

Vaping and Parenting Guide – Does Your Kid Use E-Cigs?

Vaping Guru [Trending Now](#)

Being a parent is a huge blessing, but it's also a huge responsibility. One of your key responsibilities as a parent is to keep your children healthy, and away from tobacco, drugs, and other harmful addictions. But raising kids isn't easy...

When they come, the package doesn't include any user manual, and they don't have a stop button. Yes, I've looked! However, they do come with several emotional and physical needs, which parents must provide. A failure to do so can have long-term, drastic effects.

Let me ask you a question, can you guess what's the most common reason for people to quit smoking? Right, it's becoming a parent. The motivation to keep your offspring healthy is powerful enough to get rid of the biggest addiction known to mankind. But still, it can be an extremely tough row to hoe. That's why many people who just can't quit cold turkey, try other aids like nicotine gums, nicotine patches, and e-cigarettes.

Several recent studies show that using e-cigarettes, also known as vaporizers or just e-cigs, is many times safer than smoking. Unlike chewing a gum or slamming a patch on your arm, it offers pretty much the same sensation as smoking a real cigarette, it can come in handy for harm-reduction. However, those who don't smoke or underage children need to stay away from vaporizers. If you are a parent who vapes, this guide has a lot of valuable info, some interesting facts, and handy tips for you.

National Youth Tobacco Survey Shows Rise in Vaping

Smoking among teens has been a huge concern over many years. According to [federal statistics](#), approximately 90% of smokers try their first cigarette by 18. During the past few years, vaping among teens has also surfaced as a major concern.

According to National Youth Tobacco Survey in the United States, published by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) every year, vaping is becoming quickly popular among high school students, which definitely is a bad news. So, what's the good news? We'll talk about it shortly, but first let's take a quick look at some stats from the surveys published in [2013](#), [2014](#) and [2015](#).

The survey from 2014 shows that 15% male and 11.9% female students reported having used an electronic cigarette in the preceding 30 days of the date the survey was conducted. In 2015, the ratio went up to 19% and 12.8% for boys and girls respectively. If we go back into 2013, only 1.1% of students (1.4% males and 0.9% females) had tried an electronic cigarette, and it was the least used method but within just one year its popularity went through the roof and 11.9% students reported to have used it in 2014 and it became the most used method.

Several doctors think that these trends can have drastic impacts on the youth. The CDC Director Thomas Frieden termed these trends as "alarming" and "shocking". Well, it's hard to disagree with them because e-cigarettes are only for ex-smoking adults, not even for adult non-smokers, let alone kids.

According to the same survey, while the overall tobacco use among adults hasn't changed much over the years, there has been a historic drop in the percentage of high school student smokers. In 2013, 12.7% high schoolers reported to have smoked a tobacco cigarette within the past 30 days of the survey date but in 2014 we saw an all-time low ratio of 9.2%. However, the survey doesn't show any significant change in 2015 from the last year.

So, while vaping is on the rise, smoking is on the decline.

This is because of two reasons: either the kids who were previously smoking switched to vaping for harm-reduction or new smokers are preferring vaping over smoking. As a matter of fact, the health professionals recognize the harm-reduction potential of e-cigarettes and a study sponsored by the UK Government has shown that [e-cigarettes are exponentially safer than tobacco cigarettes](#). So, the claim that e-cigarettes can prove to be a “gateway” for teenagers into the obnoxious world of tobacco is dispelled by the surveys conducted by CDC.

Also, there are numerous reputable quit smoking groups, like Quit Smoking Community, for instance, that [support electronic cigarettes](#) and trying to raise awareness of their potential positive impact. **However, that doesn't mean that as a parent you don't need to be concerned because, as a lack of decades-long data, we are not yet sure how e-cigarettes will impact our and our children's bodies in the long-run. And we definitely can't afford to take any risks when it comes to our young ones.**

Why Parents Should be More Concerned

Unlike tobacco cigarettes, e-cigs or vaporizers don't have the loathsome smell, the ash or the butts. What's more, the vapor evaporates in the air more quickly than smoke. To make the matters worse, e-cigarettes come in all shapes and sizes, which can be concealable or hard to distinguish from a normal pen, a USB memory stick or any other handheld gadget. So, in case your child is vaping secretly, it can be extremely hard to catch them. This really is a predicament for parents, however, with some inside info and a little effort you can find out whether or not your kid is flirting with vaping, and can also try to keep them away from it.

Secondhand Vapor and Vaping Around Infants

A [study conducted by Spanish Council of Scientific Research](#) published in Journal of Chromatography last year showed some remarkable results. The purpose of the study was to measure levels of volatile organic compounds (VOC) – some of which can be toxic – in indoor air, normal exhaled breath, exhaled smoke of tobacco cigarette, and exhaled vapor of an e-cigarette. See the results in the table below (nd means not detected):

Interestingly, the study shows that exhaled vapor or e-cig aerosol had fewer VOCs even than normal breath, smoke had the highest. While this study proves that secondhand vapor is virtually safe, but it does contain nicotine. Also, no matter how safe it is, vapor has pretty much the same stigma attached to it as smoke and most people find it equally repellent, so be careful when vaping in public.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently [stated](#) that teenagers who see e-cig ads or have a family member who uses electronic cigarettes are much more likely to start vaping themselves.

But being a parent, you have an even higher responsibility. And if you have an infant, it's better not to vape around them at all. Since vapor contains nicotine and Propylene Glycol, which can cause throat irritation in non-smoking adults, we don't know how adversely it can affect babies. The biggest issue with the e-cigs is that many manufacturers try to conceal the ingredients of their e-juices, while some low-quality e-cig models can cause plastic or paint to get mixed with vapor. In short, while vapor might be safer than the tobacco smoke, we can't be sure if it's 100% safe for babies.

Concentrations ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) of selected VOC in air, smoke and exhaled breath^a.

Compound	No smoking		Tobacco cigarette smoking		Type 1 e-cigarette smoking		Type 2 e-cigarette smoking	
	Indoor air	Exhaled breath	Smoke	Exhaled breath	Smoke	Exhaled breath	Smoke	Exhaled breath
Pent-1-ene	0.5	0.6	700	68	nd	0.3	nd	nd
n-Pentane	nd	nd	1200	63	nd	7	nd	nd
Pent-2-ene	nd	0.5	625	52	nd	0.3	nd	nd
Isoprene	0.4	87	2700	670	nd	47	nd	45
Pent-2-ene	nd	0.3	460	32	nd	0.2	nd	nd
n-Hexane	1	nd	975	14	nd	nd	nd	0.6
Benzene	0.6	4	1100	49	0.6	0.8	nd	0.5
Isooctane	0.4	0.2	nd	nd	nd	0.2	nd	1.5
n-Heptane	0.2	0.4	890	26	nd	0.3	1	2.1
Toluene	5	11	1400	60	nd	3	4	6.4
n-Octane	nd	0.2	560	3	nd	nd	nd	nd
Ethylbenzene	0.2	0.6	660	6	1	0.2	nd	0.3
m-Xylene	0.2	0.5	980	7	nd	0.2	nd	0.2
p-Xylene	0.1	0.2	420	2	0.6	0.1	nd	0.1
o-Xylene	0.1	0.2	590	2	0.4	0.1	nd	0.1
Naphthalene	0.05	0.1	240	3	nd	nd	nd	nd
Nicotine	nd	nd	1300	7	720	4	710	1

^a All compounds were quantified with authentic standards except nicotine that was quantified with naphthalene.

7 Hidden Warning Signs That Your Kid is Vaping

Here are some subtle signals that mean that your teenager might be vaping clandestinely.

1. Mystic Aroma

E-cigarettes don't smell bad like the smoke from combusting tobacco, however, most e-liquids have flavors in them that usually smell nice like candy, mint, vanilla, fruit punch etc. If you catch a sudden whiff of any of these but none of them is around, consider this a red flag.

2. Unfamiliar handheld gadgets

E-cigarettes come in various shapes, from cig-a-likes to box mods. However, the most common ones resemble a pen and are known as vape pens. If you see such a gadget, or a pen that isn't a pen, be aware that it could be a vaporizer. The easiest way to spot an e-cig is to look for holes on each end of the device.

3. Increased thirstiness

Vapor from e-cigs is made of VG (Vegetable Glycerin), PG (Propylene Glycol), and flavors. The chemical characteristics of PG make it attract water molecules from its surroundings. When vapor enters the mouth, PG does its trick and keeps the vaper in a state of dry mouth. So, if your kid is suddenly drinking more water, you need to keep a closer eye on them.

4. Caffeine sensitivity

Vapers develop caffeine sensitivity, and in case your kid loved coffee or Red Bulls but suddenly stops chugging on them, vaping could be the cause.

5. Batteries and Chargers

Just like you have to charge your smartphone every single day, vapers need to charge their vaporizers on a regular basis. While some e-cigs can be charged with just a USB cable, most of

the powerful e-cigs like box mods support 18650 batteries. So, if you see unfamiliar batteries on the charger, take a look around and you might find a vaping device.

6. Metallic wires and cotton wicks

If you find organic cotton, empty plastic vials or thin metallic coils lying in your child's room, this is yet another red flag.

7. Discarded atomizers

The atomizers are a vital part of e-cigs as they turn e-juice into vapor. However, they are disposable and after a while usually burn out. If you come across a discarded atomizer in your kid's trash can, it's a clear indication that he/she has been vaping.

How to Take Charge of the Situation

If your worst fears come true and you find out or just suspect that your child who is under the legal smoking age is vaping, don't panic. It's time to take charge of the situation, and help your kids walk out of this addiction. Depending on your unique situation, you might have to do certain things, however, here are some general guidelines that can be helpful.

- **Keep your vaping gear out of reach**

Be a responsible parent and a responsible vaper, and remember most of the vaping gear isn't child-proof. Always keep your e-cigs and other vaping gear away from your kids as it can pose several hazards in addition to nurturing curiosity in the mind of your kid to try what you do i.e. inhaling the vapor from the e-cig. And that's something you don't want to happen. Remember, just locking away the vaporizer in a safe place isn't enough. You should make sure that kids can't get their hands on anything that's related to your hobby. For example, e-liquids may contain nicotine, which can be poisonous if ingested. Although, most e-liquid packings are child-proof, but you don't want to take any chances.

- **Deglamorize vaping**

Let's face it, modern e-cigs and vaping gear looks interesting, to say the least. Try not to vape in front of your kids, but if you must, explain that you only do it for harm-reduction from tobacco, and try to look as uncool as possible when vaping. It means no cloud chasing or vaping tricks in front of the kids, and even conceal your vaporizer if it looks too sleek and elegant.

- **Talk to your kid**

Tell your kid that you stopped smoking because of their sake, and the last thing you would want is to see them going down the same path as you did. Tell them that using e-cigarettes is simply off-limits. But when you approach them, play it casual and ask indirect questions like "what do you friends think about e-cigarettes" or "do you know any kids who vape" etc. and then notice their reaction. Keep it open-ended and don't ask yes-no questions.

Today's kids are more educated and more health savvy. If you explain to them how nicotine can lead to addiction and even health risks, they will most likely listen to you. And last but by no means the least, be the message yourself. If you don't want your kids to vape, don't vape yourself. This will give more weight to your arguments and your kids will most likely follow you.

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