



Shropshire
Council

Youth Vaping in Shropshire

Gordon Kochane, Public Health Consultant
January 2024



Agenda

- Policy Context – smoking and vaping
- What is vaping
- Young people prevalence – what we know
- Risks associated with youth vaping
- Tackling underage vaping in Shropshire
- Further contacts for support and information

policy context



- ***The Smokefree 2030 ambition for England***, green paper 2019
- ***The Khan Review: Making smoking obsolete***, published June 2022
- ***DHSC Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*** policy paper, October 2023

- proposals to reduce youth vaping – restricting vape flavours, regulating vape packaging and point of sale displays, restricting sale of disposable vapes

- annual funding to support LA-led stop smoking services and roll out of national Swap to Stop scheme

- ***DHSC public consultation on policy proposals***, Oct-Dec 2023

The Khan Review: Independent review into smokefree 2030 policies

Four critical recommendations are boxed in red. These are 'must do's for the government to achieve a smokefree England by 2030', around which all other interventions are based.

Part 1: Invest Now

REC 1: Urgently invest £125m per year in interventions to reach smokefree 2030.

Option 1: Additional funding from within government
Option 2: A 'polluter pays' industry levy
Option 3: A corporation tax surcharge

Part 2: Stop the Start

REC 2: Raise age of sale of tobacco by one year, every year.

REC 3: Substantially raise the cost of tobacco duties (more than 30%) across all tobacco products, immediately. Abolish all duty free entry of tobacco products at our borders.

REC 4: Introduce a tobacco licence for retailers to sell where tobacco is available.

REC 5: Enhance local illicit tobacco enforcement by dedicating an additional funding of £15 million per year to local trading standards.

REC 6: Reduce the appeal of smoking by radically rethinking how cigarette sticks and packets look, closing regulatory gaps and tackling portrayals of smoking in the media.

REC 7: Increase smokefree places to de-normalise smoking and protect young people from second-hand smoke.

Part 3: Quit for Good

REC 8: Offer vaping as a substitute for smoking, alongside accurate information on the benefits of quitting, including to healthcare professionals.

REC 9: Invest an additional £70 million per year into 'stop smoking services', ringfenced for this purpose.

REC 10: Invest £15 million per year in a well-designed national mass media campaign, supported by targeted regional media.

Part 4: System Change

REC 11: The NHS needs to prioritise prevention, with further action to stop people smoking, providing support and treatment across all its services, including primary care.

REC 12: Invest £15m per year to support pregnant women to quit smoking in all parts of the country.

REC 13: Tackle the issue of smoking and mental health.

REC 14: Invest £8m to ensure regional and local prioritisation of stop smoking interventions through CCL leadership.

REC 15: Invest £2 million per year in new research and data, including investing £2 million in an innovation fund.

DHSC consultation – proposals

Restrict vape flavours most frequently used vape flavour for children is fruit flavour, 60% current youth vapers

Regulating point of sale displays - currently vapes can be displayed and often close to sweets and confectionary

Preventing industry from giving out free samples of vapes to children - closing loophole in laws that allow retailers to give free samples of vapes and other nicotine containing products to under 18s

Restricting sale of disposable vape products with non-recyclable components (environmental threat)

Regulating vape packaging and product presentation - research has shown standardised packaging with reduced brand imagery can decrease the appeal of vape products amongst young people

Reviewing non-nicotine containing vapes - not subject to same product standards and age restrictions as nicotine containing vapes, with intention to prohibit sale of non-nicotine containing vapes to under 18s

Vaping as a stop smoking aid

- tobacco smoking most important cause of preventable illness and death, and health inequalities in England - **kills up to 2 out of 3 long term users**
- vapes are the most popular smoking cessation tool for tobacco smokers in England
 - provide significantly lower exposure to harmful substances linked to cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular conditions than smoking
 - whilst not risk-free, research shows in short- and medium-term vaping carries small fraction of risk of tobacco smoking

Takeaway message –



vaping is an effective smoking quit tool ~ not recommended for children & young people ~ if you don't smoke, don't vape!





use of a battery-powered device (vape) that heats a solution, usually but not always containing nicotine

heating produces a vapour which user inhales

vapes don't contain tobacco and don't involve burning – so don't produce tar or carbon monoxide (2 of most harmful elements of tobacco smoking)

a relatively new product so long-term impacts still unknown

key messages:

-  Vaping is not for children
-  Vaping is not for people who have never smoked
-  Vaping is less harmful than smoking, but not risk-free
-  Vaping is a good tool to help smokers quit smoking

what is
vaping?

vaping in young people (underage vaping)

! vapes are **not** intended for children and young people however vape use among CYP has increased

! alarming increase in CYP vaping nationally

20.5% 11-17-year-olds have tried vapes, almost half of these have never smoked tobacco cigarettes

- ! insights & engagement from healthcare professionals working with CYP in Shropshire reflect similar position
- familiar with vaping and disposable vaping brands
 - only minority know vaping is intended to help adults quit smoking

vaping in young people

some local insights

YP familiar with
vape brands
particularly
disposable vapes

Sharing
vapes

their parents are
vaping to stop
smoking

Using vapes to
manage stress

Perceive vaping as
cool/ fashionable
thing to do, taste
nice

Think it's intended for
them due to bright
colours, flavours

Health impact on Young People

- Currently no specific research on impact for CYP
- Best available evidence focus on adults: reduced harm in short and medium term compared to tobacco smoking
- Relatively little is known about the potential effects of chronic vaping on respiratory system in the longer term
- True impact of vaping on respiratory health will manifest over coming decades
- Recommend abstain from consumption of inhaled nicotine and other products

Legal Implications

- **It is illegal to sell a nicotine inhaling product to anyone under 18**
- The owner of the business or member of staff who made the sale can be held responsible
- Shops are the main source of purchases (newsagents and supermarkets) but also online purchases
- **It is illegal for an adult to buy or attempt to buy a nicotine vape for someone under 18**
- Concern some parents purchase as a reward despite this and health risk issues
- Currently no age restriction controls in place for the sale of vapes that do not contain nicotine
- It is not illegal currently for minors to smoke or vape

Trading Standards Role

- **Trading Standards undertake covert enforcement visits to a business following concerns or complaints**
- Can only act on intelligence
- Important to ask young people where they got their vape (or cigarette)
- Currently a legal loophole which allows free samples to be given away to any age – this can be exploited by businesses but not understood to be widely happening across Shropshire

Exploitation Concerns

- **Vapes can be one of the tools used by criminals to lure young people into criminal activity**
- Selling vapes can create opportunity for young people to make money, especially in schools where they can be resold – this is sometimes on behalf of adults or other peers enabling access into schools and a wider market
- Young people may struggle to break away from this lucrative practice – leaves them vulnerable to other forms of exploitation
- Organised gangs, drug dealers & exploited young people involved in County Lines have used vapes as a method to entice new members
- Signs of exploitation may include – receiving gifts/rewards (drugs, alcohol, food, clothing), increased secretiveness (such as phone use), use of drugs or alcohol without means to afford, a decline in mental health or possession of a weapon

Tackling underage vaping in Shropshire

- **local multi-agency underage vaping Task & finish Group established**
- ❑ understand prevalence/pattern of vaping among young people to inform communication/health promotion activities
- ❑ communicate with young people & those working with them about vaping – *recognises often confusing/mixed messaging around vaping, contrasting benefits as stop smoking aid*

tackling underage vaping in Shropshire

✓ **Shropshire Position statement** aimed at education, professionals and others working with CYP – provides summary of the facts, key messages, helpful contacts

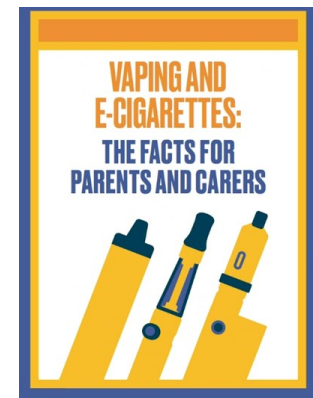
✓ **new youth vaping webpage**

highlighting risks of harm to health, legality, exploitation

Includes helpful **toolkit of resources** to promote conversations with young people and aid better understanding of the facts

[Youth vaping | Shropshire Council](#)

✓ vaping facts **leaflet for parents/carers**



tackling underage vaping in Shropshire

- ✓ **connection with school nursing team**
- ✓ **coordinated response** to DHSC open consultation
- ✓ **Trading Standards monitoring and enforcement** in respect of fake, unsafe, non-compliant vaping products and underage sales/proxy purchases
- ✓ **currently** exploring options for support for young people addicted to nicotine-containing vapes
- ✓ collating **local intelligence on attitudes and beliefs towards vaping** ~ including through local health professionals, SYA, Public Health Nursing Service, new Safer Spaces programme

Contact	Detail
Report of illegal sale of vaping products to those aged under 18 years	Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Portal Reporting to Trading Standards - Citizens Advice
Concerns about potential exploitation and grooming of young people	<p>Concern about a child or young person Call 0345 678 9021 or 0345 678 9040 if out of office hours Children's social care and health Shropshire Council</p> <p>Concern about potential exploitation in your community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone is at risk or immediate harm – Call 999 • Share non-urgent information – Call 101 or visit “Tell Us About” section at www.westmercia.police.uk • Report anonymously – Call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org
Information and resources about youth vaping	Healthy Shropshire Stopping Smoking and Youth Vaping webpage Youth vaping Shropshire Council

Thank you for listening.

we welcome your feedback, please contact

gordon.kochane@shropshire.gov.uk

cathy.e.levy@shropshire.gov.uk