigarettes?"** While vaping may help some adults quit smoking, it has **not been proven** to be an effective long-term cessation solution.



For more information about this campaign, please contact Skagit County Public Health at (360) 416-1500.

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