



SMOKE *without* FIRE

To clear the haze around electronic cigarettes, explore the recent trend through the eyes of a hobbyist, a trend follower, a store owner and a doctor

CNHS STUDENT HANDBOOK PROHIBITS:

13. Use or possession of tobacco within the jurisdiction of the school including school buildings, grounds, buses, and trips. The use of tobacco shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigar, cigarette, electronic cigarette, pipe, snuff or any other matter, substance or innovation that contains tobacco or nicotine
14. Use or possession of smokeless tobacco in the building, on school grounds, or at any school function (pg. 141)

Monday is trivia night for junior Matt James and his friends. All of legal-age, they mass-produce a blanket of vapor containing an assortment of flavors and their preferred amount of nicotine. The category for tonight's trivia is lawn ornaments. Clouds engulf them. This is bonding time away from the vape shop's tasting bar, a place where James found a hobby and a family.

"It was the beginning of junior year. Everybody was like, 'these little vape pens are cool and you can do smoke tricks with them.' I thought it was interesting," James said.

Vape pens are part of a trending alternative to smoking tobacco: electronic cigarettes, also known as e-cigarettes or e-cigs.

A recent U.S. Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report found that e-cig use among high school students has nearly tripled, increasing from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, more than 250 e-cig brands are available at convenience stores and resemble objects such as a USB memory stick or a traditional cigarette. It is activated as the user draws from the battery-powered heating device, which heats the cartridge's

liquid into an inhalable vapor.

The act of using a personalized e-cig is referred to as vaping.

"Technically, vaping is considered an e-cig. I don't like calling it an e-cig because it's not one of those little five dollar ones that you buy at the gas station. One of my mods, I spent two hundred dollars on," James said. "I also do it for fun and not because I used to be addicted to nicotine."

The local vape shop shared their knowledge on the components of "e-liquid" which is the substance within the device's cartridge.

"There are four main ingredients: vegetable glycerin, propylene glycol, distilled water, flavoring and nicotine (or without nicotine). Everything is either food grade or pharmaceutical grade," Tracey Jones, the owner of Hilltop Vape Shop, said. "When you vape, nothing is on fire, so most of the toxins come from the actual burning of tobacco and paper."

The four owners immediately started a vape shop when they experienced positive outcomes from using e-cigs.

"All four owners were smokers. Three of us were 30-year smokers, one of us was a 50-year smoker. We tried vaping and we all quit smoking within one day," Jones said. "When you've been smoking that

Look through the eyes of minors for their knowledge on electronic cigarettes

"I've seen them in tobacco stores. I don't feel like they are bad for you because they don't have tobacco in them. I've seen my older friends use them a lot."

**freshman
Bryson Cox**

"I've seen them at gas stations, the normal places. I don't have any friends that use them. I think there are health risk using e-cigs because we don't know what's exactly in it. Also, it's suppose to model cigarettes which are very bad for your health."

**sophomore
Jonathan Mao**

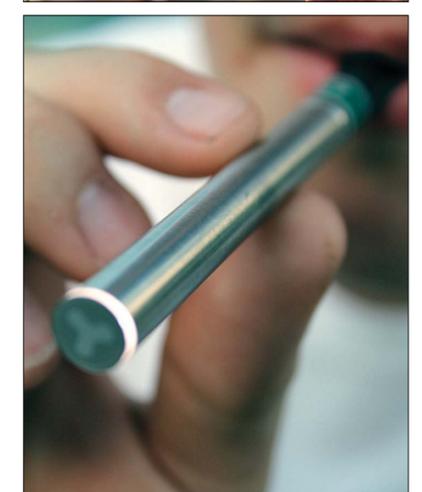
"I know people who use them because they can get different amounts of nicotine per (mg) and they can use less of it. They don't have as many poisons in it like a regular cigarette."

**junior
Cesar Garcia**

"My grandfather got one because he smoked when he was really young. He got cancer and he wasn't suppose to have cigarettes in the hospital. He got an e-cigarette because they are considered not actual smoke, but they still wouldn't let him use it. They have the nicotine in (them), but without any of the other chemicals. They are suppose to be healthier for you, but they're still addictive. You have to get the nicotine to put in them or else it's just water vapor."

**junior
Kristen Dager**

COMPILED BY TAYLOR CALLAWAY



Findings from the 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey show that current e-cigarette use (use on at least one day in the past 30 days) among high school students increased from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014, rising from approximately 660,000 to 2 million students

2013

2014

SOURCE: U.S. CENTER OF DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT 1432

Indiana House Enrolled Act 1432 defines e-liquid as "a substance that is intended to be vaporized and inhaled using a vapor pen." Also, it states that retailers who knowingly sell e-liquid to a minor commits a Class C infraction.

"You don't have to be 18 to buy hardware, but no place will sell you juice. Without nicotine, you can have the juice because it's just vegetable oil and propylene glycol. It's not illegal, but no place will do it because in Indiana we're fighting really hard to keep it going especially for the juice, so we're not taking any chances," James said. "Technically, if it is 0 percent nicotine, you can buy it. For nicotine-based juice and juice in general you have to be 18 because store owners want to be careful."

long, you kind of give up hope that you'll be able to quit. Then, suddenly, we had hope."

Despite the benefits of aiding former nicotine addicts, its long-term effects are unknown. A professional from Sandcrest Family Medicine gave feedback on his experience with minors who use e-cigs.

"They (minors) think it is somehow less addictive than regular tobacco products. They are wrong and will get hooked as much as they would have on other tobacco products," family practice physician Dr. David Porter said. "Nicotine is highly addictive regardless of source."

Health experts are becoming restless and demand action. Time Magazine reported May 1 that 31 health and medical groups wrote a letter to President Obama asking for the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) proposal of new regulations for e-cigs to be finalized. The proposal would ban their sale to minors and require health warnings on the devices nationwide.

"It took doctors many years to understand how harmful tobacco smoke and secondhand smoke were for people who used them," Dr. Porter said. "It may be many years before we find out that e-cigs are as harmful or more so than regular tobacco products. That is why we discourage their use."

However, students are still attracted to the trend and endless flavors, from gummy bear to peach cobbler. An anonymous source explains their reasoning for joining the trend.

"I do it because of all the different flavors and the interesting smoke/vape culture behind it. I'm a fruity cultured kind of person," an anonymous source said.

The American Heart Association's (AHA) official policy recommendation argues that the variety of flavors are meant to lure minors. Jones countered that the practice is not isolated to the e-cigarette business.

"Not anymore so than bubblegum-flavored Tylenol for kids," Jones said.

Moreover, the AHA states that e-cigs could serve as gateway drugs to addict minors to nicotine or start using traditional tobacco products.

"I don't think I'm addicted, but it's just to pass time that I could give up easily. You do it more for the buzz. Also, real cigarettes can kill you and they smell gross," the anonymous source said.

AHA considers them to be the last-resort method for quitting traditional cigarettes.

"We have no information on e-cigs," Dr. Porter said. "The only time I would potentially recommend e-cigs may be if they have failed other

products. The problem is that most people on e-cigs seem to continue on them, which tells me that they are not helpful in getting people totally off nicotine products."

The lifelong effects are a mystery and few studies have progressed, but the Indiana legislature has already taken action. Recently, the Indiana General Assembly announced May 5 that Governor Mike Pence signed House Bill 1432 into law. The bill states that manufacturers of e-liquid require permits, agree with security requirements, limit their ingredients and comply with other boundaries. The bill's focus is to enhance safety precautions for minors, but poses difficulties with e-cig users and business owners.

"I think we'll lose over 2,000 jobs and close down around 80 small businesses," James said.

Jones agrees. "They've overregulated it and want 24 hour security."

Despite all the tension, users like James continue to enjoy vaping by participating in competitions at local vape shops. It involves who can produce a bigger cloud or re-build their device the fastest.

"It makes me happy and I met my now closest friends because of it," James said. "It's more than just vaping, it opened a doorway to social aspects."

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