

MEDIA RELEASE

☒ **Information** ☐ **Advisory** ☐ **Warning** ☐ **Update**

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Go Back to School Tobacco-Free

According to the 2017-2018 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth Survey (MiPHY), youth use of e-cigarettes/vaping products has increased for 7th, 9th, and 11th grade students in St. Clair County since the 2015-2016 MiPHY cycle.

Past 30 Day Use of an Electronic Vapor Product

Grade	2015-2016	2017-2018	Relative Percent Increase
7 th Grade	8%	10%	25% increase
9 th Grade	16%	27%	68% increase
11 th Grade	25%	38%	52% increase

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, the use of products containing nicotine in any form, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe for youth. The brain is not fully developed until the mid-20s. Exposure to nicotine during adolescence can harm brain development, which may have long-lasting effects on impulse control, mood disorders, and susceptibility to addiction.

As students head back to school, the St. Clair County Health Department and Smoke-Free Community Team (SFCT) encourage parents to talk to kids about tobacco use and remind them that e-cigarettes and vaping products are not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes. Providing a tobacco and smoke-free environment can help protect kids from tobacco use and smoke exposure. Lisa Hauser, SFCT Coalition Coordinator, said "It is essential we work together to address e-cigarette use among young people, and do everything we can to help prevent youth tobacco use and a lifetime of addiction to a deadly product."

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Jennifer Michaluk, Director of Health Education and Planning also stated “the Health Department encourages all St. Clair County school districts to include e-cigarettes and other new emerging tobacco products in their tobacco free campus policies. It is also important to educate staff, students and parents on the policies. Emerging research suggests that school policies prohibiting tobacco use, when consistently enforced, are an essential part of lowering teen smoking rates.”

Adolescents can call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669 and receive free telephone counseling to help them quit tobacco. Smoking cessation counseling is also available through our Teen Health Center. Call (810) 987-1311 to schedule an appointment. For more information on smoke free resources or the SFCT contact (810) 987-5300. Visit our website www.scchealth.co or follow us on social media @scchdmi.

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