

Researched Persuasive Writing and Speaking

Vaping: The Tempting Toxin

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“I’m 18 years old. My lungs are like a 70 years old’s,” croaks a young man, one of the 1300 victims of lung injury cases associated with vaping in the United States. These cases occurred across 49 of the 50 states in the U.S., and 26 of the cases resulted in death (Johnson, 2017). Vaping, the act of inhaling and exhaling an e-cigarette, has become increasingly popular during recent years, yet there remains widespread ignorance about its dangers. This comes as a result of tempting flavors, loose legal regulations surrounding vaping laws, and myths of that vaping is a safe alternative to cigarettes. Stricter regulations on e-cigarette purchase such as on and offline ID checks and informative lessons in schools should be enforced to educate students about the dangers of vaping and to prevent minors from purchasing vapes.

Even if vaping may be comparably more benign than cigarettes, one can never consider vaping as “safe.” Vaping exposes the lungs to a variety of chemicals, including nicotine, ultrafine particles, heavy metals, and volatile organic compounds, which are linked to heart and respiratory diseases. Nicotine, a chemical also present in cigarettes, is especially addictive for minors because it affects their frontal cortex. The frontal cortex, the part of brain responsible for decision making, is not fully developed until age 25 (“Knowing the Risks,” n.d.). In addition, vaping is responsible for “an outbreak of a severe lung disease associated with e-cigarettes and other vaping products such as popcorn lung and lipoid pneumonia” in September, 2019 (Vandergriendt, 2019). These respiratory illness cases are evidence to the hazardous consequences of vaping.

Teen vaping has become a multibillion-dollar company, and these companies target teenagers by creating appealing flavors. E-cigarette companies introduce flavors like Gummy Bear, Candy Apple, and Cotton Candy to tempt young people to vape. A

study that included middle and high school students found that 43 percent of young people who have ever used e-cigarettes tried them because of appealing flavors (Alcaraz, 2018). Schools should prevent students from falling victims to these profit-seeking companies by educating them on identifying untrustworthy advertisements.

Loose regulations are not effective in stopping minors from purchasing e-cigarettes. On January 2018, U.S. federal vaping laws for minors forbid anyone younger than 18 years of age from purchasing and using any vaping device or product” (Durand, 2018). Despite these regulations, minors are able to find loop holes to purchase e-cigarettes with no penalties: “between 2017 and 2018, with more than 20.8% of high school students reporting recent use” (Hull, 2020). Even after laws have prohibited minors to vape, the numbers are still increasing. Furthermore, e-cigarettes can be ordered online by anyone with little to no regulation. Making identity checks compulsory for both offline and online purchase of vapes is a possible solution.

E-cigarette companies’ commercial success in targeting both adults and teenagers can be attributed to their sly manipulation of media, temptation, and ineffective laws. Many of the so-called “positives” of vaping overshadow the destruction it brings—the inhalation of toxic chemicals, the addiction, and the cascades of diseases that may arise. Laws that simply forbid minors purchasing e-cigarettes are far from enough to be successful. For the greater good of all citizens, ID check should be mandatory for all purchase of e-cigarettes, and schools should educate students on this topic. Stay safe by avoiding vapes—the tempting toxin.

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