



Friday, January 6, 2023

Dear Families:

As you may know, vaping has been an ongoing problem, both nationally and here at Greenville in recent years. Especially, among teenagers.

It is important to understand that vaping is not without risks. In fact, the use of electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices can be extremely harmful to the health of the user. One of the main dangers of vaping is that the liquid used in these devices often contains nicotine, which is highly addictive and can have long-term effects on brain development. In addition, the vapor produced by these devices can contain a variety of harmful substances, including metals, cancer-causing agents, and other toxic chemicals. These substances can be inhaled into the lungs and may cause serious health problems, such as: lung injury, heart disease, COPD, asthma, other respiratory diseases, or even premature death.

It is also important to note that many vaping products are marketed as being safer or less harmful than traditional cigarettes, but this is simply not true. In reality, vaping can be just as dangerous, if not more so, than smoking.

We understand that it can be difficult to talk to your children about the dangers of vaping, but it is important to have these conversations and to set clear boundaries to keep them safe. Some tips for these conversations include setting clear rules about not using vaping products, discussing the risks and consequences of using them, and staying involved in your child's life to help them make healthy decisions.

On Tuesday, January 10th at 6:00 pm we will be hosting an interactive program on substance use in the Middle School/High School Auditorium called "Shawna Has a Secret." This event is open to parents and guardians of Greenville students. Participants will have the opportunity to walk through a staged teen's bedroom and learn where young people may hide drugs and drug paraphernalia, what these items look like, and what their presence may indicate. Additionally, the presentation will go over behavioral signs in teens which may cause concern and what to do if they find signs of substance use.

As another resource, below are answers to common questions about vaping. We truly hope you find this information helpful and informative.

Sincerely,
Brian Reeve
Middle School Principal

Kirsty Goergen
High School Principal

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT VAPING

What is vaping?

In most cases here at Greenville, vaping is the use of a battery-operated device that uses a heating element to heat an e-liquid from a cartridge that releases a chemical-filled aerosol. Cartridges usually contain nicotine plus a base (like propylene glycol), and a flavor. Some “flavors” include ingredients such as formaldehyde and acrolein, which can cause irreversible lung damage.

Aren't vapes safe because they're regulated by the FDA?

NO! The FDA does not regulate vapes. And since they're not regulated, companies aren't required to list every ingredient on the packaging.

What are other names for vaping?

E-cigs, e-cigarettes, vape pens, pens, e-hookah, etc. They are all different terms for the same thing: electronic nicotine delivery systems.

How much nicotine is in one vape?

According to the manufacturer of JUUL, a popular vape among teens, one “pod” has as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. Some teens smoke multiple pods per day.

What do vapes look like?

Most vapes look like a pen, and most chargers look like a “USB drive.” Students can even charge them through the USB port in their computer or phone charger. However, vapes are manufactured to look more discreet, often disguised as everyday products.

Is vaping allowed in school?

The use of tobacco products, including vapes, is prohibited on school property, including on school buses.

Can't the school get “vape sensors” in the bathrooms to tell when students are vaping?

The middle school and high school have vape sensors in the bathrooms, however, without having cameras in the bathrooms it makes it difficult to tell which student is vaping. While we do our best to monitor the bathrooms, we don't have designated hall/bathroom monitoring staff. Additionally, since vapes don't usually create a noticeable puff of smoke, some students are hiding the vape in their sleeves to smoke in class. Again, without cameras in classrooms, it makes it difficult to prove.

Vapes are harmless - isn't it just water vapor?

NO. There are a lot more ingredients than just water in vapes and those ingredients are harmful to the health of the user and those around them.

How do kids purchase vapes?

Since you must be 21 years old to purchase vapes, most students get them from friends or friends of friends. Some kids even make their own cartridges, which is incredibly dangerous and can lead to severe illness or death. However, vapes can be purchased at gas stations, smoke shops, on Amazon, and through delivery services like GoPuff.

What are the warning signs of nicotine addiction?

Increase irritability or anxiety. Decreased lung capacity. Frequent trips to the bathroom/walks out of the room.

What are the signs of withdrawal?

Feeling irritable, restless, or jittery. Feeling sad, down, anxious, tired, or groggy. Concentration or sleeping trouble.

How do I know if my child is addicted to nicotine/vaping?

Ask them the following questions:

- Do you continue to vape even though you may want to stop?
- Do you continue to vape even though you know it's hurting you in some way?
- Do you feel anxious or irritable when you want to use a vape but can't?
- Do your thoughts about vaping interrupt you when you're focused on other activities?

If they answer yes to any of these questions, they could have an addiction and you should seek help from a medical professional.

Do vapes have smoke?

Although they tend not to produce visible emissions, yes vapes have smoke - and secondhand smoke from vapes can be just as dangerous as secondhand smoke from cigarettes.

What do vapes have in them?

Vapes can be used to smoke marijuana, herbs, waxes, and oils and more often than not contain nicotine, an incredibly addictive substance. Some vapes can even be laced with deadly chemicals and drugs, like fentanyl.

New York State banned flavored vapes, are kids even vaping anymore?

Yes, now more than ever. New York State first outlawed flavored vapes in 2019 in response to a teen vaping epidemic fueled by candy-flavored nicotine smoke. However, there is little enforcement for this ban and therefore flavored vapes can easily be purchased.