

For Immediate Release

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Help Youth Stay Tobacco and Nicotine Free in the New School Year *Promote smoke-free spaces and connect youth to quit support*

YPSILANTI, Mich., Sept 28, 2020 –Vaping use continues to rise among youth. Washtenaw County Health Department encourages parents, health care providers, and community members to talk honestly about the ill effects of nicotine and remind them that e-cigarettes are not a safe alternative. Scientists are still learning about COVID-19 and nicotine use, but we know smoking and vaping damages the lungs and weakens the body's immune system.

“Smoking and vaping is never safe for young people, especially now. Connecting young people to resources like My Life, My Quit program, supporting policy changes that help them avoid using in the first place, and providing education on the negative health toll of tobacco use, including vaping – can prevent illness and save lives,” says Amanda Ng, health promotion coordinator.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, youth are more sensitive to nicotine and can feel dependent earlier than adults. Nearly nine out of 10 smokers start smoking by age 18. About three out of four teen smokers end up smoking into adulthood, even if they intend to quit after a few years.

Smoking and Young People

According to the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, almost 33% of U.S. high school students report using electronic vapor products in the past 30 days, and nearly as many reports frequent (≥ 20 days during the 30 days before the survey) electronic vapor products usage.

“Nicotine is very addictive,” says Ng. “Young people need support to stop vaping.”

For young people who have already begun to use tobacco or vape, the My Life My Quit program is designed specifically for young people. Youth under 18 can text or call 855-891-9989 for free confidential help with quitting smoking or other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. The My Life My Quit program offers a self-guided online program, interactive text messaging and text reminders. In addition, the [Michigan Tobacco Quitline](#) is an evidence-based service that provides help for Michiganders of any age. Call the Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or enroll online.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline

The Michigan Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669) is an evidence-based service that helps smokers access quit aids, counseling and other resources. The service is available 24/7 in multiple languages.

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The Michigan Tobacco Quitline provides free telephone coaching for the uninsured, pregnant women, residents enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare, veterans, cancer patients, and Native Americans. The Quitline provides services including materials, text messaging, an online program, and referral to all Michigan residents.

Individual tobacco users can contact the Quitline directly at 1-800-QUIT-NOW, or enroll online at <https://michigan.quitlogix.org/>. Providers in all health care settings are also encouraged to refer their patients and clients to the Quitline. Additional information, including a fax referral form for providers, is available on the website.

Washtenaw County Health Department

Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs. Visit the Washtenaw County Health Department online at www.washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

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