**September 2020**

***This is an internal document for STEPP grantees only.***

**Press Release**

Below is a template press release that you can use to support your work to educate parents and adults in your community about the dangers of youth vaping and how to help reduce it. Feel free to customize this release based on Healthy Kids Colorado Survey data related to your community.

*If you have questions or need assistance, contact SE2, STEPP’s communications technical assistance provider, at* *TA@se2communications.com**.*

**Be sure to:**

* Edit all items in yellow highlights;
* Delete any information you don’t need; and
* Distribute your press release on your organization’s letterhead or in an email without these instructions.

**[INSERT YOUR COALITION’S LOGO HERE]**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: [name], [number], [email]

**Colorado Sees Positive Signs on Youth Vaping but There’s More Work to Do**

Colorado is starting to flatten the curve on Colorado’s youth vaping epidemic but there’s still much more work to do in [community name] to reduce teen vaping.

Recently released Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) data from 2019 showed that a little over a quarter of Colorado high schoolers vape (25.9%) - a percentage that is still too high. While it’s promising that youth vape rates haven’t increased since 2017 (27%), it’s critical to prioritize efforts that will further reduce these rates.

The survey also revealed some encouraging news. The majority of Colorado youth now think vaping is risky (73%) up from 50% in 2017. This is a significant and important shift. Current cigarette smoking among youth is at an all time low.

Further, the data showed that more than half of youth who reported vaping said they were trying to quit. Policies aimed at preventing youth use, continued education to youth and parents, and access to youth-specific cessation resources will be critical to building on this progress and realizing the same progress Colorado has seen with youth cigarette use over the past decades.

Last year, Colorado banned vaping in indoor public places and the age to buy tobacco, including vape products, is now 21 years old. Starting in 2021, all retailers in Colorado will have to get a license to sell tobacco products, which will increase enforcement of the minimum-age requirement.

These policies plus evidence-based state and local prevention efforts [list local policy successes here] are expected to continue to reduce youth tobacco use, including vaping.

[You can include your HKCS region data, including 2017-2019 trends, here. [This summary](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nVR0XE65lsF8ZbP-gUv4DJ24gosCt7tOdbhw5Ko_JF8/edit) (created for internal use) shows past 30-day cigarette and vape use rates by HKCS region in 2017 and 2019. You can go to the HKCS dashboard for more detailed results for your region.]

Parents and trusted adults play an important role in helping young people understand the risks associated with vaping.

“We know from research that young people benefit from conversations with their parents or other trusted adults, like teachers, coaches and counselors,” said [insert local community health official name and title]. “Fact-based conversations where a trusted adult can tell teens the truth about the dangers and risks of vaping without judgment can be very productive, and actually change teens’ minds.”

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has created a number of free materials to help parents and other adults who work with youth talk about vaping with teens. They are available on the Tobacco Free Colorado website at: [TobaccoFreeCO.org/know-the-facts/](https://www.tobaccofreeco.org/know-the-facts/).

Parents can call for community policies that reduce tobacco use among youth. If you want to learn more about this issue or what [local public health agency name] is doing to help address it, please contact [insert contact information].

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