

Tuolumne County Public Health Department



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For Immediate Release

KNOW THE RISKS OF MARIJUANA AND TOBACCO FOR YOUTH

Sonora, CA – In recent years, the growing use of marijuana and tobacco among youth has become a major concern for the Sonora Police Department (SPD) and Tuolumne County Public Health Department (TCPH). Smoking anything, including marijuana and tobacco, can contribute to early death and disease, and the known health effects of vaping include lung inflammation, throat irritation, heart disease risk, increased asthma symptoms and decreased immune response. While smoking rates have been declining among youth, unfortunately many young people now choose to vape or use e-cigarettes, often falsely believing that vaping is a safe way to use these substances. The most recent California Healthy Kids Survey found that 21% of Tuolumne County high school juniors currently vape and 24% currently use marijuana, although it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase either marijuana or tobacco products in California.

KNOW THE RISKS

- People who drive under the influence of marijuana can experience slower reactions, decreased coordination, and difficulty reacting to signals and sounds. Avoid driving 3 hours after smoking and 6 hours after ingesting marijuana products. Driving while high is illegal.
- Marijuana can be laced with fentanyl or other substances without your knowledge and have serious, or even fatal effects.
- Chronic marijuana use and chronic nicotine use by young people have both been linked with anxiety, depression, learning and memory problems, and altered brain development. These substances can affect adolescents differently than adults, with lifelong consequences.
- Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical found in all tobacco products. Youth use of nicotine has been found to increase the risk of becoming addicted to ANY substance.
- One disposable vape typically contains 2-3 times as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes, and flavored vapes commonly contain chemicals known to harm the lungs and brain.

MAKE HEALTHY AND SAFE CHOICES

- Talk to your kids and loved ones frequently about the dangers of marijuana and tobacco use.
- Set an example by living a drug and tobacco free lifestyle. Keep marijuana and nicotine products locked up out of reach of children, and ensure all e-liquids have a childproof cap.
- Encourage those who currently use these products to quit.
- Educate yourself about the topic from trusted sources.

SPD partners with many local agencies, including TCPH and local schools, to prevent substance use and promote the health and safety of the community. For more information, visit <https://www.sonorapd.com/programs-and-services/know-the-dangers-or-marijuana-and-tobacco-use/> or contact the Tuolumne County Public Health Tobacco Control Program at (209) 533-6862 or tobaccocontrol@co.tuolumne.ca.us.

LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

- CDPH Cannabis Education: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/DO/letstalkcannabis/pages/letstalkcannabis.aspX>
- Stanford Cannabis Awareness & Prevention Toolkit: <https://med.stanford.edu/cannabispreventiontoolkit.html>
- SAMHSA Know the Risks of Marijuana: <https://www.samhsa.gov/marijuana>
- Kick It CA Tobacco Cessation Resources: <https://www.undo.org/>
- Health Effects of Vaping on Teens: <https://www.flavorhookkids.org/>

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