



North Shore Schools

Discovering Your Dreams

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By now we're sure that you've seen the recent rash of media stories about the dangers of vaping, particularly as it has impacted our country's youth. As of September 12, a sixth person in the United States has died from lung disease related to vaping in the US. As of Friday, there have been more than 450 possible cases of lung illness associated with using e-cigarettes reported to the CDC across 33 states. The early symptoms include fatigue, nausea, vomiting, coughing and fever, escalating to shortness of breath, which can become so extreme it can prompt an emergency room visit or require hospitalization.

The recent rise of acute lung illnesses linked to vaping has deepened concerns about the safety of the devices. Major government and health agencies are coming out with strong warnings and potential action. The CDC says e-cigarettes should never be used by youth, young adults, pregnant women or adults who do not currently use tobacco products. Tuesday, the American Lung Association warned that "e-cigarettes are not safe" and can cause irreversible lung damage and disease.

North Shore School District has been partnering with North Shore Coalition Against Substance Abuse (NS-CASA) to ensure that our students are getting high quality prevention education on vaping. These have included:

- In May 2019, a representative from the National Guard specializing in substance use educated all 7th and 8th graders about vaping risks.
- In May, 2019, all 5th and 6th grade students were given vaping education in assemblies led by Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD).
- NS-CASA has arranged for all High School Students to attend a talk entitled "Clearing the Air" that will specifically debunk myths surrounding both vaping and marijuana use during Red Ribbon Week in October.
- NS-CASA and the North Shore Schools have also brought vaping education directly to parents through "Hidden in Plain Sight" in December 2018 and "Parent University" at the Middle School in February 2019.

NS-CASA will be holding its first CASA Coffee on September 27th at 9:00 am on the topic of Vaping: Nicotine and Marijuana. Interested parents should RSVP to the event at www.nscasa.org. Those interested in receiving the Quarterly CASA newsletter should also sign up on the website.

Over the course of the past several years, we can confirm a dramatic increase in students who vape. In large part, this is likely attributable to the low perceptions of risk associated with vaping versus smoking. We are now seeing the evidence that nothing could be further from the truth. The North Shore Schools

have been taking a more aggressive approach to students who are found to be vaping. We believe that education around the real health risks surrounding vaping will change long-term behaviors and our partnership with NS-CASA is vital to those efforts. This past summer, the Board of Education revised Policy 5440, which is the policy that governs the District's positions and practices regarding Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco, to include vaping. We are now working on the regulations to support the policy, but vaping now carries similar penalties as the use of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco in school.

Because early education and awareness regarding the risk factors associated with vaping are likely to yield the strongest result, the District is proud to announce the appointment of both an elementary counselor and health and wellness teacher to enhance our instructional efforts with students. Over the past summer, major K-12 curricular enhancements have been made to ensure that wellness, mindfulness, and the arming of students with strong protective factors under the direction of our new Director of K-12 Counseling. While much work remains, we are excited about the direction of the work and will be monitoring the results of our efforts closely. We are also looking forward to administering the Bach Harrison Survey in the fall again to benchmark student use and perceptions of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping.

As parents and educators, we ask that you educate yourselves on how to identify vape and e-cigarette paraphernalia. Please refer to the attached pamphlet on Vaping produced by The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids to get information on vaping and how to talk to your kids. It is not too early to talk to your child at any age about the risks associated with vaping. NS-CASA and the North Shore Schools enjoy a strengthened relationship for the benefit of the entire community. We know and recognize that our work as a team with one another, and with parents, students, and other sectors of the community will help us to raise awareness of the dangers associated with the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and vaping, reduce use, and strengthen the abilities of our young people to make healthier choices.

Very truly yours,



Alison Camardella
President

North Shore Coalition Against Substance Abuse



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