



FIVE PROVEN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO STOP VAPING IN SCHOOLS

Easy, engaging and effective
Vaping education

OVERVIEW

Vaping is becoming more common among teens, and Australian schools are finding it hard to deal with. After running 250 workshops with over 20,000 students, we've identified the top five activities that have proven to engage students and make a real difference in vaping education.

These activities are easy to use, highly engaging, and effective in tackling the vaping issue in schools. Based on real experience, they provide a practical way to educate tech-savvy students and encourage healthier choices.

Are you ready to bring these high-impact activities to your classroom? Let's begin.

Five proven classroom activities to stop Vaping in Schools

1. Analysing Big Vape's influence in academia
2. Vaping: What you know vs. What you don't
3. Standing strong: Peer pressure refusal skills
4. Who can help?
5. Decoding tobacco advertising



1. ANALYSING BIG VAPE'S INFLUENCE IN ACADEMIA

Objective

Understand the impact of corporate funding on academic research and its ethical implications.

Learning outcomes

- Explain how corporate funding can influence academic research.
- Identify and discuss ethical concerns in corporate-sponsored studies.
- Evaluate research credibility and propose ways to critically assess it.

Activity (15 minutes)



Article reading (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "We're going to look at how the vape industry influences research.
- Please read this case study about JUUL funding a special journal issue, which caused some ethical concerns. Focus on potential conflicts of interest."
- Give students 3–5 minutes to read the case study.
- Print the case study on the next page and give this to the students to read.

Group discussion (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Now, in small groups, discuss these questions: Why would JUUL fund academic research? What ethical concerns can arise from this? One person in your group should take notes."
- Give students 5 minutes to discuss.

Insight sharing (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Let's share insights. Each group, tell us one way you think corporate funding could affect the objectivity of research."
- Each group shares one insight.

Wrap-up

Ask students to think about how they can critically assess research findings that may be influenced by corporate interests.

CASE STUDY: ANALYSING BIG VAPE'S INFLUENCE IN ACADEMIA

In 2021, Juul Labs, a company that makes e-cigarettes, paid \$51,000 to sponsor a special issue of a science journal called the *American Journal of Health Behavior*. This issue included 11 research articles, all written by scientists working for Juul or connected to the company. Most of the articles said that using Juul's e-cigarettes helped smokers quit smoking regular cigarettes.

But this created a problem. Some people were worried about the fairness of the research because Juul paid for the whole issue. Three members of the journal's editorial board even quit because of these concerns.

One big issue was that Juul's involvement wasn't clearly shared with everyone who reviewed the studies. A reviewer found one study to be biased (meaning it seemed unfair or one-sided) and only after asking questions did she find out that Juul had paid for the entire issue. This made people wonder if the research could really be trusted, since Juul was paying for studies that made their products look good.

This problem isn't just about Juul. When companies pay for research, they might influence the results to favor them. In fact, research has shown that studies funded by tobacco companies (like Juul) are less likely to report harmful effects compared to studies not funded by these companies. It makes people think that companies like Juul fund research to promote their products, not to actually help public health.

Juul said that the research should be judged on the science alone, but many experts still find it hard to trust studies funded by companies with something to gain. Critics say this creates a "conflict of interest," meaning the scientists might feel pressured to find positive results that benefit the company.

This case shows why it's important to question research, especially when it's funded by companies. When reading studies, it's smart to ask who paid for the research and think about how that could affect the results.

2. VAPING: WHAT YOU KNOW VS. WHAT YOU DON'T

Objective

Assess personal knowledge and uncertainties about vaping to foster critical thinking and informed research.

Learning outcomes

- Recall and list three known facts about vaping.
- Identify and discuss areas of uncertainty about vaping.
- Research one uncertainty and summarize findings from credible sources.

Activity (15 minutes)



Introduction

- Teacher: "Today, we're doing something different. I want to know what you know and what you're not sure about when it comes to vaping."

Part 1: What do you know? (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Write down three things you know about vaping."
- Allow 3–5 minutes for students to write.

Part 2: What are you not sure about? (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Now, write down three things you're unsure about."
- Allow 3–5 minutes for students to reflect.

Facilitated discussion (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Let's discuss what you know and your uncertainties."
- Have students share one known fact and one uncertainty, encouraging group responses.

Wrap-up

- Teacher: "For homework, research one of your uncertainties using credible sources. Find reliable information from credible sources, like government health websites or scientific articles. Write a short paragraph summarising what you learned and be ready to share your findings with the class."

Suggestions for handling misinformation during the session

- Acknowledge uncertainty: "Interesting point—let's explore accuracy of the information together."
- Encourage critical thinking: "How can we verify this? What sources are reliable?"
- Research together: Pause to look up information from credible sources.
- Follow up later: "I'll research this and share findings next class."
- Promote reliable sources: "Use trustworthy sources like health organisations."

3. STANDING STRONG: PEER PRESSURE REFUSAL SKILLS

Objective

Practice effective refusal techniques to resist peer pressure around vaping, reinforcing that non-vaping is the norm among teens.

Learning outcomes

- Understand that non-vaping is the norm among teens.
- Develop and practice effective refusal techniques to resist peer pressure.
- Evaluate which refusal strategies are most effective and why.

Activity (15 minutes)



Quiz (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Let's start with a quick quiz. What percentage of Australian teenagers are currently vaping?"
- A. 29%
- B. 65%
- C. 42%
- D. 10% (Correct answer)
- Give students a moment to respond, then reveal the correct answer.
- To make it more fun and engaging, turn it into a competition.

Vaping excuses (2-3 minutes)

- Teacher: "Now, take 2-3 minutes to write down five excuses you might use if someone offered you a vape."
- Allow students time to write their responses.

Role play (10 minutes)

- Teacher: "Pair up in groups of 2-3. One of you will offer a vape, and the other will practice refusing it using one of the excuses you just wrote down. The person offering the vape should be persistent so the refuser can practice each excuse."
- Let students engage in role play, rotating roles as time allows.

Wrap-up

- Discuss as a class which refusal techniques were most effective and why. Highlight that having an 'excuse' ready-to-go is the easiest way to refuse a vape. Reinforce that most teens don't vape, making non-vaping the norm and a powerful stance.

4. WHO CAN HELP?

Objective

Ensure students know where to turn for help if they or someone they know is struggling with vaping or other substances.

Learning outcomes

- Identify key support services available for vaping and substance use concerns.
- Understand when and why to seek help from these services.
- Retain contact information for relevant support resources in case of need.

Materials needed

1. Print and cut the slips of paper on the following page, each containing the names and descriptions of support services.
2. A small basket or box.
3. Print and cut the following page in half to share with your students.

Activity (15 minutes)



Introduction (2 minutes)

- Teacher: "Today, we're going to learn about some important resources that can help if you or someone you know is struggling with vaping or other substances. It's important to know where to find support when you need it."

Who can help? Draw (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "I'm going to pass around a basket with cards, each listing a service that can provide help. Take turns drawing a card, reading the service name and what it offers."
- Pass the basket around, assist students with explanations if needed.

Quick discussion (3 minutes)

- Teacher: "When might you use one of these services, and why do you think it's important to know about them?"
- Encourage students to share brief examples and reflections.

Wrap-up (2 minutes)

- Teacher: "Remember, these services are available whenever you need them. I'm going to give you a sheet with the contact details so you can keep it for reference."
- Hand out sheets with the contact details of the services.

Your GP (Doctor)

Professional medical advice
for health concerns.
Contact your local doctor.

Kids Helpline

24/7 phone and online
counselling for kids and teens.
Call 1800 55 1800 or chat online.

Quitline

Support to quit vaping
or smoking
13 78 48

Smiling Mind App

Mindfulness and meditation
app for mental well-being
smilingmind.com.au

Headspace

Youth mental health service
headspace.org.au

Beyond Blue

Mental health support and advice
1300 224 636

Your GP (Doctor)

Professional medical advice
for health concerns.
Contact your local doctor.

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5. DECODING TOBACCO ADVERTISING

Objective

Students will identify how tobacco advertising targets youth and discuss the manipulation tactics used.

Learning outcomes

- Identify key strategies used in tobacco advertising to target youth.
- Analyse the emotions and perceptions that these advertisements exploit.
- Propose strategies for resisting manipulative marketing tactics.

Activity (15 minutes)



Article reading (5 minutes)

- Print the case study on the following page and hand it to the students to read.
- Teacher: "Today, we're going to look at how tobacco companies target young people through advertising. Take a few minutes to read the printed case study and then we will discuss it in groups."

Quick group discussion (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "In your small groups, discuss these questions: How do these ads make tobacco seem appealing? What emotions do they exploit? How might these marketing tactics influence the perception of tobacco among different age groups?"
- Give students time to discuss in small groups.

Insight sharing (5 minutes)

- Teacher: "Let's hear from each group. Share one insight about how young people are being manipulated by these ads."
- Have each group share, followed by a brief class discussion.

Wrap-up

- Teacher: "As a wrap-up, think about one way you can avoid falling for these manipulation tactics in the future."

CASE STUDY: DECODING TOBACCO ADVERTISING

Tobacco companies are using old tricks online to make products like nicotine pouches, e-cigarettes, and heated tobacco seem cool and fun. Their ads often show young, healthy-looking people using these products, making them appear safe, even though they are addictive.

In 2020, researchers at Stanford found that Philip Morris International (PMI) promoted its IQOS heated tobacco on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and through influencers. They even worked with influencers as young as 21, breaking their own rules. PMI had to stop the campaign after this was revealed.

In Indonesia, half of kids aged 13-15 saw e-cigarette ads online. These ads made vaping look like a high-tech gadget or something fun at parties. Tobacco companies are clearly targeting young people to make smoking look exciting.

Tobacco marketing is also hidden in popular TV shows. A report found that in Netflix's Formula 1: Drive to Survive, 33% of the screen time in one season had tobacco-related branding. Even in countries with advertising bans, companies use sponsorships to reach millions of viewers.

There's also "surrogate marketing," where companies use cigarette-like branding to advertise non-tobacco products. In India, many ads on Facebook and Instagram for smokeless tobacco looked like cigarette ads.

Why Digital Tobacco Advertising is a Big Problem

First, digital ads can easily cross borders and reach young people in places where tobacco ads are banned. Second, online ads can be personalized based on what you look at online, making it easier to target people. Third, these ads are hard to track because they appear and disappear quickly. Lastly, companies are pushing newer products like e-cigarettes as safer alternatives, but they're still highly addictive, and the long-term health risks are unknown.

Tobacco companies are using digital marketing to target young people, making harmful products look appealing. It's important to recognize these tactics and not fall for them.



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