VAPING: WHAT YOU SHOULD ACTUALLY KNOW

A REAL TALK GUIDE FOR TEENS

WHAT'S REALLY INSIDE A VAPE

Most vaping products contain nicotine, even those mistakenly labeled as "low" or "just flavor." Nicotine is highly addictive and alters how the developing brain functions. Furthermore, vape aerosol is never harmless water vapor. It contains toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and microscopic particles that cause direct damage to lung tissue.

UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY TACTICS

Flavors like candy, fruit, and mint are intentionally created to hook younger users by masking harsh chemical tastes and making the initial experience deceptively smooth. Tobacco and vape companies use these appealing flavors alongside targeted social media marketing to trick you into thinking their products are harmless fun, when the real goal is just to take your money and lock you into a lifelong cycle of addiction.

That habit gets expensive fast. Regular users often spend anywhere from $1,000 to over $2,000 a year on vaping. handing their hard-earned cash straight over to corporate pockets. When you add it all up, what would you rather spend that money on instead?

WHY BRAIN HEALTH MATTERS

The human brain continues developing until the mid-twenties, making it particularly vulnerable to nicotine. Use during these years can impair focus, memory, mood, anxiety regulation, and impulse control. Addiction happens much faster than expected, and while vaping is often used to cope with stress, nicotine withdrawal actually increases anxiety and stress over time.

SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

Social media often distorts reality, making it seem like vaping is everywhere and that everyone is doing it. In truth, data from the National Youth Tobacco Survey shows that roughly 93% of middle and high school students do not use e-cigarettes. The vast majority of teens choose not to vape, proving that the pressure to join in is largely an illusion created by online algorithms and clever marketing.

NAVIGATING PRESSURE AND FINDING SUPPORT

If someone offers you a vape, handling social pressure can be simple with low-key responses like saying you are good, it is not your thing, or that you have practice later, and remember that no one is owed an explanation.

For anyone who already vapes, breaking free is possible by recognizing triggers, delaying cravings, and using distractions like music or drinking water. Real help is available through text programs and resources such as Smokefree Teen (teen.smokefree.gov) and the Truth Initiative (truthinitiative.org/thisisquitting). Remember you don't have to do it alone.