



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
PRINCE JONAH KUHIO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2759 SOUTH KING STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

April 2024

Dear Kuhio Ohana,

Aloha, I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of growing concern within our school community.

Recently, we have observed an increase in incidents involving students bringing vaping devices or e-cigarettes onto school premises. As a school committed to the well-being and safety of our students, this is an issue that requires our collective attention and action.

Vaping poses serious health risks, especially for young children whose bodies are still developing. The chemicals found in vaping products can harm their lungs, brain development, and overall health. It is crucial for us, as educators and parents, to work together to address this issue and protect the health and safety of our children.

We are taking proactive measures within the school to educate students about the dangers of vaping and to reinforce positive decision-making skills. Our teachers are incorporating age-appropriate lessons on health education, and we are providing resources and support to help students make informed choices.

However, we believe that addressing this issue effectively requires partnership and open communication between school and home. As parents, you play a crucial role in guiding and supporting your child's behavior outside of school hours.

We encourage you to have open and honest conversations with your child about the risks associated with vaping. Talk to them about making healthy choices and the importance of saying no to peer pressure. Additionally, please be vigilant and aware of any signs or behaviors that may indicate your child's involvement with vaping. We have included some information on the back of this letter to help the conversation with your child about vaping. Additional resources are available through the American Lung Association at <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking>.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Together, we can work towards creating a safe and supportive environment for all our students.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn M. Kobayashi".

Lynn M. Kobayashi
Principal
Prince Jonah Kuhio Elementary School



Talking to Kids About Vaping

Over 3.5 million kids used e-cigarettes in 2020, including 1 in 20 middle school students. E-cigarettes, also known as e-cigs or vapes, can have a profound impact on your child's health. If you'd like to talk to your kids about vaping but are unsure how, here are some ways to help start a discussion.

Open the conversation with a question to gauge how much your child knows:

- » My friend was telling me that her kid is getting awful peer pressure at school to vape. Have you ever felt pressured to vape?
- » My friend told me she found a vaping device, and it made me wonder: Do you know what an e-cigarette looks like?

If they tell you that they're being pressured to vape, you can say:

- » It helps if you're not alone. So if you can find someone else in your group to take the stand with you, that would help.
- » It's also okay to just get yourself out of there if you're feeling pressured. Make up a reason you have to leave the conversation. And I will always be your excuse! Just text me the letter "X," and then I can text that I need you to come home. It gives you an easy way to say, "Hey, gotta go. My parents just asked me to come home."

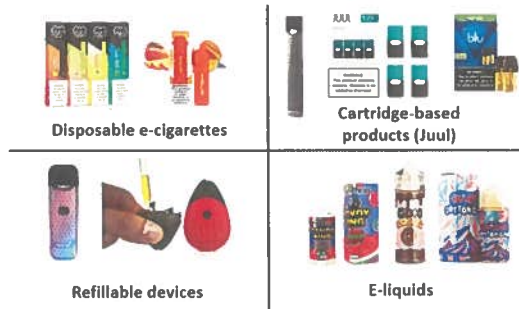
If they say that they think vaping isn't bad for you, challenge them with a few facts:

- » This isn't just harmless water vapor. It's an aerosol of nicotine, propylene glycol, solvents, chemical flavorings, and more. They're not well-regulated, so we actually don't even know everything that's in them.
- » E-cigarettes contain nicotine just like regular cigarettes, which is why they're highly addictive.

- » One pod often contains as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes—or more.
- » Nicotine harms your brain. It can affect your memory and concentration. And it trains your brain to be more easily addicted to other drugs.

If they point out that e-cigarettes seem harmless because they come in candy flavors, you can say:

- » That's because the tobacco/e-cigarette companies are using flavors that appeal to kids so they'll try them and get addicted.
- » Tobacco companies have been luring kids with all kinds of flavored products for decades. Flavors just make it easier to start.



If they say, "You smoke / smoked, why shouldn't I?" you can say:

- » Hey, I'm not perfect, and I've made plenty of mistakes that I'm hoping you won't make.
- » Quitting was really hard, and I don't want you to go through that. And I'm afraid of what kind of damage I've done to my body.

Content courtesy of The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.
Learn more at www.tobaccofreekids.org.

Want more information on e-cigarettes?

Visit www.fightflavoredcigs.org for more resources for parents and information on the youth e-cigarette epidemic. Reach out to partnerships@tfk.org with any questions.

