

June/July 2021

ONcall

ready-to-use NEWS

inside

Communication tips for your reopening

A return to normal school operations is in the future. Now is the time to plan for the reopening that will return your school to pre-COVID programs. Read about some of the issues that will arise from the perspectives of parents and school staff.

Feature your teachers (and staff) in your content plan

Highlight the work of your employees and build trust with parents and community members by sharing details that spotlight your staff members. Add staff and teacher feature content to your content plan. Ask them to fill in the details and share the stories with your audiences.

How to make parents partners in education

When parents and teachers work together, the impact on students can be dramatic. There are many ways to build or strengthen the parent-school partnership. School reopenings are a good time to get reacquainted and build a collaborative partnership to help students succeed.

The power of student voice

Students are increasingly involved in social justice issues, and they are speaking out through rallies, petitions and protests. They want to have input on policy decisions affecting them. Some districts are giving student representatives an opportunity to participate in school board meetings and allow student voices through virtual meetings and public policy discussions. School boards can benefit from hearing a student perspective, and young people can benefit through the policy experience and the chance to be heard.

Here's to You! Tips for Your Good Health

This issue has information about preparing to get back to normal, finding recipes, protecting yourself from tick bites and building up an exercise habit through 10-minute workouts.

INSIGHTS FOR PARENTS: Tips to help parents talk to their kids about vaping

Vaping is popular among teens and young adults, despite the health risks. Read about the dangers of vaping, how to recognize signs of possible vape habits and how to talk to them about the health hazards of this substance.

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For content questions, contact: Marcia Latta Communications Consultant (503) 580-2612.

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Communication tips for your reopening

In the era of COVID, when teachers, parents and students have had to make huge changes, school communications have had to pivot as well. The flyer-in-the-backpack-routine no longer works when backpacks stay home with their owners. So, how have schools fared, and what can we do now that schools are reopening?

Amanda Laughtland is a guardian for a child in suburban Washington and is pleased with her school's approach. "They are doing half days, which works well as they don't all have lunch together. They have an outdoor snack break and the school packs lunches for any child who wants to take one home." Her school has maintained current information on the school's website, circulated an email newsletter and held a Zoom meeting with parents about changes to the schedule. "Honestly, I was able to figure out all I needed from the newsletter."

Cindy Besch, who has children in an Arizona school district, has also appreciated promptness. "Our school has been very good with communicating changes," she explains. "They shoot out an email and text usually as quickly as possible after board meetings."

Reopening at last... but not for everyone

"My kids can't go back until they are vaccinated because of my son's heart," explains Spring Liles, a parent in a rural part of Washington State. "We are hoping for fall of 2022. Until they have vaccines for younger children, we will stick with video chats. For many of us parents of young children with special needs, the quarantine and lockdown continues."

Liles has been pleased with how her district has handled communications. "They are consistently emailing and making public statements. And they are reaching out for a lot of parental input."

What about the missing students?

Unfortunately, schools are having to face a real reckoning with how accessible online education has been for the most disadvantaged students. For approximately three million of the most educationally marginalized students in the country, March might have been the last time they experienced any formal education — virtual or in-person.

"In Washington D.C., back-to-school family surveys found that 60% of students lacked the devices and 27% lacked the high-speed internet access needed to successfully participate in virtual school.

In Miami-Dade County, 16,000 fewer students enrolled for the 2020-21 school year compared with the previous year." <https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/missing-margins-estimating-scale-COVID-19-attendance-crisis>

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When school districts reach out to families, they often do so through text messages, robocalls, emails, Facebook posts and snail mail. It's communication that requires families to have a working cellphone, internet access and a fixed address. That means families who move frequently, change cellphone numbers, or do not speak English can be left out of the loop and difficult to find. During the COVID-era, people moved at higher numbers than usual due to job losses, concern about viral transmission in the cities, and other factors. www.mymove.com/moving/COVID-19/coronavirus-moving-trends/

"In North Carolina, a state education official told state lawmakers in December that more than 10,000 students had not been accounted for. New Mexico could not account for more than 12,000 students at the start of the school year — children who were enrolled before the pandemic but never showed up in the fall. This month, the state's education department reported that more than 2,700 students were still missing." www.washingtonpost.com/education/pandemic-schools-students-missing/2021/02/25/f0b27262-5ce8-11eb-a976-bad6431e03e2_story.html

For these students, getting them back into the classroom is urgent. And that means finding them.

Some schools have used coronavirus aid to hire family liaisons to find missing students; Others have launched door-to-door campaigns, sending staff and parent volunteers to the homes of students who have not been attending classes.

For Sacramento Unified School District, where three-quarters of the schoolchildren qualify for social service programs, the district not only dispatched staff members to students' homes, they set up a food truck at large apartment complexes in order to draw out families and their children, in addition to going through the food stamp program and local social service agencies to find addresses. This creative approach was successful in helping them locate almost 50% of their missing students.

In thinking about some creative ways that your district can reach out to find their missing students, ask yourself where families hang out. What services do parents of school-age children access regularly? Can you get help by coordinating with local service agencies, churches and grocery stores?

What's next?

Once everyone is back in the classroom, figuring out how to handle all the different ways the pandemic and remote learning (or lack thereof) has affected our students is the next step.

The students who have missed school are not the only ones who have fallen behind. Remote learning has proved challenging for even the most reliable pre-pandemic students.

Laura M., whose son is in a New York City charter school, is concerned that his school doesn't understand the magnitude of the challenges that remote learning has presented. "As a student with significant executive function challenges as a component of ADHD, he has gone from getting top grades in a gifted class mid-fifth grade to failing all but two classes thirteen months later." Her son reads *Scientific American* for fun, but is "failing reading" because he can't complete his reading logs. "He needs significant redirection to stay on task during class, both of which are essentially impossible to provide remotely." His parents work full-time as a lawyer and a teacher and are unable to provide the assistance that his individualized education program (IEP) calls for.

Laura notes her son is at very real risk of failing sixth grade. “It’s ridiculous. He has not had a sixth grade.” She’s been frustrated by the lack of communication about what the school plans to do about it.

“I want to hear that children like my son, who have been unable to learn effectively through remote schooling, will not be penalized for what has been essentially a lost year,” she says. “We’ve given it everything we had, but everything isn’t enough when a child is in the wrong learning environment.”

As districts transition back to in-school learning, there will need to be discussions around how to accommodate the needs of the students who were left behind by the extraordinary circumstances of the past year. Many families are also reeling from unexpected losses, and those children are going to need additional mental health resources as well. We have our work cut out for us, but school teachers and staff have risen to the challenges of the pandemic with extraordinary resourcefulness and passion, and no doubt they can do the same in the coming year.

Megan J. Wilson is a Los Angeles-based freelance writer and communications consultant.

Contributed by Connie Potter, communications consultant

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Feature your teachers (and staff) in your content plan

The expectation — the hope — is that students will be back in school buildings with their teachers this fall. After the disruption of the pandemic, staff reintroductions may be in order.

School and district staff bring a wide variety of excellent qualifications to their positions. Personalizing them as individuals helps engage the public and build connections. A great way to highlight the good work of employees and build trust with parents and community members is to share a few details about the people who work in school buildings.

Make a plan for teacher (and staff) features

Summer is a great time to plan your content for the coming year. When you plan your content calendar for the new school year, consider including staff feature articles. They don't have to be excessively time-intensive, and they can be a great content source for a robust communications plan for the whole year.

New information and consistent content are essential for your digital media. Staff features are a great way to build awareness about your schools, engage your parents and create a library of content for your content needs. Add staff features to your school and district websites, social media channels, e-newsletters or printed newsletters.

Find the stories

An efficient way to manage these features is to have staff send in the details. Identify representative staff to highlight, send out an open call for volunteer submissions, or set up a nomination process. You could also consider sending questionnaires to all staff.

With their help, you can easily share insight into their personal side and what inspires them, providing a peek behind the scenes of your schools. Use it for your administrators and board members, too. They don't need to write it up. They will answer a few questions, and you can write it.

These features can be used on your website or in one-page hand-outs that you can display in the district office or classroom during parent/teacher conferences. You could also create trading cards or bookmarks. Be sure to include a photo in whatever format you choose. Your interview subjects will feel like local celebrities.

Start with a template

Create a form for staff, and then check in with them for more details, if necessary. Be sure

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to edit for grammar and readability. You don't want mistakes to reflect poorly on this staff member or your schools.

Staff Features

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The template is intended to evoke personal, professional, inspiring and funny information.

Make it easy to encourage staff participation. The example below shows how simple this can be. Respondents don't have to answer all questions. Any new information gives a personal, likable glimpse.

Sample Q & A

Name: Michael Garcia

Years I've been teaching: 15, and I hope many more.

Where I grew up: New Mexico on a horse ranch, but we moved into town later when we had to sell the ranch and mom needed to find work.

Hobby or hobbies: Hiking and reading books with my kids. Raising our puppy. And soccer!

Career background (college, degrees, specialty, where I've taught): Master's in Teaching, _____ State University, 1996. Started with _____ School District in 1998.

Favorite foods: Anything my mom used to cook! Seriously, but I love apple pie.

Something funny I may have done as a child: I buried my little sister's Barbie doll in the back yard, but at the time that wasn't funny, so I dug it up and gave it back as a birthday present. Hey, I was only four!

My favorite saying or quote: It's all good.

Book(s) on my nightstand: *Chaser*: Unlocking the Genius of a dog who knows 1,000 words

Why I love teaching: I am truly inspired by, and in awe of, the kids I get to teach every day. If I can help just one child succeed, I know my work really matters.

Something people would be surprised to know about me: I dropped out of high school because I needed a job to support my mom and little sisters when dad died. But I came back and graduated. Also, my mom grew up in Ireland.

One special moment that showed me "it was all worth it" to become a teacher: *Hint: It doesn't have to be a big thing....maybe the fact that one of your students got into the college they wanted.*

I caught one of my students bragging about the book he was reading "just for fun."

Something I've learned in the past year: Don't get sidetracked by failure; use what you learned. Mistakes are never wasted unless you forget you made them.

The best way to reach me: My work email is _____. I check it every afternoon. You can always call the school office to reach me in an emergency at _____ or direct message me at (social media handle).

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Examples:

Staff Features

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Crook County School District

www.crookcountyschools.org/?s=teacher+spotlight

Greenville County Schools (video)

<https://greenville.k12.sc.us/it/spotlight.html>

Lake Nona High School News (written by a student)

<https://lnhsnews.com/7556/student-life/teacher-spotlight-24-question-with-mr-arroyo/>

Round Rock ISD

<https://walsh.roundrockisd.org/teacher-spotlight/>

Contributed by Shannon Priem, APR, former public information director for the Oregon School Boards Association

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How to make parents partners in education

Research is clear that when parents and teachers work together, the impact on students can be dramatic. Test scores go up. Attendance improves. Discipline problems go down. Graduation rates improve.

But developing strong parent-school partnerships can be a challenge. Demanding work schedules may not allow parents much time for volunteering. Arranging transportation or child care may be difficult. Cultural and language differences can create barriers. And sometimes there's a belief — by either parents or educators — that families should leave the education of children to the experts.

Developing strong parent-school partnerships requires both educators and parents to recognize the value of working together for the benefit of children. Together, they can create family-friendly schools and school-friendly homes, says Joyce Epstein, director for The Center of Parent School Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

Family-friendly schools encourage parents to be involved in their school and in their child's education — everything from serving on school committees to volunteering in their child's classroom. School-friendly homes are ones where parents help their children with homework and reinforce the importance of school and learning.

In order to create those kinds of partnerships, mutual trust and respect must happen. Teachers must trust families and appreciate their insights into their children. Families, in turn, must trust and respect teachers and their expertise and knowledge of their children's educational needs.

Communicating frequently and openly is a critical element in developing effective parent-school partnerships. Through two-way communications, each side has a better understanding of the other's needs and goals. But it's essential that two-way communication happens on a frequent basis, so that their insights and information gets shared and acted on.

Not all parents wish to be involved in their child's education in the same role or to the same degree. It's not enough just to have opportunities for classroom volunteers or field-trip chaperones because all parents don't have the same schedule. For a variety of reasons — work commitments or the need to be with younger children at home or lack of interest in certain activities — parents need a variety of options for getting involved.

Epstein identified six types of involvement for comprehensive parent-school partnerships:

1. **Parenting** — Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
2. **Communicating** — Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and their children's progress.

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3. **Volunteering** — Recruit and organize parent help and support.
4. **Learning at Home** — Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning.
5. **Decision Making** — Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
6. **Collaborating With the Community** — Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development.

Where to start in creating healthy parent-school relationships? The checklist below spells out the crucial steps, according to Teachers & Parents As Partners (TAPP), a research-based program developed at the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools. TAPP's goal is to build partnerships between parents and teachers to help solve children's behavioral and academic challenges.

Form relationships

- Children benefit most when their caregivers and teachers know one another and have some basic information about “how things work” at home and school.
- One of the basic building blocks of strong parent-teacher relationships is a focus on children's strengths and the strengths of the partnership.

Create ways to become and stay engaged

- Engagement — between parents and teachers, and with their students—is essential to help children feel valued and important.
- Efforts to remain connected, no matter how small, will help create deep and meaningful consistency for the child at home and at school.

Communicate two ways

- Both parents and teachers have important information to share when it comes to a child they both know well.
- Make sure that communication is frequent and clear, and everyone has an equal chance to speak and to listen.

Structure consistent opportunities for learning and behavior

- Look for similar ways to create structured learning opportunities across home and school, because these connections can help children be successful in both places.
- Reinforce children's positive behaviors at home and school to help them experience consistent messages.

Collaborate to achieve goals and solve problems

- Both parents and teachers have important information and ideas that can help when a student is having a problem.
- Children show more improvement when teachers and parents work together to create a plan, decide on strategies, and practice them at school and home.

Savvy teachers make it a priority to develop opportunities for parents to get involved both in their child's individual learning and in their classrooms. They quickly discover that students

aren't the only ones who benefit. Strong parent-school partnerships can improve school climate, provide family services and support, increase parents' skills and leadership, connect families with others in the school and help teachers with their work.

Resources

Teachers & Parents As Partners (TAPP), <https://cyfs.unl.edu/TAPP/research>

The Center of Parent School Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, www.sfcj.hjucos.com/

Contributed by Connie Potter, communications consultant

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The power of student voice

There is a rise in youth activism across the country in social and racial justice issues like Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ rights and ending the school-to-prison pipeline. Students are holding rallies, starting petitions and attending virtual school board meetings, which have been more accessible to students due to COVID-19. Students want to have input on policy decisions affecting them. Yet, the majority of school boards do not have student representation. This is a missed opportunity for students as well as for the adults making decisions. School boards can benefit from gaining a student perspective, and students can feel heard, effect change, and learn about civics, school governance and policy.

The National School Boards Association found that as of January 2021, only 67 of the 495 largest school districts (14%) have students serving on their governing boards. Among the 67 districts, the majority have one student board member. In some districts, students are selected by their peers, while in other districts, students are appointed by the board. Most student representatives serve for one year and do not have voting rights. www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2021/Students-Serving-on-School-Boards

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Salem-Keizer Public Schools, OR

The school board in Salem, Oregon, recently appointed their first student advisor. The district already had a district-wide student advisory committee, but felt the new role of student advisor would create a direct way to get input from students on board decisions. The new student advisor will serve a one-year term as a non-voting member. <https://salkeiz.k12.or.us/news/sksb-appoints-student-advisor/>

Eugene School District, OR

The Eugene School District has a “Student Advisory Panel” that attends all regular public meetings and represents students’ interests. The panel consists of one representative from each high school. According to their board policy, “the student representative shall receive notice of meetings, the agenda and the appropriate agenda materials; be provided a place at the Board table; and shall have the same privileges of discussion as apply to Board members. The student representative shall not be a voting member of the Board.” www.4j.lane.edu/board

According to a report by the Center for American Progress, there are advantages and disadvantages to having students on your school board:

Advantages

- Gives students real power over state and district policies, including hiring and budgeting
- Gives voting student members equal power to adult members
- Allows students to gain experience with governing bodies
- Fosters open conversation between students and adult decision-makers



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Disadvantages

- Engages only a few select students
- Often includes students for whom the current education structure is already working
- May not influence change if the student is not a voting member
- Dependent on the structure, risks student representatives not feeling empowered to voice their opinions or to disagree with adult authority figures

www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2019/08/14/473197/elevating-student-voice-education

Having student representation on your school board is just one way to listen to students. There are many strategies for schools and school boards to increase student voice, such as student surveys, student councils and youth participatory action research.

In Minnesota, St. Paul Public Schools has a student engagement and advancement board comprised of high school students in grades 10 -12. The students work on multiple initiatives each year to increase student voice in decision making at the Board and Administration level. “The SEAB’s role is not to speak for students, but to develop and implement strategies that amplify student voice.” *www.spps.org/seab*

Chicago Public Schools district formed student voice committees at 16 high schools about six years ago, and now there are almost 200 of the committees in primary and secondary schools. “Students involved in the committees have become more active in causes in their communities and have also gotten their classmates involved in local issues, such as the census. These students have also provided feedback on online learning that has taken place during coronavirus closures.”

<https://districtadministration.com/chicago-public-schools-student-voice-committees-youth-activism-civics-social-studies>

Whichever strategies your school and district choose, make an intentional effort to include diverse student voices. The Springfield Renaissance School in Massachusetts has a high school student voice group that works on race and equity. It has tackled issues like Latinx representation in the curriculum and the use of racial slurs by opposing teams in sporting events.

<https://districtadministration.com/student-voice-diversity-diverse-curriculum-springfield-renaissance-school>

Make sure you’re giving all students equal opportunities to share their ideas. Don’t just invite the top-performing students or the outgoing students in leadership roles to join committees. Seek out students whose voices you haven’t heard.

Resources

SoundOut, a non-profit that works with K-12 schools to increase student involvement

<https://soundout.org/>

Michigan Association for School Boards Students on Boards Toolkit

www.masb.org/students

Here's to You!

Tips for your good health provided by your district

June/July 2021

Get ready to get back to normal



We have spent more than a year collectively worrying and protecting ourselves from the pandemic. Life will return to some level of pre-pandemic normal soon, and attention will need to turn to how to get back to normal or used to a new "normal."

New guidelines will help with the physical transitions. The more challenging transition will be mental and emotional. It's been a roller-coaster year, and it's not over. Start getting ready now for post-pandemic life.

Start small. Acclimate slowly by getting out daily. Stop by your workplace. Take your children to visit their schools.

Seek professional help. Mental health professionals are in high demand. If your anxiety is overwhelming, seek professional help from a therapist.

Think it through. Imagine your routine, and mentally walk through your day-to-day activities. Adopt a mindset of optimism, a recognition of challenges that you have the ability to manage.

Consider signing up for an online reentry course. One option is online by The Institute for the Future: Life After COVID-19: Get Ready for our Post-Pandemic Future.

www.coursera.org/learn/life-after-covid-19-get-ready-schools

Listicles for healthy, inexpensive cooking ideas

An increase in home cooking is one of the positive practices adopted by many people during these concentrated periods of sheltering at home. Healthy and budget-friendly, cooking is also a great family activity. Many people, especially younger adults, have said they plan to continue eating in after the pandemic ends. Fortunately, there are resources to help with any cooking need. Here are a few recommendations for family meal planning:

52 Easy, Healthy Dinner Ideas That Take 30 Minutes or Less, <https://bit.ly/2PLNvw2>

13 Sheet-Pan Dinner Recipes That Cost Less Than \$2 Per Serving, <https://bit.ly/3ebn38t>

40 Healthy One-Pot Meals to Simplify Your Weeknights Easier and More Delicious, <https://bit.ly/3aZpCs2>

Healthy Smoothie Recipes That Are Fast and Filling, <https://bit.ly/3gZzJku>

47 Salad Dressing Recipes That Are So Much Better Than Store-Bought, <https://bit.ly/3gSg9GZ>



Here's to You! is published for school district staff members in the interest of your good health. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Here's to You! is written and published by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

Graphics from *The Noun Project*, www.thenounproject.com.

Spending more time outdoors? Beware of ticks.

Warm weather and cabin fever bring people outside and into nature. Outdoor activities are healthy and rejuvenating, but there are risks. Learn more about the risks from tick bites to stay safe during summer outings into nature.

More than Lyme Disease

Watch out for ticks after hiking and camping in the woods. Lyme disease is familiar to most, but other lesser known tick-borne illnesses are also hazardous. Some are region-specific. Google the following to safety precautions.

Babesiosis: Watch for flu-like symptoms that can become serious. This tick-borne parasite is transmitted by deer ticks in the Northeast or upper Midwest.

Rocky Mountain spotted fever: Carried by various ticks, depending on the area. It is most commonly found in only a handful of states. It causes symptoms such as headache, nausea and muscle pain. Watch for a pinpoint-type rash. This is a serious condition and must be caught early.

Borrelia miyamotoi disease: Predominantly found in the Midwest, Northeast and mid-Atlantic states, this disease occurs

mostly in July and August. It is similar to Lyme disease.

Powassan virus: Found mostly in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions, this infection happens in late spring to mid-fall and is caused by deer ticks. It is fast-spreading and can

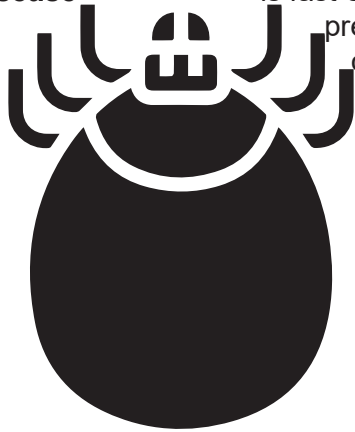
present no symptoms or progress to dangerous conditions.

Colorado tick fever: Mostly found in western states and transmitted by wood ticks, this infection is usually not fatal. Watch for flu-like symptoms and a fever that returns a few days after resolving.

Tularemia: This illness can be serious and has several causes. It has been found in all states except Hawaii. It has a variety of symptoms. Watch for skin ulcers at the infection site and swollen lymph glands.

Anaplasmosis and ehrlichiosis: Transmitted by different ticks, they have similar symptoms, including fever, chills, headache and muscle aches and nausea. Ehrlichiosis often causes a rash. Early diagnosis is important as conditions can worsen and become serious. Antibiotics will treat both.

Read more: www.cdc.gov/ticks/tickbornediseases/rmsf.html



The benefits of a 10-minute exercise habit

According to government health recommendations, adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week and at least two weekly sessions of strength training to stay healthy.

Most people miss that mark. The CDC reports that only 23% of adults ages 18-64 meet both standards; 32% reach both goals.

Making a case for smaller goals

Unfortunately, many people feel like failures if they fall short of these goals, but there is a benefit to shorter sessions — any movement is better than none.

- Starting small can help build healthy habits. Research suggests that it takes 30 days to establish, or break, a habit. Smaller time commitments can support habit-building.
- Shorter sessions can make intense — vigorous — workouts seem easier. There are numerous significant benefits of high-intensity workouts.
- Mixing up workout activities may be easier if the time commitment is smaller. Try something new to maintain motivation.
- Lower expectations are part of pandemic self-care. Fitting some activity into daily routines and letting go of guilt is healthy.





The Dangers of Vaping



**June/July
2021**

INSIGHTS FOR FAMILIES is provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education. Insights is produced by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

Vaping is popular many among teens and young adults. The CDC estimates that one in every 20 middle school students used e-cigarettes in 2020, and one in every five high school students vapes.

It is the most commonly used tobacco product among youth and has the same health risks as all tobacco products as well as additional toxins produced by the e-cigarette device.

The dangers of vaping

Vaping is dangerous. Young users may not realize this because they think the vape pen looks cool or seems safer than cigarettes, but it isn't. They may not care because they are young and more likely to take risks as teens, but parents should tell their children about these risks anyway.

According to pulmonologists, there are four main health risks to vaping

1. Vaping puts teens at high risk for nicotine addiction.

Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Teens may not realize how highly addictive nicotine is or how concentrated the nicotine is in e-cigarettes. The developing teen brain makes them even more susceptible to nicotine addiction, which can affect attention span, learning, mood and impulse control.

2. Vaping is bad for your lungs.

E-cigarettes have toxins in the aerosol and chemicals in the flavor cartridges, which are even more dangerous when heated. The health dangers include serious lung injuries and impairment, and the long-term effects are still unknown.

3. Vaping, even once, affects cardiovascular health.

The nicotine and chemicals in e-cigarettes have been tied to heart disease. A 2019 study found that people who vape were 56% more likely to have a heart attack and 30% more likely to suffer a stroke than those who do not vape. Studies have shown these risks after just one e-cigarette.

4. Use of e-cigarettes increases risk of other substance use.

Vaping can be a gateway to other substance use. Teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to smoke tobacco and use other substances such as drugs and alcohol. Studies have found that teens who vape are more than three times more likely to use marijuana.

<https://bit.ly/3t4Ff7P>

How to know if your kids are vaping

Vaping devices come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Parents may not recognize one if they see it, and teens may be very defensive about

being confronted or under suspicion for vaping. Parents can watch for the following signs of possible vape use before approaching teens:

- **Increased thirst.** Vaping removes hydration from the skin of the mouth and throat, resulting in greater thirst. If your child drinks significantly more, they may be vaping.
- **Desire for flavor.** When the mouth is dried out, you lose flavor perception. With routine vaping, food can become less flavorful. This is called “vaper’s tongue.” If your teen uses much more salt or spice, they may be vaping.
- **Nosebleeds.** Vaping also dries the skin of the nose, which can cause nosebleeds.
- **Acne.** Watch for unusually bad or more frequent breakouts.
- **Cutting back on caffeine.** Vaping can cause or increase anxiety and severe mood swings, which can be worse if coupled with caffeine. Users often decrease their caffeine intake to avoid these side effects.
- **Pneumonia.** E-cigarette vapor can cause inflammation in the lungs, leading to infections or pneumonia.
- **Finding unfamiliar USB drives, battery chargers or spare parts.** Devices for vaping have cartridges and parts such as spare wires, cotton balls or small containers (“pods”) that contain e-juice. Your teen may be vaping if they have unfamiliar tech parts or devices with their things or in their trash.

<https://bit.ly/3aVdQz7>

What to tell your child

Teens and young adults engage in risky behavior despite warnings from parents, teachers and adults with expertise. They may not listen, but it is important to keep talking to them to help keep them safe. Experts suggest that starting young is the best approach.

The American Lung Association has resources for parents. Print or email the Vaping Conversation Guide to get started: <https://bit.ly/3eJ6pfx>.

Getting ready:

- Know the facts.
- Consider your child’s viewpoint.
- Be calm.
- Practice what you will say.

Talking to your child:

- Acknowledge your child’s independence.
- Ask what they think.
- Be ready to hear them if they admit that they vape.
- Blame Big Tobacco, not your child.
- Avoid scare tactics.

After you talk:

- Thank them.
- Help them manage their stress.
- Help them handle peer pressure.
- Check in and leave lines of communication open.

www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit/talk-about-vaping/conversation-guide