

Talking with your teen about vaping

A guide for parents and carers



This guide offers practical information and advice for parents and carers of teens about vaping. It includes tips and tricks for before, during and after the conversation.

Before the conversation

Know the facts:

- Educate yourself about vaping, use online resources such as the Frank website www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes

Be patient and ready to listen:

- Prepare yourself that you may be told information that makes you feel uncomfortable. Make sure you have a plan in place to contact a friend, family member or professional after the conversation to discuss and process what was talked about.
- Remember, your goal is to have a **two-way conversation**, not to deliver a lecture.
- It is ok if the conversation takes time, you may need a break and come back to the conversation at a later time.

Set a positive example:

- If you use a tobacco product, it can be harder for your teen to understand why you may be asking them to change their behaviour.
- It's never too late to quit, you can contact Smokefreelife Berkshire for support:
Phone: **0118 4492026**
Text: **QUIT to 6677**
Visit: [Stop Smoking Berkshire](http://StopSmokingBerkshire.com) | [Smokefreelife Berkshire](http://SmokefreelifeBerkshire.com)



Legal vapes



During the conversation

Finding the right time:

- Finding the right time to have the conversation can be hard, however having a natural and neutral discussion will increase the likelihood of it being a positive experience for those involved. Starting the conversation with 'we need to talk' is likely to cause your teen anxiety and result in them coming to the discussion with a negative attitude and giving overly defensive responses to any questions asked.
- Instead use real world situations to prompt the conversation such as:
 - Seeing someone vaping when out with your teen
 - Seeing someone vaping on the TV or in an online video or reel
 - Passing or going into a shop advertising or selling vapes when out with your teen

Ask questions and listen to your teen:

- Ask what their view is on vaping? Do they have friends who vape? Why do they think their friends vape?
- Learn from your teen, but also use your knowledge to help them to understand the current research that vapes, especially those containing nicotine are not harmless.

Talk about the reasons children may vape:

- Give examples such as wanting to fit in, curiosity, stress.
- Talk through ways they could respond if they ever feel pressured to try vaping.

If your teen is vaping:

Try to understand why they are vaping by asking questions such as; 'What do you enjoy about vaping?' Or 'How does vaping make you feel?'. Understanding this may help you to understand your teens needs and lead to a discussion on alternative healthy ways those needs can be met.



“Having a natural and neutral discussion will increase the likelihood of it being a positive experience for those involved.”

Answer their questions:

Being ready to answer questions your teen has can be really helpful. Here are some examples of questions they may ask, and some hints on how to respond.

Why don't you want me to vape?

- Research shows that vapes containing nicotine are addictive.
- Your brain is still developing. This means that you may be more vulnerable to addictions. Lots of vapes contain nicotine, which can change your brain to make you crave more. Nicotine can also affect memory and concentration.
- Vapes contain chemicals that could be harmful. When people use a vape, they are breathing in tiny particles that could damage their lungs.

What's the big deal about nicotine?

- Your brain is still developing and continues to until you are 25. Nicotine is known to be harmful to brain development and is highly addictive.
- Using nicotine at your age may make it harder for you to concentrate, learn and control your impulses.
- Nicotine has been shown to train your brain to become more easily addicted to other drugs.

Aren't vapes safer than cigarettes?

- Because your brain is still developing scientific studies show it's harmful for you to use any product containing nicotine.
- Whether you get nicotine from a vape or cigarette it is still nicotine and therefore still not safe.
- Vapes contain a lithium ion battery, there have been instances where the vape battery has caught fire or exploded and hurt people.

You used to smoke/ vape, so why shouldn't I?

- This comes down to our age. As my brain is no longer developing in the same way yours is, the impact nicotine has on my brain is different.
- Stopping is really hard. If I could go back and make the choice again, I would never have become a smoker/ vaper.



Answer their questions:

I thought vapes didn't have nicotine – just water and flavouring?

- Most vapes whether they are refillable, or disposable contain nicotine, even in small amounts.

I've tried vaping, it was no big deal.

- Thank you for being honest and telling me. What made you want to try vaping?
- I appreciate your honesty. How did it make you feel?
- It's great that you've told me this. Would you do it again?
- Thank you for letting me know. Do you want to speak to someone to get some support with this.

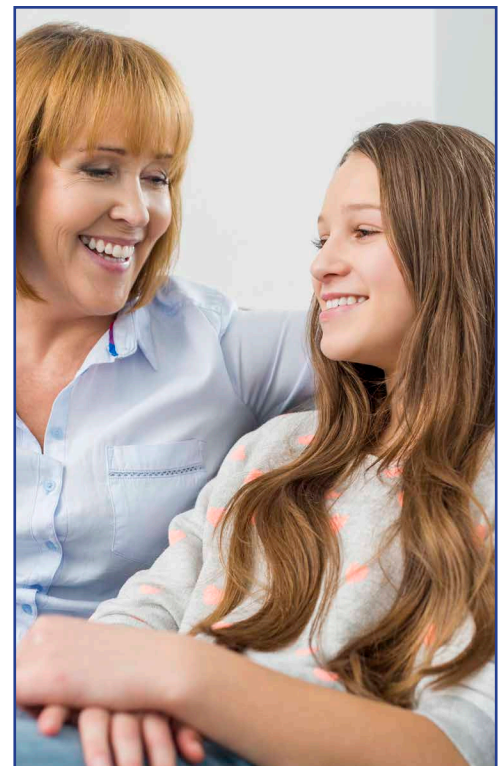
How can I help my teen say no if someone offers them a vape?

For many teens saying yes to their peers is easier than saying no and potentially exposing themselves to judgement and negativity. Helping your teen to come up with a plan to deal with peer pressure will prepare them should a situation arise.

Together you can come up with ways to turn down the offer of a vape, that will help your teen to gain the confidence to say no. Here are some suggestions:

- I'm concerned about asthma
- I'm worried it will affect my sport
- I want to spend my money on something else
- I'm good thanks, I'm currently trying to keep fit and healthy
- I've tried it before and didn't like it
- That's fine if you want to, but I don't thanks
- No thanks, it's not for me
- I don't want to put those chemicals into my body

Peer pressure often happens during social times. Perhaps suggest they try to avoid the situation by having an excuse to leave, or they could suggest another activity instead, like playing a video game, going for a walk, or getting something to eat or drink. Once comfortable, your teen can state their reason for not vaping, like talking about the chemicals or nicotine addiction.



After the conversation

- Keep the conversation going - one of the biggest things you can do now is to make sure this isn't the last conversation you have with your teen about vaping, or any other substances.
- There are lots of resources out there about vaping so try to encourage them to go to reputable and reliable sources.

Other considerations

- It's illegal for under 18's to buy any vaping products, including the liquid.
- Refillable vapes are being used to smoke substances such as THC and Spice. There have been a growing number of instances where young people have been hospitalised owing to the serious side effects these substances can cause.
- In the UK, legal disposable vapes can contain a maximum of 600 puffs and have a maximum nicotine strength of 2%.

Helpful resources

Smoke Free Teen

Advice on quitting vaping for children. [Quit Vaping | Smokefree Teen](#)

Talk to Frank

Information about vapes.

- Vapes: [Vapes | FRANK \(talktofrank.com\)](#)
- Cannabisvapes: ['Cannabis' vapes - do you know what you're vaping? | FRANK \(talktofrank.com\)](#)



Illegal vapes