



COLLINGWOOD SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

There is growing concern at Collingwood, and in our province, around the significant interest our students show with e-cigarettes and vaping.

For those of you unfamiliar with these items, they were introduced in 2007 as a way to help smokers quit smoking. Since they were claimed to be tobacco free, they have not been regulated by government as strictly as tobacco and, therefore, are easily accessed at a variety of different locations.

There are many conflicting perspectives and inconsistencies with regards to e-cigarettes and vaping. We would like to share our concerns with you, our policy around the use of e-cigarettes and vaping on school grounds and provide some helpful resources. Please discuss this issue with your children at home.

SCHOOL POLICY

Vaping or being in possession of an e-cigarette while at Collingwood School, on campus, or at any school-sponsored event, contravenes the [Collingwood School Code of Conduct](#). Vaping is treated the same as smoking cigarettes at Collingwood School and in most cases, those who involve themselves in such behavior at school will be suspended and, subsequently, placed on school probation (escalating consequences will be given to repeat offenders). Additionally, we may involve our police liaison officer where necessary.

WHAT IS VAPING?

The industry defines vaping as the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vapourizer or an e-cigarette. The primary concern is that the actual vapour may be produced from an aerosol containing a number of materials in an e-liquid. These materials contain metals, potentially toxic chemicals, and are often supplemented by either nicotine or THC/cannabis. As stated by the World Health Organization, [vaping for young adolescents can be a gateway to smoking](#). Furthermore, it is important to note that vaping has been linked to chronic bronchitis (aka smoker's cough), bloody sores, lung wounds that won't heal, and even cancer. Legislation has been brought forward for Health Canada to regulate vapes and e-cigarettes, but thus far these devices remain almost entirely unregulated.

RESOURCES

- [E-Cigarettes in Canada - Heart and Stroke](#)
- [Stanford University - E-Cigarettes and Vape Pens 101](#)
- [BC Coastal Health - Tobacco Cessation](#)
- [A very comprehensive website put together by the Surgeon General on E-cigarettes](#)
- [An article on a new vaping tool](#)

COMMON VAPING MYTHS ACCORDING TO THE [AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION](#)

Myth #1 Vapes/E-Cigarettes are Safe

- Fact: E-cigarettes are unregulated tobacco products: "We don't know for sure what's in them. 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 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 #4 E-cigarettes aren't marketed to kids

- E-cigarette use among middle and high school students more than tripled from 2013 to 2015. "With aggressive industry tactics such as cartoon characters and candy flavors including bubble gum, fruit loops, chocolate and strawberry, it's no surprise studies show a dramatic increase in kids using e-cigarettes. For the first time ever, teens are smoking e-cigarettes more than traditional cigarettes."

Over the next few weeks, we will be educating our students and staff about the health risks of vaping through meaningful discussions to grade groups. We will also discuss, with the students, what they should do if they walk into a situation (like a washroom) and they see someone vaping or using an e cigarette.

Thank you for your partnership in discussing this issue with your children at home. We hope you will find the above links and information useful when engaging in conversations at home.

Please remind your children that there are resources available to them and adults in the building for them to talk to.

Samantha Weiss
Dean of Student Life