

Alaska Tobacco Facts: E-cigarette use, suspension, and academic outcomes among Alaska high school students



1800+ DAYS LOST

781 Alaska students were suspended for tobacco use and lost more than 1800 days of school in 2018-2019

The number of Alaska high school students who smoke combustible cigarettes has decreased over time and many lives have been saved, but there is still work to do.

1 in 4
Alaska High School Kids Vape

Data Source: Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2019

E-cigarette use, also called vaping, is increasing among high school students.¹ In Alaska, 1 out of 4 teens used e-cigarettes during the past 30 days.² Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is addicting and harms brain development.³ E-cigarette vapor also contains cancer-causing chemicals and heavy metals.³

Improving School Policies for Tobacco and E-cigarette Use

Schools typically use in- and out-of-school suspension penalties to help maintain safety standards. In Alaska, there were 781 total school suspensions for tobacco product use, including e-cigarettes, in 2018-2019.⁴

Evidence suggests schools that use harsher punishments may reduce graduation rates for all students in their schools. Research shows there are no short- or long-term academic benefits for the entire student body by removing disruptive students, including those who were suspended for tobacco or e-cigarette use.⁶

Types of e-cigarette devices

Disposable e-cigarettes	Rechargeable e-cigarettes	Medium-size tank devices	Large-size tank devices	E-cigar	E-pipe
-------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	---------	--------

Image from CDC: Electronic Cigarettes, What's the Bottom Line?

The potential negative impacts of suspension on students

Increased chance of:

- ◉ early tobacco and other substance use,
- ◉ dropping out of school,
- ◉ disruptive behavior, like lying and theft,
- ◉ poor academic achievement, and
- ◉ arrest and incarceration^{7,8,9}

Students at schools with higher suspension rates:



◉ are less likely to attend four-year colleges

◉ are more likely to be arrested as adults⁹



What Can Schools Do?

Consider alternatives to suspension programs for tobacco.

Alternative programs, like the ones listed under resources (on the back), may encourage youth to continue learning in school while quitting tobacco and e-cigarette products.¹⁰

Use proven strategies.

Principals should consider alternative strategies proven to reduce tobacco and e-cigarette use in schools, (on the back).

Engage parents and the community.

Engage parents, school staff and students in discussions about safe and supportive discipline practices.

Invest in support staff.

Counselors, social workers, and mental health resources provided in school can enhance students' emotional well-being and improve overall academic performance.^{11,12,13}

Know the data.

- ◉ Collect school discipline data.
- ◉ Use [Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) and the [Alaska School Health Profiles Trend Reports](#).
- ◉ Monitor schools and districts that are implementing alternative practices to track effects on high school students.

Resources

School administration, teachers, and staff:

Training Resources

- **E-Cigarette Use Among Alaska Teens.** This course provides accurate messages about the health harms associated with youth use of e-cigarettes and shows how to prevent e-cigarette use during school or on school grounds. To enroll, sign up for a free e-Learning account, or log in to your account on the [Alaska Department of Education and Early Development website](#).
- **Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska.** This framework was developed for schools in Alaska to integrate trauma-informed practices into schools to support students. This resource can be used by school and community teams to improve places of learning.
- **Not Buying It.** This Alaska public education campaign shares messages about the real consequences of tobacco and e-cigarette products, videos, resources, and tips and strategies to quit. This campaign is designed for Alaska teens but includes resources for educators and community partners.

Alternatives-to-Suspension Programs for Schools

- **INDEPTH.** The American Lung Association's Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health (INDEPTH) is an alternative for students who face suspension for violation of school tobacco, vaping, or nicotine use policies. Facilitator training is provided at no cost.
- **Healthy Futures.** Stanford Medicine's Tobacco Prevention toolkit offers 1-, 2-, and 4-hour Healthy Futures curriculum for free as an alternative model.

To share with parents:

- **The Live Vape Free program** This online resource is for parents and other adults concerned about teen use of e-cigarettes. Live Vape Free provides personalized support, tips, and resources to start conversations with teens about vaping.

To share with students:

- **Live Vape Free Teen Texting Program** (For teens ages 13–17). **Text VAPEFREE to 873373** to join an interactive texting program that helps teens learn about vaping and get support to quit. The texts include facts, inspiration, videos, quizzes, activities, and texting with a quit coach.
- **Not Buying It.** Students can visit this teen focused campaign for more resources.



Alaska Tobacco Facts: E-cigarette use, suspension, and academic outcomes among Alaska high school students

AK LIVE VAPE FREE
text VAPEFREE to 873373

References

- ¹ Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Alaska Tobacco Facts - 2019 Update. https://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Tobacco/PDF/2019_AKTobaccoFacts.pdf. July 27 2021.
- ² Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Teen Vaping Infographic. https://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/chronic/Documents/yrbs/2019YRBS_Highlights.pdf. July 27 2021.
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Smoking & Tobacco Use. Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults. Published online July 7 2021. https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html. Accessed July 28 2021.
- ⁴ Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Patrick Sidmore. Presentation on Tobacco Related Suspension and Expulsion Data, Youth Risk Behavior Survey and School Health Profiles. Presented January 4 2021.
- ⁵ Boudreau, E. School Discipline Linked to Later Consequences. Harvard Graduate School of Education, Research Stories. Published online September 16, 2019. <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/19/09/school-discipline-linked-later-consequences>. Accessed July 28 2021.
- ⁶ Lamont, J.H. Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion. Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Council On School Health. Published March 2013. (3) e1000-e1007; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2012-3932>.
- ⁷ Hemphill SA, Heerde JA, Herrenkohl TI, Toumbourou JW, Catalano RF. The impact of school suspension on student tobacco use: A longitudinal study in Victoria, Australia and Washington State, United States. Health education & behavior: the official publication of the Society for Public Health Education. 2012;39(1):45. doi:10.1177/1090198111406724.
- ⁸ Noltemeyer AL, Ward RM, Mcloughlin C. Relationship Between School Suspension and Student Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis. Vanderwood M, ed. School Psychology Review. 2015;44(2):224-240. doi:10.17105/spr-14-0008.1. https://edsources.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Noltemeyer_Ward_2015_Meta-Analysis.pdf. Accessed July 27 2021.
- ⁹ Bacher-Hicks A, Billings SB, Deming DJ. The School to Prison Pipeline: Long-Run Impacts of School Suspensions on Adult Crime. National Bureau of Economic Research; 2019. doi:10.3386/w26257. https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26257/w26257.pdf. Accessed July 27 2021.
- ¹⁰ American Lung Association. INDEPTH Pilot Evaluation Overview. Published online. <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/f8816bd1-c5cc-46e9-800c-fd02ab9603a3/ala-indepth-pilot-evaluation-overview.pdf>. Accessed July 27 2021.
- ¹¹ Huffman A.M. Students at Risk Due to a Lack of Family Cohesiveness: A Rising Need for Social Workers in Schools. The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas. Volume 86, 2013- Issue 1. Published online November 26, 2912. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00098655.2012.731022>. Accessed July 27 2021.
- ¹² Collins T.P. Addressing Mental Health Needs in Our Schools: Supporting the Role of School Counselors. The Professional Counselor, Volume 4, Issue 5, pages 413-416. Published 2014. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1063214.pdf>. Accessed July 27 2021.
- ¹³ Atkins, M.S., Hoagwood, K.E., Kutash, K. et al. Toward the Integration of Education and Mental Health in Schools. Adm Policy Ment Health 37, 40–47. Published March 23, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-010-0299-7>. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10488-010-0299-7#citeas>. Accessed July 27 2021.

Publication date: November 2021