



Sacred Heart College Lower Hutt

Smoking/ Vaping - Education for Whānau

Like many schools, we are very concerned about incidents involving student vaping at school. The Wellington Secondary Schools Principals Association have sent a letter to the Government about our increasing concerns of vaping in all our schools.

I hope the information discussed here helps give you the resources you need if you feel your child is involved in this kind of behaviour, as well as alert you to possible repercussions if your child engages in vaping on school property. We take this issue very seriously due to the negative health effects vaping can have on our students and often find that our parents are not aware of the risks around vaping.

Vaping is the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vaporiser or e-cigarette. The vapour can contain nicotine and other substances which is concerning. The liquids that are vapourised come in many different flavours and might even smell fruity. For example, many of the flavours of these liquid concentrates, or 'vape juices', are sweet and even have names such as, marshmallow, bubble-gum, and lemonade. They are often marketed and packaged to look like sweets.

Vaporisers/e-cigarettes come in all different shapes and sizes. Some common styles we see look like a thick pen, a stylus for an iPad, a flash drive, or a small flask with a round chimney coming off the top. The devices are very small and can easily be hidden on a person or blend in with normal backpack items. Stores cannot sell vaping items to people under the age of 18. However, students report that they purchase the devices online or buy from older siblings, friends, or unfortunately even parents.

When students vape in school it can be due to an addiction to nicotine they have developed, a peer pressure issue, or they are simply curious and want to try it out. Additionally, vaping on school grounds negatively impacts students and staff who do not want to be exposed to or breathe in vapour.

The Ministry of Health reports that nicotine is addictive and can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25 on average. We know that using nicotine may make it harder for school related tasks such as learning and concentration. Students may not be aware of the harmful effects of vaping.

Vaping is prohibited at school, and students who are caught are dealt with through our discipline system, which is firstly designed to educate about the harm vaping causes, and which could eventually lead to being stood down or suspended from school if it continues. Our goal is to partner with parents to help support our students in making positive decisions for themselves and their future. If your child has been caught vaping you will be contacted by the school. We encourage you to have a conversation with your children about this topic to ensure they make positive choices.

Resources

- Relevant and up-to-date information [Vaping Facts website \(link is external\)](#)
- Services parents can contact to find support for their child who want to stop vaping. Find your [local stop smoking service\(link is external\)](#) or contact [Quitline\(link is external\)](#).
- Talking to your child about vaping. The [How to talk to your teen](#) page has some useful tips about finding the right moment and suggestions about what to ask and how to respond.

NO SMOKING



**THIS IS A
SMOKE AND
VAPE FREE
SCHOOL**