



*The mission of the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is to serve our entire community and to achieve health equity by promoting well-being, preventing disease, and protecting the environment through partnerships, innovation, and excellence in public health practice.*

December 6, 2022

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

As you probably know, e-cigarette use (also known as vaping) among students has reached epidemic proportions. Students are using e-cigarettes with nicotine, cannabis, and other products.

During January-February 2023, students will begin learning about e-cigarettes through **Stanford's "You and Me Together Vape Free"**. This new curriculum, You and Me, Together Vape-Free curriculum, is part of the Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit, is a theory-based and evidence-informed curriculum created by the Stanford Reach Lab as well as by youth, educators, and scientists across the U.S.

**The goals of this curriculum are for adolescents to:**

- *Increase their knowledge about e-cigarettes and the harms they can cause.*
- *Gain awareness of strategies manufacturers and sellers of e-cigarettes employ to increase use among adolescents, such as deceptive and creative marketing strategies.*
- *Gain skills to refuse experimentation and use of e-cigarettes.*
- *Ultimately, to reduce and prevent e-cigarette use of any type, including nicotine, cannabis/THC, and/or non-nicotine products. The You and Me, Together Vape-Free curriculum includes 6 lessons, each providing activities, online quiz games, and worksheets in addition to presentations, resources, and other materials aimed at addressing key factors associated with youth e-cigarette use, including changing adolescents' attitudes towards and misperceptions about e-cigarettes; increasing their refusal skills to pulls of flavors, marketing, and social media; reducing stress and depression which have been linked to e-cigarette initiation and use; improving coping; and decreasing intentions and actual use of all e-cigarette products.*

This program is an age-appropriate prevention and awareness curriculum that is aimed at: validating a teen's choice not to use, investigating the reasons teens may be curious about using, and motivating teens who are already experimenting to reduce, pause, and/or quit their usage as a step towards living vape-free.

Research consistently shows that teens who learn about the risks of drugs at home, from parents or caregivers, are less likely to use substances than teens who report learning nothing about the risks at home. However, getting the message across is not easy. Thus, this newly redeveloped curriculum also offers discussion guides that can be shared between the student and a trusted adult. These essential conversations are geared towards opening up lines of communication, not finding right or wrong answers. Parents are encouraged to talk less and listen more.

You can learn more about this curriculum at: <https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/you-and-me-together-vape-free-curriculum.html>

Additionally, feel free to contact me at the email address below with any questions.

Sincerely,

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