Bost Health Policy Forum

Taking Down Tobacco McCracken County FCCLA
McCracken County FCCLA Ambassadors Panel

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Taking Down Tobacco Student Ambassadors

1. E-cigarette use among U.S. youth remains at epidemic levels
2. Over the last twelve months states and localities have taken the lead, along with the U.S. House of Representatives, to address the youth e-cigarette epidemic and ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes. In the absence of effective federal action, states and localities covering 25% of the American public (including 24% of U.S. youth) have enacted laws prohibiting or strictly limiting the sale of all flavored e-cigarettes.
3. Since the September 10, 2019 launch of the initiative to end the youth epidemic, “Protect Kids: Fight Flavored E-Cigarettes,” a growing number of states and cities are taking action to crack down on the sale of flavored e-cigarettes. In the project’s first year, major policy victories were achieved in five states and multiple localities.
4. According to the National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), among high school students, e-cigarette use declined to 19.6% in 2020, after increasing by 135% from 2017 to 2019 (from 11.7% to 27.5%).
5. The drop in youth e-cigarette use is driven by a number of factors, including new public education and cessation efforts as well as the remarkable progress, particularly at the state and local level, that has been made in the last year in prohibiting flavored e-cigarette use.

8,000
Teens start vaping everyday.---American Lung Association

26.1% & 17.3%
Of KY high school and middle school students currently use e-cigarettes.
Startling Statistics

8,900
People die in KY each year due to smoking.

$1.9 Billion
Health care costs
Dangers of Vaping and COVID

Cleveland Clinic

“As with cigarette smoking, vaping can also compromise the respiratory system. This means that people who smoke or vape are more susceptible to lung infections. According to Dr. Humberto Choi, a pulmonologist and smoking cessation specialist at the Cleveland Clinic, recent studies have shown that aldehydes and other components found in vaping liquids can impair the immune function of cells found in the airway and lungs.”

Teen Testimony

Vaping makes it hard to breathe with a mask on. Covid lungs make everything harder, so having to wear a mask all the time is a struggle.

https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0410.pdf
How do Teens Get E-Cigarettes?

Older siblings and friends

With the Tobacco 21 law, it has become more difficult for teens to buy vapes. Being all virtual at school can also be a barrier to acquiring puffbars. We do not see our friends everyday.

Mail Order

It is easy to order e-cigarettes online. A website cannot determine who is making an order. All you have to do is fill in a person’s personal information who is over 21, which is easy to grab your mom’s driver’s license. This is why it is so important to prohibit sales of nicotine products via mail.
Our Goals

01  Prevention
Teaching students that e-cigarettes are highly addictive and not harmless water vapor

02  Cessation
Give teens the tools to inspire them to quit vaping.

03  Advocacy
Advocate for stricter laws which prohibit the sale of flavored e-cigarettes

04  Train
Share and train other FCCLA chapters to implement similar programs in their schools.
What Works!!!

Education

Ambassadors have taught over 1,000 high school students and 500 elementary students on the dangers of e-cigarettes.

Advocacy

We have met with state and national legislators about enforcing stricter laws against the sale of flavored tobacco products.
Our principal, Mr. Matthew Houser, encouraged our local FCCLA chapter to confront the teenage vaping epidemic which was occurring in our local school. Over 40 students joined our ambassador team and received training for the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids through a teleconference.
The Peer Led Approach

**Elementary**
We visited local elementary schools and presented anti-vaping lessons to 4th and 5th graders.

**Great American Smokeout**
School-wide assembly and pledges to be smoke-free in the high school.

**Letter to the Editor**
Engaging the community to be aware of the problem teens were facing with the vaping epidemic.

**Classroom Presentations**
Ambassadors delivered the Rise of Vaping lesson to over 30 classrooms of their peers at McCracken County High School.
Advocacy

In the picture you can see me standing before a podium. I had the honor to speak at a press conference in Washington DC hosted by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. I told my story about attending my first high school football game and being offered a JUUL. I was told it was harmless and tasted like mint gum. I loved mint gum so I didn’t see the danger in trying it. I would have never tried a combustible cigarette because I knew how harmful they were and I thought they were gross. I became addicted to JUUL and got caught at school with mine and had to serve detention. I was scared and ashamed because I had never been in trouble before. I tried quitting unsuccessfully 3-4 times over the next several months and then finally did when my supply was cut off over the summer break. It is still a struggle at times.
Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act

After the press conference, we sat in the gallery of the US House of Representatives and saw the bill be debated and passed.
Celebrating the passing of the Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Bill
State Level Advocacy

Frankfort
I also spoke at the Coalition for a Smoke Free Tomorrow Rally last year in Frankfort.

State Legislators
Our team met with our local state senator and representative to gain support for upcoming legislation.

Coalition for Smoke Free Tomorrow News Conference
Abigail Birman spoke at a virtual news conference last week to help introduce new legislation being proposed to allow local governments more control regarding tobacco sales and advertising in their communities.
U.S. Representative Comer Meeting

Young people need to reach out to your congressmen.
- Young people can use their voices
- Our viewpoint is valuable
- Representatives will listen

ADVOCATE!
ABC came to our school to interview a couple our ambassadors to talk about addiction.

Newspapers
We have been published in the Paducah Sun, Prevention, New York Times, and various other newspapers across the state.

Television
Several news stations have covered our efforts.

Good Morning America
ABC came to our school to interview a couple our ambassadors to talk about addiction.

Promotional Videos
Tobacco Free Kids has recorded several commercials with us speaking about the dangers and struggles that come from vaping.
Who is missing from our Advocacy Efforts?

Local Government

- Local governments see first-hand how effective tobacco control policy can evolve over time and can respond more quickly to local needs.
- KY city and county governments generally have broad powers under the state constitution to adopt ordinances to protect public health.
- However, KRS 438.3000 prohibits local jurisdictions from enacting tobacco-control measures regarding the use, display, sale, and distribution of tobacco products sold in the state.
- Legislators should repeal 1996 statutory language that preempts city and county governments from adopting regulations that govern how tobacco products are displayed, sold, distributed and used.
- We will be able to advocate to local mayors and aldermen for change in our local area.
- IT WILL BE A GAME CHANGER FOR YOUTH!!!
Thank You!

To summarize:

- Teach your teens that e-cigarettes are not harmless water vapor. They are addictive and dangerous.
- Pass stricter laws that keep tobacco and nicotine products out of the hands of young people.
- Spread the message and advocate every chance you get. You may save someone’s life!