

# **DITCH THE VAPE**

## **Underage vaping in Epping Forest**

Survey Report 2025

by the Epping Forest Youth Council

May 2025



## FOREWORD

I am delighted to commend the EFDC Youth Council for their dedication and hard work in producing this important report on underage vaping in Epping Forest. Their commitment to tackling an issue that affects the health and wellbeing of young people across our district is both inspiring and commendable.

This report is the result of thoughtful research, honest conversations, and a shared determination to make a difference. It reflects the voices of our young people and highlights the real challenges they face, while also offering practical recommendations for positive change.

As a locally practicing GP Doctor and the Portfolio Holder for Community Health and Wellbeing, I fully endorse this project and thank the Youth Council for their proactive leadership. Their work not only informs our future approach but also reinforces the vital role young people play in shaping healthier, safer communities for all.

Kind Regards,

**Cllr Kaz Rizvi**  
Cabinet Member | Community Health & Wellbeing  
District Councillor | Chigwell with Lambourne  
Epping Forest District Council



## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

I would like to thank EFDC Youth Council for their hard work on their Ditch the Vape project tackling underage vaping. Youth Vaping is a key issue for Essex County Council and the insight gained from this project will be used to further inform our efforts in the piloting of a harm reduction behavioural change response to youth vaping across the county.

**Helen Gregory,**  
Essex Public Health

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# DITCH THE VAPE

**The Youth Councillors' latest project focuses on raising awareness of alcohol and substance misuse issues among young people, aligned with the priorities of the Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2022/26.**

The first stage of the project involved educating the Youth Councillors by engaging with key services such as the Amy Winehouse Foundation, The Children's Society, Healthwatch, Public Health and Essex County Council and The Training Effect. Such a broad topic, the Youth Councillors agreed to tackle underage vaping first, as it was highlighted as a major concern amongst young people attending the Epping Forest youth conference (November 2023).

Meeting the service providers and support services helped them understand the dangers presented by underage vaping and the addictive behaviours that can develop. As part of the project, the Youth Council produced a 17-question vaping awareness survey, which was distributed to the secondary schools within the Epping Forest district. A total of 2,924 pupils completed the survey.

The rise of youth vaping in Great Britain is a growing concern. According to a report by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), the data reveals that while the rate of youth vaping has stabilised, it remains a serious cause for concern, with close to a million children having tried vaping. The survey highlights key trends which emphasise the need for immediate government intervention. (source ASH 2024)



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The Epping Forest Youth Council report explores the prevalence and consequences of underage vaping in the Epping Forest district. With insights gathered from nearly 3,000 young people, the study highlights the health, environmental, and social effects of vaping among young people.

The surge in youth vaping coincides with the widespread availability of inexpensive and highly appealing disposable vapes. These products have gained popularity among children and young adults, due to extensive promotion on social media. In response, both national and local initiatives are being implemented to address the growing concerns surrounding youth vaping.

## KEY FACTS

While most young people do not vape, vaping is not risk-free. Unlike smoking, it does not produce toxic tar or carbon monoxide but vapes still contain nicotine, metals and other chemicals. Short-term health effects of vaping can include coughing, headaches, dizziness, and sore throats, while the long-term health impacts remain unknown due to a lack of published research. However, we are hearing more reports of young people experiencing respiratory difficulties, and anxiety when unable to access their vape. Furthermore, vapes discarded in public places also pose a health risk to young children and dogs who often find them and pick them up.

Beyond health concerns, vaping poses a significant environmental threat. The UK disposes of an estimated 1.3 million single-use vapes every week, enough to cover twenty two football pitches. These products contain batteries and plastics that are difficult to recycle, leading to environmental pollution. Harmful chemicals from discarded vapes seep into the soil and water, posing risks to wildlife and ecosystems.

Vapes were originally designed as a smoking cessation aid for adults, yet their increasing use among young people raises concerns about dependency, health risks, and environmental impact. Addressing these issues requires a collaborative approach involving policymakers, educators, and communities.

### Survey findings

The survey gathered responses from 2,924 young people aged 12-18 across Epping Forest district secondary schools and The New City College. The findings provide valuable insights into vaping behaviours and perceptions among this age group.

Vaping is widely recognised as a concern, with 63% agreeing it is an issue. However, 94% said they do not vape. Those that said they do, 40% started as early as primary school.

### Accessibility and availability

69% of young people agree that vapes are too readily available to those under 18. Vapes are perceived as easily accessible, with 34% being sold from corner shops, 19% are obtained from dealers. Dealers are young people who re-sell them at a reduced cost using Snapchat and other social media platforms. Often these vapes have been used.

16% were obtained from friends and 12% were found on the floor in discarded places. These were identified as the most common outlets.

### Barriers to quitting

Peer pressure and the belief that vaping is “cool” are significant barriers to quitting, with 33% stating they “like it too much” to stop, and 16% having attempted to quit but found it difficult.

### Health and awareness

While some acknowledge the health risks, 10% of respondents do not believe vaping is harmful, highlighting the need for clearer education on the risks. 54% use four or more vapes per week and 67% of vapers surveyed, puff 20 or more times a day.

### Environmental concerns

Only 27% would use a vape bin at school if provided, this suggests a fear of being caught vaping and being reprimanded. This also indicates a lack of social consciousness to recycle vapes as 45% said they would be discarded as litter.

### Desire to quit

23% expressed a desire to quit vaping, due to health and cost concerns. However, 77% showed no interest in quitting, suggesting that interventions need to address the enjoyment and addiction factors associated with vaping.

## IN SUMMARY

The survey highlights vaping as a prominent issue, therefore there is the need to address this through education, policy reform, and community engagement. Tackling the social, emotional, and informational factors behind vaping and offering support for those who wish to quit, will help reduce its prevalence and mitigate its impact on young people in the Epping Forest district.

While most schools participated in the survey, some declined, citing concerns that it addressed illegal activity. This highlights a key challenge: some schools are hesitant to discuss vaping due to its illegal implications. However, avoiding the topic does not prevent vaping; instead, it leaves young people without a platform to express their experiences or gain guidance on the risks involved.

Schools, youth workers and health workers, should embrace vaping education as a preventative measure and support open discussions to help students make informed decisions. Clear national guidance on addressing vaping within the curriculum and pastoral support is also needed.

In addition to the findings on underage vaping, discussions with young people have revealed another emerging concern, snus and nicotine pouches. While snus is banned, nicotine pouches remain widely available in corner shops, general food stores, and vape shops, making them easily accessible to young people.



**Nicotine pouches are an emerging concern**

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Nicotine pouches are smokeless and spitless products containing nicotine, flavourings, and other ingredients. These pouches are designed to be placed in the mouth, similar to chewing tobacco or snus, but they don't contain tobacco leaves. Instead, they often use plant-based materials as fillers. While nicotine pouches are generally considered less harmful than smoking, they're not entirely risk-free and can still lead to nicotine addiction.

While pouches are a relatively new product, they are very similar to Scandinavian 'snus'. But whereas snus contains tobacco, pouches do not. This distinction is important, as it means pouches often slip through regulatory black holes such that the laws and rules that apply to tobacco products and cigarettes, don't apply to pouches. This lack of regulation means that pouches, unlike cigarettes, can be legally sold to people under the age of 18 in the UK.

## CONCLUSION

**The survey has highlighted the extent of underage vaping in the Epping Forest district and the need for a multi-faceted approach to address the issue.**

By implementing stronger awareness initiatives, enforcing regulations, and offering better support, we can help young people make healthier choices.

Further collaboration between schools, parents, retailers, health providers, police, and local authorities is essential in tackling this growing concern.

**Only through a united effort can we reduce the risks associated with underage vaping and other harmful substances.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Educational awareness campaigns

- Implement targeted awareness campaigns in schools to expose the health and environmental risks of vaping and to correct misconceptions.
- Empower young people through peer-led initiatives and positive role models, to shift attitudes and discourage vaping.
- Implement vape disposal education programmes, including accessible and free educational resources, designated vape bins and awareness on the impact on the environment.

## Stricter enforcement of age restrictions

- Ensure strong enforcement of the new disposable vape law ban (from 1 June 2025) through collaboration between Trading Standards, the council, and the police.
- Promote ways in which people can report underage sales to Trading Standards.
- Crack down on underage vape sales with stronger policies and legal action against offenders.

## Support for those wanting to quit

- Establish accessible quit-vaping programmes in schools, offering emotional support, practical strategies, and professional guidance for young people wanting to quit.

## Community engagement & positive alternatives

- Develop a community-wide strategy with local authorities, schools, and organisations to tackle youth vaping.
- Provide engaging and affordable alternatives, such as sports, arts, and well-being activities, to reduce vaping's social appeal.

## Environmental impact and public awareness

- Promote the council's doorstep collection dates.
- Launch vape recycling programmes and enforce stricter regulations on vape littering.
- Promote public awareness of vaping's environmental harm and introduce clean-up initiatives.
- Support research on long-term effects of vape waste and battery disposal.

## Collaboration between health and environmental agencies

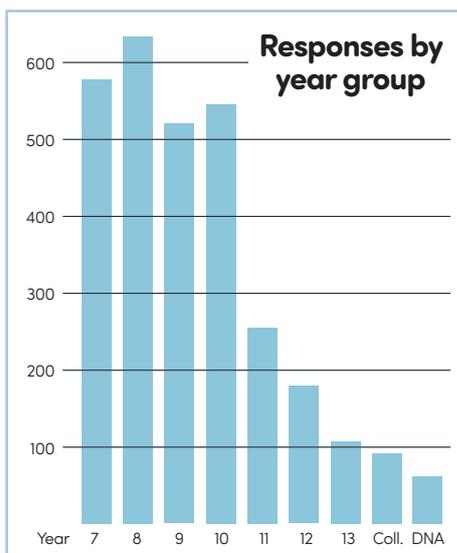
- Strengthen partnerships between public health and environmental organisations for a unified approach.
- Hold manufacturers accountable by requiring transparency on the environmental impact of their products.

# EPHING FOREST YOUTH COUNCIL VAPING AWARENESS SURVEY FINDINGS

## Question 1: What year are you in?

The responses to this question were broken down by year group. The following table shows the distribution of responses across the different year groups:

Year group	Total responses	%
Year 7	568	19%
Year 8	623	21%
Year 9	511	17%
Year 10	536	18%
Year 11	250	9%
Year 12	176	6%
Year 13	105	4%
College	90	3%
Did not answer	65	2%



**2859**  
responses

**ANALYSIS:** These results indicate that younger students (Years 7 to 10) were more engaged in the survey, while older year groups, particularly in Years 11 to 13, had lower levels of participation.

- Most responses came from students in Year 8 (623 total responses), followed by Year 7 (568 responses).
- Year 9 and Year 10 also had strong participation, with totals of 511 and 536, respectively.
- Fewer responses came from Year 11 (250), Year 12 (176), and Year 13 (105).
- College students contributed the least, with just 90 responses.

## Question 2: What school or college do you go to?

While most schools participated in the survey, a few declined, citing concerns that it addressed illegal activity. This highlights a key challenge: that some schools are hesitant to discuss vaping due to its illegal implications.

## Question 3: Where do you live?

In the survey we asked for post codes to highlight areas that the findings represented but we did not collect addresses. The Youth Councillors who designed the survey thought it was **important that the survey was anonymous** to maximise the number of people that would complete it.

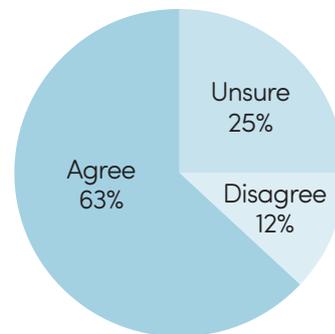


## Question 4: Are vapes an issue in your area?

The majority of respondents agree that vaping is an issue in their area.

	Total responses	%
Agree	1846	63%
Disagree	359	12%
Unsure	715	25%
Total	2920	

**63%**  
think vapes  
are an issue



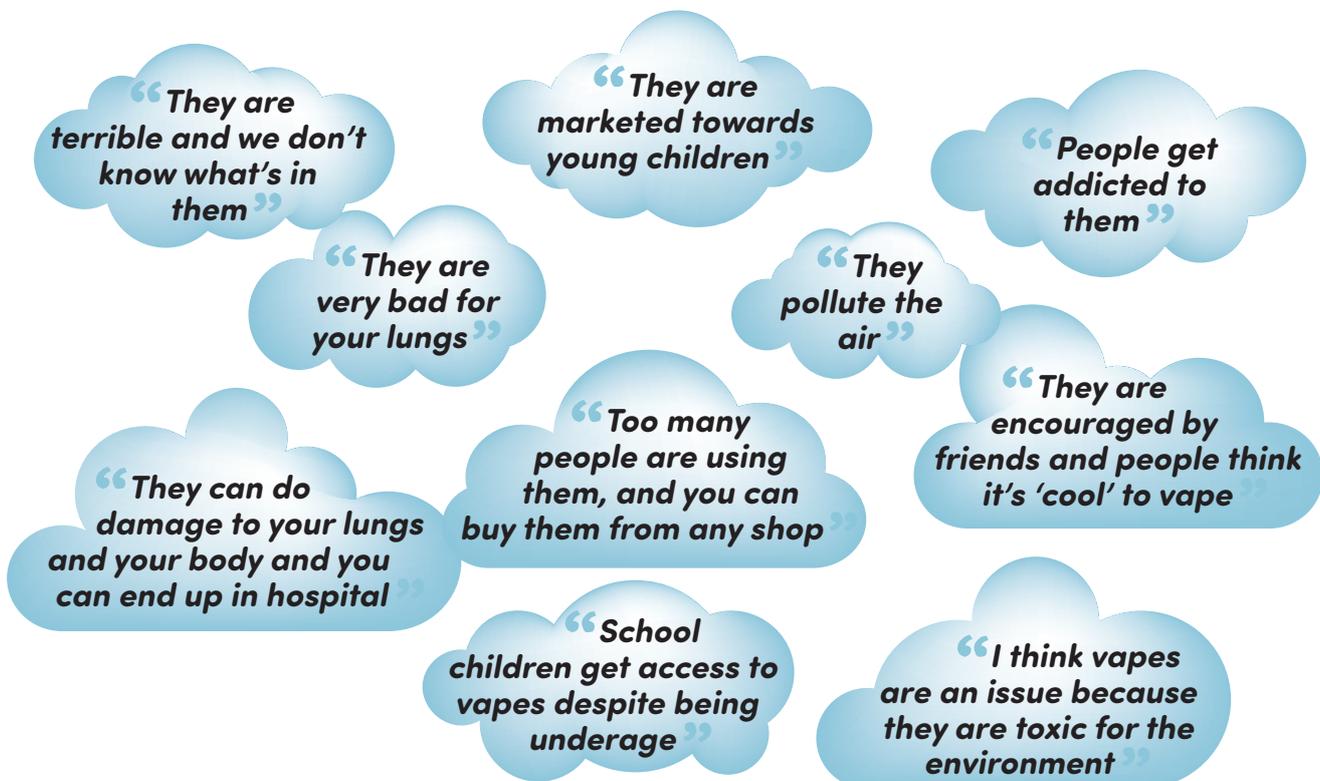
**ANALYSIS:** Most respondents agree that vaping is an issue in the area.

- 63% of total responses indicating agreement.
- 12% of respondents disagreed with the statement, while 25% were unsure.

## Question 5: Why do you think vapes are an issue?

2,516 pupils responded to this question; a sample of the comments are below:

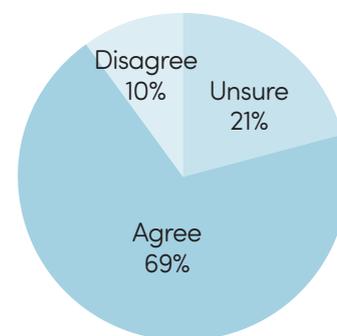
Quotes from the young people:



## Question 6: Are vapes are too easily available to under 18s in our community?

	Total responses	%
<b>Agree</b>	2012	69%
<b>Disagree</b>	283	10%
<b>Unsure</b>	624	21%
<b>Total</b>	2919	

**69%**  
agree that vapes  
are too available  
to under 18s



The data indicates strong concern among young people about the availability of vapes to under-18s.

### ANALYSIS:

- 69% of all respondents agree that vapes are too easily available to under 18s in the community.
- 10% of the total responses disagreed, while 21% were unsure.

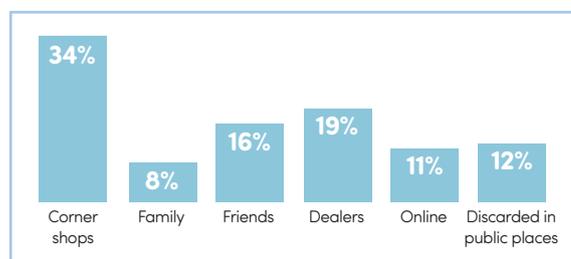
## Question 7: Where are vapes most available to under 18s?

(Pupils could answer multiple choices)

The data shows that corner shops and dealers are the most commonly reported sources of vapes for under-18s. A dealer is typically a young person who buys vapes and resells them, often through social media platforms like Snapchat. Buyers and sellers arrange local meeting points, and the vapes are sold for a couple of pounds less than in shops. However, some of these vapes may already have been used. Younger children, including those in primary school, are also encountering vapes in a different way. Some are picking up discarded vapes in play areas, often finding ones that still contain a few puffs. This could be their first introduction to vaping. Introducing vape bins in play areas would help protect children by reducing the risk of them picking up and using discarded vapes.

	Total responses	%
<b>Corner shops</b>	2192	34%
<b>Dealers</b>	1206	19%
<b>Friends</b>	1029	16%
<b>Discarded in public places</b>	763	12%
<b>Online</b>	690	11%
<b>Family</b>	501	8%
<b>Total</b>	6354	100%

**34%** say corner shops  
sell to under 18s



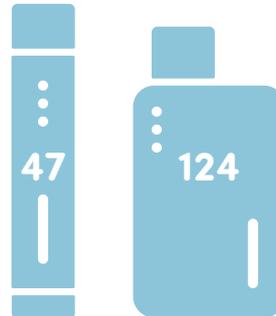
### ANALYSIS:

- 34% of respondents believe that vapes are most easily available through corner shops, followed by dealers (19%) and friends (16%).
- Discarded vapes in public places were identified by 12% of the total group as another common source, with online sales contributing 11%.
- Family members were seen as a less common source, with just 8% of respondents indicating this.

## Question 8: What size vape do you use?

This suggests that most young people in the survey do not vape, but for those who do, the larger vape sizes are more commonly used.

Vape size	Total responses	%
I do not vape	2749	94%
600 puffs	47	2%
600+ puffs	124	4%
Total	2920	



**Larger**  
vapes are more  
commonly used

### ANALYSIS:

- 94% of respondents report that they don't vape.
- Of the 6% (171 pupils) who do vape, the most common choice is vapes with 600+ puffs (4% of total responses), followed by 600 puffs (2%).

## Question 9: How many vapes do you use per week?

These results suggest that among the small percentage of respondents who vape, many use multiple vapes each week.

Number of vapes used per week	Total responses	%
Less than 1	17	10%
One	20	12%
Two	23	14%
Three	19	11%
Four or more	92	54%
Total	171	



### ANALYSIS:

- 54% of respondents use four or more vapes per week, which is the largest category, followed by less than 1 vape per week (10% of total responses).
- A total of 14% report using two vapes per week, while 12% use one and 11% use three vapes weekly.

## Question 10: How often do you use your vape (puff) per day?

This suggests that those who vape tend to 'puff' frequently, with the majority puffing 20 or more times a day.

Number of times you use your vape per day	Total responses	%
5 puffs of less	17	10%
5 – 20 puffs	40	23%
20+ puffs	114	67%
Total	171	



**67%**  
puff **20+**  
times  
a day

### ANALYSIS:

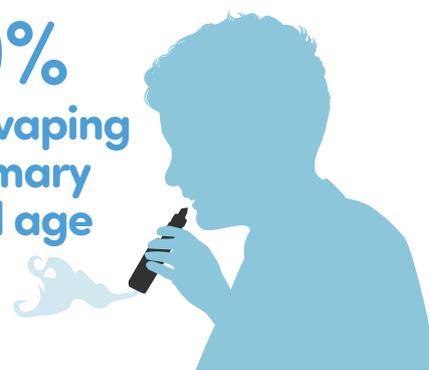
- A significant 67% of the total respondent's report using 20 or more puffs per day.
- 23% of respondents use between 5 and 20 puffs per day, and 10% use 5 or fewer.

## Question 11: When did you begin to vape?

These results highlight that vaping starts at an early age for many respondents, with a huge portion starting before reaching secondary school.

When did you begin to vape?	Total responses	%
Primary (before Year 7)	68	40%
Year 7 – Year 9	42	24%
Year 10 – Year 11	29	17%
College or sixth form	32	19%
Total	171	

**40%**  
started vaping  
at Primary  
school age



### ANALYSIS:

- The largest proportion of the 171 respondents, 40%, began vaping at the primary level (before Year 7)
- 24% began vaping during Years 7 to 9, while 17% started during Years 10 to 11.

A smaller percentage, 19%, started vaping at college or sixth form, which reflects an older age group.

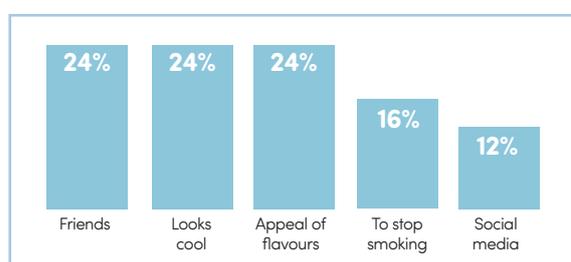
## Question 12: What influenced you to vape?

(Pupils could answer multiple times)

The data reveals that peer influence is the most significant factor in young people's decision to vape, with 24% citing friends as an influence. The appeal of bright colours and sweet flavours, such as bubble gum and watermelon, also plays a major role (24%), alongside the perception that vaping looks 'cool' (24%). Additionally, 16% reported vaping as a method to stop smoking, while 12% were influenced by social media. These findings highlight the various social and sensory factors contributing to underage vaping.

Influence	Total responses	%
Friends	70	24%
Looks cool	69	24%
The appeal of flavours	68	24%
To stop smoking	47	16%
Social media	35	12%
Total	289	

### Equal influences – friends, fun flavours and looking cool



#### ANALYSIS:

- The most cited influences on vaping were friends (24% of total responses), followed by looks cool (24%) and the appeal of flavours (24%)
- A smaller percentage, 16%, reported vaping to help stop smoking.
- Social media was less of an influence, cited by 12% of respondents.

## Question 13: Where do you dispose of your empty vapes?

(Pupils could answer multiple choices)

The data suggests a lack of awareness or action regarding proper disposal methods, with a huge portion of vapes being discarded irresponsibly in public spaces.

Disposal method	Total responses	%
Throw away in street	89	45%
Throw away at home but don't recycle	59	30%
Recycle at home with batteries	26	13%
I use a vape bin	26	13%
Total	200	

#### ANALYSIS:

- The most common disposal method is throwing vapes away in the street, reported by 45% of respondents, followed closely by those who throw them away at home but do not recycle (30%).
- A smaller percentage of respondents dispose of their vapes in vape bins or recycle them at home with batteries (13% each).

## Question 14: Would you use a vape bin if they had one in school?

A majority of the respondents (57%) said they would not use a vape bin if available in school. This could indicate that many pupils are uninterested in designated vape bins. However, school policies currently impose sanctions on students caught with a vape, which may have influenced their responses. Some students might avoid using a vape bin out of fear that it could lead to punishment.

	Total responses	%
No	98	57%
Yes	46	27%
Maybe	27	16%
Total	171	



Only  
**27%**  
would use a  
vape bin if  
available

### ANALYSIS:

- Most respondents, 57%, would not use a vape bin if available in school.
- 27% would use it, and 16% answered maybe.

## Question 15: Would you like to stop smoking or vaping?

A majority of the respondents (77%) did not want to stop smoking, but almost a quarter (23%) did want to stop, therefore services need to address this need.

	Total responses	%
No	131	77%
Yes	40	23%
Total	171	

**77%**  
do not want to  
stop smoking  
or vaping



### ANALYSIS:

- 77% of respondents do not want to stop vaping, indicating that for the majority, vaping is not currently seen as a behaviour they wish to change.
- 23% of respondents expressed a desire to quit, highlighting a potential area for support and intervention for those who want to stop but may need help to do so.

## Question 16: Why would you like to stop vaping?

This suggests that young people are motivated by both personal well-being and practical concerns, such as the financial cost, when considering quitting vaping.

Reason to stop	Total responses	%
Health	26	29%
Money	21	23%
Physical fitness	23	25%
Family & friends	10	11%
Getting into trouble	11	12%
Total	91	

**54%**  
cite health and fitness as a reason to stop vaping



### ANALYSIS:

- The primary reasons for wanting to stop vaping are concerns about health (29%) and money (23%).
- Physical fitness also emerged as a significant factor for 25% of respondents, while family and friends (11%) and the fear of getting into trouble (12%) were less commonly cited.

## Question 17: What prevents you from wanting to give up vaping?

These findings suggest a combination of pleasure, social influence, and a lack of awareness of potential harm are key barriers to quitting.

Reason for not giving up	Total responses	%
I like it too much	77	24%
It looks cool	61	19%
Do not believe it's harmful	33	10%
Tried to give up but it was too hard	32	10%
Seeing family and friends vaping	28	9%
Health	26	8%
Money	21	7%
Physical fitness	23	7%
Family and friends	10	3%
Getting into trouble	11	3%
Total	322	

### ANALYSIS:

- 24% of respondents stated they do not want to give up vaping because they like it too much.
- Other prominent factors include the perception that it looks cool (19%).
- A notable percentage also tried to give up but found it hard (10%), and 10% do not believe vaping is harmful.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

### Youth perspectives on the health implications of vaping

Young people have expressed concerns about the health and environmental risks of vaping, with many recognising the dangers of nicotine addiction and the impact on vital organs, such as the lungs. They also highlight the environmental damage caused by discarded vapes.

These perspectives reinforce the importance of ongoing education, regulation, and awareness campaigns to combat underage vaping.

*“They said it was just ‘flavoured air,’ but now I’m out of breath just walking up the stairs”*

*“I started vaping because everyone else was doing it. Now I can’t stop, and I wish I had never started”*

*“Because they can do damage to your lungs and your body, and you can end up in the hospital”*

*“They contain nicotine, which is a harmful and addictive substance”*

*“Vapes are bad for health and studies have shown they have worse effects than cigarettes”*

*“Because they are very bad for your lungs”*

*“Because people get addicted to them”*

*“Many young people, who are mostly girls, vape in toilets and while socialising. It has become a social norm among young people our age”*

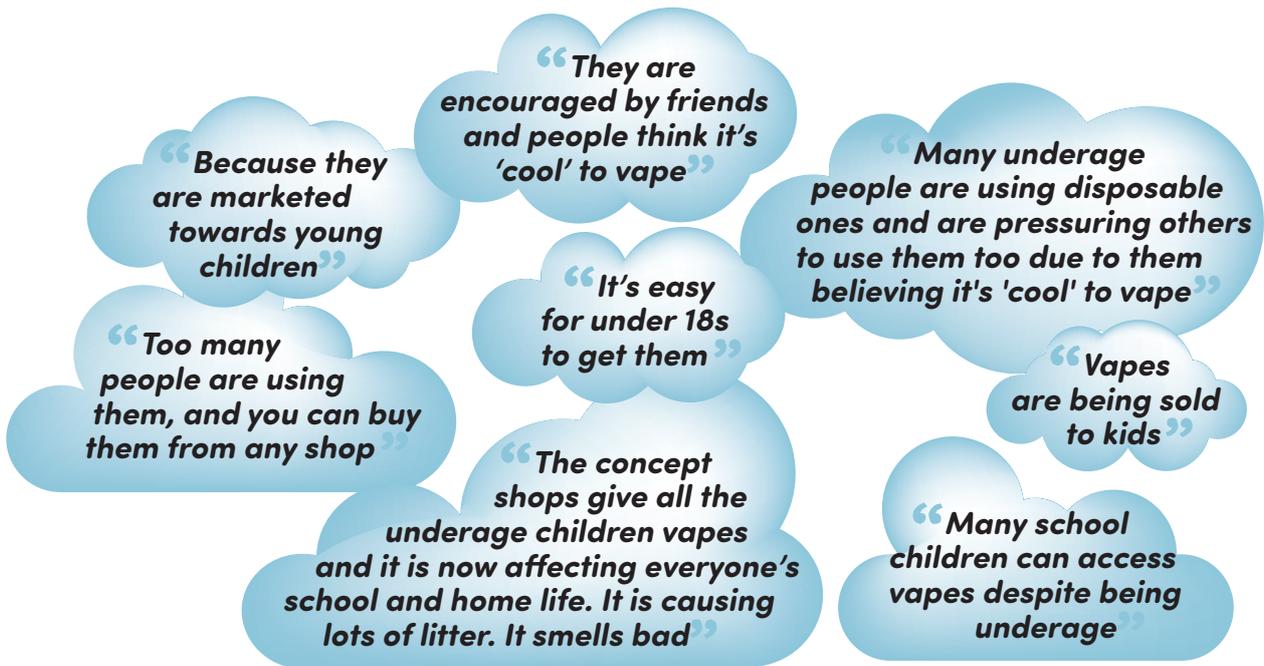
*“They are encouraged by friends and people who think it’s ‘cool’ to vape.”*

*“a lot of children in my school are vaping, however I personally do not, one of my friends has recently started, and it is not benefitting his health at all, also we can see his attitude change towards GCSEs”*

## Social concerns raised by young people

Vaping has become normalised in social settings, with many young people viewing it to appear “cool”. Peer pressure and accessibility are significant factors contributing to its widespread use, even among younger children.

These insights highlight the need for stricter regulations and awareness campaigns to address both the social normalisation and accessibility of vaping.



## Environmental concerns

Young people have expressed alarm about the environmental impact of vaping. Many highlight the pollution caused by discarded vapes and the toxic nature of vape products.

These concerns highlight the urgent need for both health education and environmental initiatives to mitigate the impact of vaping products on public spaces.



## METHODOLOGY

The Epping Forest Youth Council (EFYC) designed this Microsoft Forms survey to gather insights from secondary school pupils, about underage vaping.

At the EFYC Youth Conference in November 2023, 100 pupils from 10 secondary schools in the Epping Forest district identified underage vaping as their top concern. In response, this survey was launched to collect further data on the issue.

The survey was completely anonymous, no names or contact details were recorded. The data collected was used solely for analysis and consultation purposes, helping service providers develop additional support for young people in the community. All responses were kept confidential.

The survey was open for 107 days and closed on 20 December 2024, with an average completion time of 2 minutes and 38 seconds.

### 17 questions from the Epping Forest Youth Council vaping awareness survey

1. What year are you in?
2. What school or college do you go to?  
\*This question was removed as some schools declined to share the survey with pupils.



bymuratdeniz - iStock

3. Where do you live? Only provide your postcode, e.g. CM16 4BZ.  
We do not require your full address, the survey is anonymous.



AleksandrYu - iStock

4. Are vapes an issue in your area?
5. Why do you think vapes are an issue?
6. Are vapes too easily available to under 18s in our community.
7. Where are vapes most available to under 18s?
8. What size vape do you use?
9. How many vapes do you use per week?
10. How often do you use your vape (puff) per day?
11. When did you begin to vape?
12. What influenced you to vape?
13. Where do you dispose of your empty vapes?
14. Would you use a vape bin if they had one in school?
15. Would you like to stop smoking or vaping?
16. Why would you like to stop vaping?
17. What prevents you from wanting to give up vaping?

# THE LAW

In the UK, it is illegal for anyone under 18 to purchase or use vaping products. These age restrictions aim to protect young people from the health risks of nicotine addiction. If caught vaping underage, minors may face consequences ranging from confiscation of devices to educational measures.



## 1. Legal age for vaping in the UK

The sale of vaping products to individuals under 18 is prohibited under the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations (TRPR) 2016. Retailers are required to verify the age of customers purchasing e-cigarettes or e-liquids.

While possession of vaping products by minors is not explicitly illegal, using them in certain public spaces may lead to enforcement actions.

## 2. What happens if you're caught vaping under 18?

### 2.1. Confiscation

If caught vaping in schools or other restricted areas, authorities such as teachers or community officers may confiscate the device.

In some cases, the confiscated device may only be returned to a parent or guardian.

### 2.2. School disciplinary actions

Most schools have strict no vaping policies. Students caught vaping may face consequences such as:

- Warnings or reprimands
- Detention or suspension
- Parental notification and involvement

### 2.3. Police involvement

While police do not typically pursue minors for vaping, they may take action if the situation involves illegal substances (e.g., THC cartridges) or anti-social behaviour.

## 3. Why are these rules enforced?

The strict regulations on underage vaping are designed to:

- **Protect health:** Prevent young people from becoming addicted to nicotine and developing long-term health problems.



- **Curb vaping uptake:** Reduce the appeal of vaping among minors, especially with sweet or fruity flavours.
- **Ensure compliance:** Encourage retailers to adhere to age-verification policies and prevent underage sales.

#### 4. Education and support for underage vapers

Rather than focusing solely on punishment, many schools and community programmes aim to educate young people about the risks of vaping:

- **Workshops and talks:** Highlight the dangers of nicotine addiction and vaping related health risks.
- **Counselling services:** Provide support for minors struggling with nicotine dependence.
- **Parental guidance:** Encourage open conversations between parents and children about the risks of vaping.

#### 5. Tips for parents and guardians

If your child is caught vaping, consider the following steps:

- **Stay calm:** Approach the situation with understanding rather than anger.
- **Educate together:** Research the risks of vaping and discuss them openly.
- **Encourage alternatives:** Help them find healthier ways to manage stress or peer pressure.

Underage vaping is taken seriously in the UK, with measures in place to protect young people from the risks of nicotine addiction. If caught vaping under 18, minors may face confiscation, school disciplinary actions, or educational interventions. Parents, schools, and community programmes play a vital role in guiding young people toward healthier choices and understanding the consequences of vaping.

The laws serve as a deterrent, aiming to reduce the number of young people becoming regular users of nicotine through vapes, thereby safeguarding their health and well-being.

**The Tobacco and Vapes Bill (2024) will create the world's first smoke-free generation, gradually ending the sale of tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 and toughening laws to protect children from addiction.**

## FURTHER READING

### ASH. ACTION ON SMOKING & HEALTH

- [ash.org.uk/resources/view/ash-brief-for-local-authorities-on-youth-vaping](https://ash.org.uk/resources/view/ash-brief-for-local-authorities-on-youth-vaping)
- [ash.org.uk/resources/view/use-of-e-cigarettes-among-young-people-in-great-britain](https://ash.org.uk/resources/view/use-of-e-cigarettes-among-young-people-in-great-britain)

### CATCH22

- [catch-22.org.uk/resources/vaping-a-guide-for-young-people](https://catch-22.org.uk/resources/vaping-a-guide-for-young-people)

### ESSEX SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

- [escb.co.uk/safeguarding-topics/substance-misuse-and-youth-vaping](https://escb.co.uk/safeguarding-topics/substance-misuse-and-youth-vaping)

### FRANK

- [talktofrank.com/drug/vapes](https://talktofrank.com/drug/vapes)

## REPORTS

### BREAK THE VAPE

- Youth Vaping in Essex - You Said, We Did
- [data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/24qw8/essex-youth-vaping](https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/24qw8/essex-youth-vaping)

### ACTION ON SMOKING AND HEALTH (ASH)

- Their 2024 report on youth vaping in Great Britain. (ASH report)
- [ash.org.uk/uploads/Use-of-vapes-among-young-people-in-Great-Britain-2024.pdf?v=1725288402](https://ash.org.uk/uploads/Use-of-vapes-among-young-people-in-Great-Britain-2024.pdf?v=1725288402)

### THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

#### Essex Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (EYPDAS)

- [childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/east/EYPDAS](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/east/EYPDAS)

### GOV.UK

- [gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/youth-vaping-call-for-evidence/youth-vaping-call-for-evidence](https://gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/youth-vaping-call-for-evidence/youth-vaping-call-for-evidence)

### NHS

- [nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/help-others-quit/young-people-and-vaping](https://nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/help-others-quit/young-people-and-vaping)

### PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

- [publichealth.hscni.net/publications/vaping-factsheet](https://publichealth.hscni.net/publications/vaping-factsheet)

### UK GOVERNMENT

- Announcement of a £62 million study tracking youth vaping effects. (Gov.uk)
- [gov.uk/government/news/10-year-study-to-shed-light-on-youth-vaping](https://gov.uk/government/news/10-year-study-to-shed-light-on-youth-vaping)



Epping Forest Youth Council

The Epping Forest Youth Council

2024-2026

**Bancroft's**



**Orient Ainapore**

**Braeside Independent School**



**Freya Foster**



**Izellah Harrison**

**Brentwood School**



**Hassan Akhtar**

**Chigwell School**

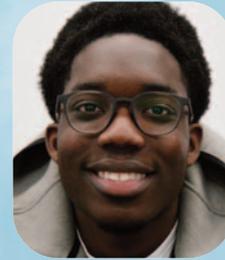


**William Ayrton**



**Yuvan Kumar**

**Davenant Foundation School**

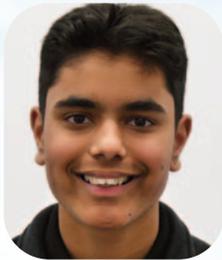


**Kwasi Asare**



**Jacques Prinsloo**

**Debden Park High School**



**Krish Gohil**



**Amber Griffiths**



**Evie Griffiths**

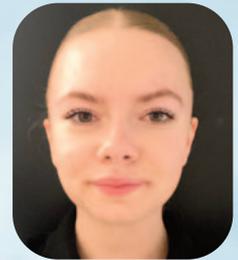
**Epping St John's School**



**Alexander Amoateng**



**Oscar Ruthven**



**Millie Thompson**

**King Harold Academy**



**Reiss Bartlett**



**Rhiana Ciuperca**



**Jakub Piotr Krupa**

**King Solomon High**



**Rafi Sher**

**New City College**



**Erika Skingsley**

**Roding Valley High School**



**Abigail Burger**



**Eylul Ugur**

**The Ongar Academy**



**Sara Chiriac**

We would like to thank the members of the Epping Forest Youth Council for their excellent research and data analysis, which greatly informed this report.

**The publication of this report has been funded by the Community Safety Partnership, the Jack Petchey Foundation and Epping Forest District Council.**

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced **Community Safety Partnerships** (CSP) to provide a multi-agency response to crime and the fear of crime within communities. They support the work of the police and other statutory agencies and are widely considered as the most effective approach to finding joint solutions to local community safety issues.

The work of the CSP does not replace the work of the police or the day-to-day business of the organisations involved, instead it is a channel for agencies to work together, delivering against agreed priorities, co-ordinating resources, achieving efficiencies and value for money. The CSP in Epping Forest is well established and is in an excellent position to continue deliver community safety initiatives that matter and can make a difference to people feeling safer in the district. The CSP is pleased to be supporting the Youth Council in getting key messages out to young people in the district and listening to their views and perceptions, their awareness of the situation and their thoughts on how this could be improved, this all can be used to influence future works.

The **Jack Petchey Foundation** was set up in 1999 and since then they have invested over £180m in programmes across London and Essex to celebrate young people and to inspire and motivate them to fulfil their potential. This investment has directly benefitted over 1.3 million young people. Their flagship Achievement Award Scheme has recognised the achievements of over 250,000 young people. They have various other grants and programmes, including the Leader Award and Leader Award Grant, which part-funded this report.