

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, State Tobacco Education Prevention Program (STEPP) has recently discovered that a retired teacher, high school principal and superintendent now working with the manufacturer of JUUL products has contacted schools in Colorado and other states. JUUL products are a brand of electronic smoking devices. He is promoting a prevention program designed by the e-cigarette manufacturer.

JUULs are relatively new to the e-cigarette market and are of particular concern with regards to youth use due to their easy-to-conceal design. [JUUL](#) closely resembles a USB drive and emit little to no detectable vapor or odor. They are now the top-selling e-cigarette company in the country.



One pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes, with many appealing flavors.



Menthol Fruit Creme Classic
 Medley Brulee

Because these devices contain nicotine, they are covered by the definition of “tobacco products” under Colorado’s Tobacco-free Schools law, which prohibits their use on school property by students, staff, faculty and visitors. *Section 25-14-103.5(2)(c), C.R.S.*

JUUL’s website touts their products as less harmful than combustible cigarettes, but they still deliver a strong dose of nicotine to the user. The representative has said “JUUL is absolutely committed to limiting their product to convert adults who smoke regular cigarettes to something less harmful.” The [Juul Nation Instagram page](#) shows how appealing their marketing could be to youth.

Nicotine is the addictive chemical found in combustible cigarettes and numerous studies have documented the harmful effects that nicotine has on the developing teen brain.¹ Research has

¹ England, L. et al. *Nicotine and the Developing Human: A Neglected Element of the E-cigarette Debate.* *Am J Prev Med.* 2015 Mar 7.

shown that teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to start smoking combustible cigarettes, even if they have not previously smoked². Vaping among youth in Colorado is a public health concern. According to the most recent Health Kids Colorado Survey, 46% of middle and high school students have used an e-smoking device at least once and 26% are current users.³

The 2016 E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report to the Surgeon General states in part "...many of the marketing techniques used by e-cigarette companies are similar to those used by the tobacco industry for conventional cigarettes..." and the report quotes National Institute on Drug Abuse (2014) and says "Acceptance of tobacco industry funds is viewed by many as contributing directly or indirectly to the industries interests, and thus harmful to public health."⁴

Some points to remember about e-cigarettes and vaping:

- According to the National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine recently published report on the [Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes](#), there is substantial evidence that e-cigarette use increases risk of ever using combustible tobacco cigarettes among youth and young adults.
- E-cigarette use among youth and young adults is an emerging public health threat, and are now the most commonly used tobacco product among U.S. youth.
- E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called "e-cigs," "e-hookahs," "mods," "vape pens," "vapes," "tank systems," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems."
- E-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products—flavorings, and other chemicals that help to make the aerosol. Users inhale this aerosol into their lungs.
- Second hand e-cigarette aerosol that is exhaled into the air by users is not harmless. It can contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals.
- Vaping devices can be used to deliver marijuana and other drugs.
- While e-cigarettes have the potential to benefit some people and harm others, scientists still have a lot to learn about whether e-cigarettes are effective for quitting smoking.
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, a group of health experts that makes recommendations about preventive health care, concluded that the evidence is insufficient to recommend e-cigarettes for smoking cessation in adults, including pregnant women.

² Bunnell, R. et.al. *Intentions to Smoke Cigarettes Among Never-Smoking US Middle and High School Electronic Cigarette Users: National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2011–2013, Nicotine & Tobacco Research, Volume 17, Issue 2, 1 February 2015, Pages 228–235*

³ *Health Kids Colorado Survey, 2015*

⁴ *U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. 2016*

STEPP considers JUUL and similar electronic smoking device companies to be part of the tobacco industry, which has a long history of sponsoring youth prevention programming that ultimately undermines evidence-based tobacco control efforts.⁵⁵ Importantly, these programs have not been evaluated by any credible third party for effectiveness in youth tobacco prevention. The U.S. Surgeon General has previously stated that while tobacco industry sponsored anti-smoking programs may improve the public's perception of the tobacco industry, they have failed to reduce young people's tobacco use.⁶

If JUUL approaches your school/district or offers funding to support the implementation of this program, our office strongly recommends that schools/districts reject these offers and encourages schools/districts to instead utilize one or more of the free resources below:

- A recently developed prevention module on JUULs from Stanford University. This module can be accessed via Stanford Medicine's Tobacco Prevention Toolkit Web page at: <http://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/E-Cigs/ECigUnit6.html>.
- Stanford University has also created this informative brochure: https://office365stanford-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/rceb3_stanford_edu/EaOQeNHvKp1GkTXekf16DZQBC-5bdf6BoUtsQyt2tLcu7Q. that provides an excellent overview of this module.
- CATCH My Breath Youth E-Cigarette Prevention Program (<https://catchinfo.org/modules/e-cigarettes/>)
- The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids has an informative document [about the JUULs product](#).
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids' [Taking Down Tobacco](#) skill building for media and policy work.
- STEPP youth cessation and prevention programs [Second Chance](#) and [NOT](#).
- STEPP is creating an e-cigarette and e-vaping education toolkit directed at parents and askable adults, which will be available beginning 1 May, 2018.

If you would like additional resources on tobacco prevention and maintaining a tobacco-free environment, please contact the tobacco control program at your local health department and/or American Lung Association at lung.org and RMC Health at: info@rmc.org

⁵ Landman, A., Ling, P., Glantz, S.. *Tobacco Industry Youth Smoking Prevention Programs: Protecting the Industry and Hurting Tobacco Control*. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2002 June; 92(6): 917–930.

⁶ U.S Department of Health and Human Services, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*. 2012