

# Youth vaping in Jersey consultation

A summary of key findings  
from the 2024 survey of  
parents and carers

## Introduction

Between 18 March-16 May 2024, Public Health Jersey held a consultation to assess the views and opinions of parents and carers about youth vaping in Jersey. The goal was to understand how widespread vaping is among young people, what influences the use of vapes, and the roles schools and the Government of Jersey should play in tackling the issue.

Parents and carers participated through an online survey sent to all secondary schools. The survey had 17 questions focusing on parental awareness, perceptions, and concerns, and received 213 completed responses.

A copy of the survey questions is included at the end of this summary.

## What you said

**Parental Concern and Awareness:** Parents showed significant concern about youth vaping in Jersey. About 22% of respondents reported that their child smokes or vapes, and that they mainly use disposable vapes. Vaping is seen as common in Jersey, especially in school toilets, buses, and public spaces.

**Ease of Access and Peer Influence:** Parents cited shops, peers, adults, and online as ways that young people access vapes. Social media platforms like Snapchat are often mentioned. Some specific shops were also named for allegedly selling to minors without age checks.

**Drivers of Uptake:** Peer pressure was viewed by parents as the main reason that young people started vaping, followed by curiosity and emotional stress, like exam anxiety. Sweet flavours, bright packaging, and marketing strategies were seen as targeting young people and making vaping more appealing.

**Nicotine Addiction and Struggles to Quit:** Many parents felt their child was addicted to nicotine, noting frequent use and secretive behaviours. While some children attempted to quit, many efforts were seen as unsuccessful or unsupported.

**Environmental and Health Risks:** Single use (disposable) vapes were identified by parents as environmental hazards, often seen as litter. Concerns were raised about unknown long-term health impacts and the addictiveness of high-nicotine devices, especially for adolescents.

**Strong Support for Regulation and a Ban:** About 89% of parents supported a ban on single use vapes. Many also called for stricter rules, such as:

- Banning flavours and child-targeted packaging
- Raising the legal purchase age
- Restricting sales to prescription-only for adults quitting smoking
- Imposing fines on adults who supply minors

**Schools Viewed as Crucial but Overburdened:** There were mixed views on the role of schools in preventing vaping in Jersey. Many parents supported strict enforcement, like using vape detectors and suspensions. Others stressed the need for education, counselling, and external support. A common theme was that schools alone cannot solve the problem.

**Desire for a Whole-System Response:** Parents called for a coordinated approach to youth vaping in Jersey, involving the Government (including Public Health and Education), law enforcement, and families. They stressed the need for consistent messaging, strong legislation, and support for young people.

**Mixed Views on Taxation:** Some parents saw higher taxes as a deterrent, while many preferred an outright ban on all vaping products. Concerns arose that taxation could be ineffective or unfair. A few feared it might push young people towards buying cigarettes or other harmful products.

## What we are doing now

Public Health Jersey is working with schools, youth services, and children to gain insights and find ways to prevent vaping and nicotine use in Jersey. We are also guided by research and evidence on youth vaping.

Public Health Jersey is:

- Running a prevention campaign on social media for children and young people, informed by the Schools Council Network
- Developing a central resource to support schools with PSHE for Key Stages 3 and 4
- Creating an interactive digital 'Quit Plan' to help children stop vaping based on their habits
- Collaborating with the YES project to support young people to quit vaping
- Hosting a webpage with advice, guidance, and tips
- Exploring regulations for reusable vapes and other nicotine products.

Single use vapes have been heavily marketed to young people and are the most common type of vape used. Most vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can affect mood, behaviour, and learning. It can also lead to dependency. Since 2016, it has been illegal in Jersey to supply nicotine vapes to anyone under 18; however, youth uptake has remained significant.

As a result of a consultation led by the Infrastructure and Environment department in 2024, new legislation will soon ban the import, sale, and supply of single use vapes in Jersey. Public Health Jersey supports this due to the environmental damage caused by single use vapes and the associated health risks from vaping.

The Government of Jersey is also proposing a moderate increase in vape prices through a new tax on vaping liquid, to further discourage children and young people from vaping.

While most young people don't vape, a considerable number do. We need to do more to protect our younger generation from vaping and to reduce the harmful effects of nicotine. We aim to preserve the option for adults wanting to quit smoking. Our work is part of a wider strategy to protect all Islanders and future generations from the harms of tobacco, vapes, and nicotine in all forms.

## **Appendix 1**

The following questions were sent to parents in an online survey in March 2024:

1. What school/college does your child/do your children attend? (select all that apply).
2. How old is your child/are your children? (select all that apply).
3. Do you personally use nicotine products, and if so which ones? (select all that apply).
4. As far as you are aware, does your child or the young person you look after smoke or vape?
5. What products do they use?
6. How does your child/young person access vapes?
7. Can you provide more information about your child's or young person's use of vapes?
8. What is your child's awareness of the health risks associated with vaping?
9. Are you aware of the current vaping laws in Jersey?
10. Where do you get your information on the health impacts of vaping from? (select all that apply).
11. What are your thoughts and/or concerns about youth vaping in Jersey in general? Why do you think this?
12. What do you think your child's school should do to tackle the issue of youth vaping on school premises?
13. What do you think the Government of Jersey should do to tackle youth vaping in Jersey outside of schools?
14. Would you be in support of a ban on disposable vapes under an amendment to the Single Use Plastics etc. (Restrictions) (Jersey) Law 2021?
15. How will a ban on disposable, single use vapes have an impact on you/your household?
16. If a ban on single use vapes is approved, what support and resources should be available to people that regularly use disposable, single use vapes?
17. Would you be in support of an increase in taxation on disposable, single use vapes by the Government of Jersey?
18. Is there anything else you would like to say? (please provide your contact details below).