



**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE  
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We want to address increasing use of e-cigarettes among adolescents and young adults across Massachusetts. More commonly known as vaping, the use of e-cigarettes is growing in popularity among this age group and is becoming more and more difficult to detect because of some of the newer devices such as the Juul (pronounced “jewel”). Students may believe and may try to convince parents that vaping is safe and that it does not contain nicotine. However, the United States Surgeon General and the American Academy of Pediatrics deems vaping unsafe and warns that there is no guarantee that even “nicotine free” e-cigarettes, are completely without nicotine. Further, these devices can also be used to inhale marijuana or THC. It is important to know that these devices are not legal to possess under the age of 18, and many communities have made 21 the legal age for possession and use.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that while adolescent use of tobacco has declined, it remains a persistent public health problem and that e-cigarettes are threatening to addict a new generation to nicotine. The AAP strongly recommends that the minimum age to purchase tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, should be increased to 21 nationwide. Karen Wilson, MD, MPH, FAAP, chair of the AAP Section on Tobacco Control states, “The developing brains of children and teens are particularly vulnerable to nicotine, which is why the growing popularity of e-cigarettes among adolescents is so alarming and dangerous to their long-term health.”

To help parents and families learn more about vaping, how e-cigarettes are used and the health risks associated with them, we have put together a fact sheet. Please read this fact sheet and share the information with your child or adolescent as you deem necessary.

We would like to make clear that the School Committee has prohibited the possession, use, consumption, purchase, selling or giving away of tobacco products, including vapor/E-cigarettes on school property or at any school function.

If you have questions or concerns about this please reach out to your school’s guidance counselor or nurse.

Sincerely,

Tricia Laham, MEd, BSN, RN, NCSN  
Coordinator of School Health Services

Dr. Tina Bozeman, NBCT  
K-12 Coordinator, Health and Physical Education

Dr. Maria Letasz  
Director of Guidance and Clinical Services



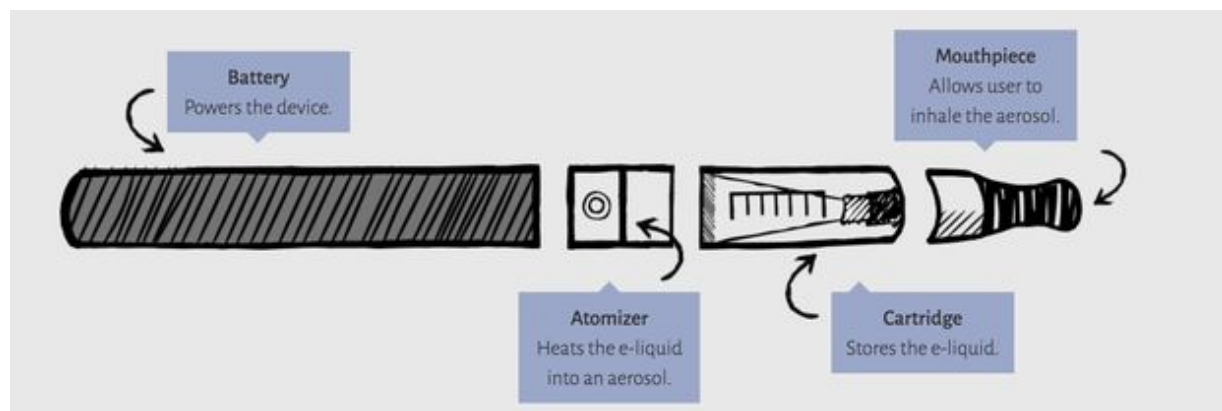
## E-Cigarettes and Vaping Family Information Sheet

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### How Does an E-cigarette Work?

E-cigarettes use a battery to heat up liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other additives into an aerosol. Users inhale this aerosol into their lungs. E-cigarettes can also be used to deliver cannabinoids such as marijuana and other drugs. “Juuling” is a discrete form of vaping.

Source: <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/getthefacts.html>



### How do you know if someone is vaping?

Unlike conventional cigarettes, vaping pens and devices do not leave a long lasting smell in the air, or sulphur smell from matches or burning. If anything, a faint fruity smell is left briefly that can be reminiscent of candy, light perfume, or light cologne. Given this, it is possible to use these very small items in a manner that is difficult to detect. Sometimes, users will exhale the mist down into a sleeve or neckline of a shirt so that it condenses quickly and no “smoke” is even observable.

### What do vaping pens look like?

Vaping pens are changing regularly and becoming easier to conceal. Currently one of the most popular vaping pens is the Juul which looks similar to a USB device and can be charged by a laptop. See below for a recent article on how popular Juul brand e-cigarettes are becoming.

### What are the impacts of vaping on the human body?

Vaping has been linked to chronic bronchitis (a.k.a. smoker's cough), bloody sores, lung wounds that won't heal, and even cancer. Please read this article for more information:

<https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/article/concerns-explode-over-new-health-risks-vaping>

## Some Common Vaping Myths

- **Myth #1 - Vapes/E-Cigarettes are Safe**  
Fact: E-cigarettes are unregulated tobacco products: "Studies have found toxic chemicals including an ingredient used in antifreeze and formaldehyde in e-cigarettes. Because the FDA doesn't regulate these products, there aren't requirements around ingredient disclosure, warning labels, or youth access restrictions."
- **Myth #2 - E-cigarettes don't have nicotine**  
Fact: Almost all e-cigarettes contain nicotine, including many that claim they are nicotine-free. "A 2014 study showed wide-ranging nicotine levels in e-cigarettes and inconsistencies between listed and actual nicotine levels in these products. Nicotine is an addictive substance that can have negative health impacts, including on adolescent brain development. The more nicotine a person uses, the greater the potential for addiction."
- **Myth #3 - Vaping isn't used for marijuana**  
Fact: The Juul and other e-cigarette devices can be used to inhale vapor that includes the active ingredients in marijuana, THC and CBD. This method of inhaling marijuana is growing in popularity because users think it reduces the negative health effects of inhaling smoke, and it is harder to detect than if a person is smoking marijuana.
- **Myth #4 - E-cigarettes can help smokers quit**  
Fact: The FDA hasn't found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit. "Instead of quitting, many e-cigarette users are continuing to use e-cigarettes while still using conventional cigarettes."
- **Myth #5 - E-cigarettes aren't marketed to kids**  
E-cigarette use among middle and high school students more than tripled from 2013 to 2015. Aggressive industry tactics such as cartoon characters and candy flavors including bubble gum, fruit loops, chocolate and strawberry, appeal to a younger audience. For the first time ever, teens are smoking e-cigarettes more than traditional cigarettes." Often teenagers believe that these devices are simply used to inhale sweet tasting vapor and are ignorant of the health risks.

### Additional Resources:

#### **U.S. Surgeon General's Comprehensive Website on E-cigarettes**

<https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/default.htm>

#### **American Lung Association's Stance on E-cigarettes**

<http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/e-cigarettes-and-lung-health.html>

#### **An article on the Juul Vaporizer that is easy for users to conceal because of its size and similarity to USB devices**

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/nation-now/2017/10/31/juul-e-cigs-controversial-vaping-device-popular-school-campuses/818325001/>