

# Guide to using **VAPE CHECK**

Vape Check is a tool to help youth and health workers conduct a one-on-one single session brief intervention with young people who regularly use nicotine vaping products.

The tool provides opportunities to:

- provide information on vaping to young people
- screen for nicotine dependence or risk of dependence
- understand motivations to vape and not vape
- create a plan to cut back or quit for those who are ready
- suggest harm reduction strategies
- discuss further support as required

## **Who is Vape Check for?**

Vape Check is to be used with young people who vape regularly. It is not intended to be used with young people who have never vaped, only vaped once or twice or people who are vaping for smoking cessation or the management of nicotine dependence.

*Note: Despite this tool being developed with young people in mind, it can also be used with an adult. However, we would suggest adapting language or sections as required to be age appropriate.*

## **Engagement, consent, and confidentiality**

As with any intervention, it is important the worker has developed rapport with the young person prior to commencing Vape Check. Additionally, as this tool is designed to facilitate a collaborative discussion, the young person needs to provide consent to engage in the process. Workers will need to consider how to manage confidentiality in the setting in which they work.

## **Caution**

Vape Check is not intended to replace a full clinical assessment and does not assess for suicidal ideation or self-harm. Nor does it assess wider psychosocial factors that may contribute to substance use. Where relevant, a psychosocial assessment should also be completed.

## **Language**

The language used throughout Vape Check has been purposefully selected to make it easy for young people to understand. For this reason, the term “addicted/addiction” has been selected. While the term “dependence” is more appropriate in clinical settings, the aim of Vape Check is to facilitate a conversation with the young person, who may not be aware of clinical terminology.

## **How to deliver this brief intervention**

Brief interventions can be effective for promoting behaviour change. They are most effective when delivered in a supportive, personalised, and non-judgemental manner.

It is important workers read and become familiar with the tool before using it. This will help with the flow and promote a conversational style. Vape Check is not intended to be given to a young person as a worksheet to complete on their own. Vape Check should take between 10 - 15 minutes to complete. The tool can be accessed via [insight.qld.edu.au/dovetail](https://insight.qld.edu.au/dovetail)

Please be aware that this guide contains hyperlinks to additional information and resources. If you are reading a printed version, the full URLs for each hyperlink can be found on the final page.

# VAPE CHECK

## Worker's notes

This tool is designed to help a worker have a conversation with someone who frequently vapes nicotine. It is not designed to be used with people who have never vaped, only vaped once or twice, or people who are vaping for the purpose of smoking cessation or the management of nicotine dependence.

This icon  indicates a conversation point.

A guide to using this tool can be found at [insight.qld.edu.au/dovetail](https://insight.qld.edu.au/dovetail)

This tool will provide you with some useful information and practical tips about vaping. It only takes about 10-15 minutes to complete.

## 1 START HERE



Disposable vapes are banned in Australia. Pharmacies are the only place to legally access vape devices, e-liquids, parts and accessories.

### In the past 3 months, how often have you smoked tobacco?

- Never
- Once or twice only
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Daily/almost daily

### In the past 3 months, how often have you vaped?

- Never
- Once or twice only
- A few times a month
- A few times a week
- Daily/almost daily

What age did you first start vaping?

Since you started, has your vape use:

- Increased?
- Decreased?
- Stayed the same?



Vaping doesn't have any health benefits for people who don't smoke. For people who do smoke, switching to vaping may be less harmful in the short-term, but it's still not completely safe. We don't know what long-term vaping does to your health, so ongoing use is not recommended. Pharmacies can sell vapes to people trying to quit smoking or to help manage a nicotine addiction. If you're under 18 in Queensland, you'll need a prescription from a doctor or nurse practitioner (other States and Territories may have different rules).

## 2

The following questions will help us work out if you are becoming addicted to nicotine (tick all that apply)

- Have you ever tried to stop vaping, but couldn't?
- Do you need to vape if you're feeling stressed?
- Do you ever have strong cravings/urges to vape?
- Is it hard to keep from vaping in places where you are not supposed to, like school, work or home?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate, or do you get anxious, restless, or irritable if you haven't vaped in a while?
- Do you feel stressed if you can't find your vape or it runs out?

Answering yes to any of these may indicate possible nicotine addiction.



What do you think about this?

## Using Vape Check

Vape Check has six sections. Although it's ideal to follow the tool sequentially, workers may decide to skip sections that aren't applicable or add extra information to address a young person's unique needs and circumstances.

Throughout Vape Check, you'll notice these speech bubble icons . They indicate opportunities for starting a conversation or providing education. Not all points need to be addressed if they're not relevant.

### Section 1 – Frequency of tobacco and vape use

<p><b>In the past 3 months, how often have you smoked tobacco?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Never</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Once or twice only</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A few times a month</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A few times a week</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Daily/almost daily</p>	<p><b>In the past 3 months, how often have you vaped?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Never</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Once or twice only</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A few times a month</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A few times a week</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Daily/almost daily</p>
<p><b>What age did you first start vaping?</b> <input type="text"/></p>	<p><b>Since you started, has your vape use:</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Increased? <input type="radio"/> Decreased? <input type="radio"/> Stayed the same?</p>

The first section assists workers to understand the frequency of vaping and tobacco use in a young person's life, including whether their vape use has changed over time.

Although this tool is focused on vaping, if the young person has developed a nicotine dependence from smoking tobacco as well, this should open a broader conversation about nicotine dependence relating to both tobacco and vaping. It may not be appropriate to encourage a young person to quit vaping if they are at risk of relapsing to tobacco smoking. However, if they're struggling to refrain from vaping in places they shouldn't vape, for example at school, it's important to explore this during the intervention and discuss options to help keep them engaged in school.

[Overall conclusions](#) of current evidence indicates that whilst not harmless, in the short to medium-term, nicotine vaping products are less harmful than smoking tobacco. Young people who smoke tobacco may benefit from ceasing tobacco smoking and switching to vaping only. Once they are ready, they should consider ceasing vaping. There are prompts to discuss this in section six of the tool.


**Important:** If the young person has never vaped or has only vaped once or twice, Vape Check is not appropriate, and the intervention should be ceased. For these young people, a more general conversation about vaping and how nicotine works in the body is recommended. The ['Influencing gen vape summary report'](#) has more detailed information on how to support a young person who vapes infrequently.

### Section 2 – Assessing symptoms of nicotine dependence

**2** The following questions will help us work out if you are becoming addicted to nicotine (tick all that apply)

- Have you ever tried to stop vaping, but couldn't?
- Do you need to vape if you're feeling stressed?
- Do you ever have strong cravings/urges to vape?
- Is it hard to keep from vaping in places where you are not supposed to, like school, work or home?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate, or do you get anxious, restless, or irritable if you haven't vaped in a while?
- Do you feel stressed if you can't find your vape or it runs out?

Answering yes to any of these may indicate possible nicotine addiction.

 **What do you think about this?**

Section two helps to determine whether someone may be dependent on nicotine. The more boxes ticked, the more likely the person is nicotine dependent. This is not a validated measure and is intended as a guide only.

Some questions point to symptoms of nicotine withdrawal and others are symptoms that indicate a loss of control over vaping. We suggest you make this section as conversational as possible and use it as an opportunity to help the young person develop insight into the signs and symptoms of nicotine dependence.

# 3

If you buy your vapes, how often do you buy a new one? (skip if not relevant)

\$ How much does each vape cost you?

\$ How much would this be per year? (You may need a calculator for this section.)

**What else could you do with this money?**

## What do you like about vaping?

e.g. "it's fun to do with friends", "I like the taste", "I find it relaxing"

It's good to know the reasons why you vape.

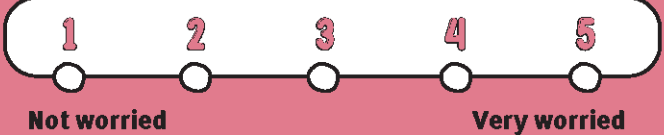
## What are the not so good things about vaping?

e.g. "I can't leave the house without it", "I'm getting in trouble at school"

It's helpful to think about ways to reduce negative impacts (even if you're not ready to stop) and keep an eye out if these impacts are getting worse or if the list is growing.

# 4

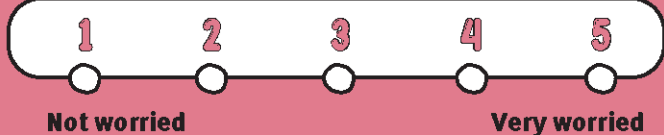
**On a scale from 1-5, how worried are you about your vaping?**



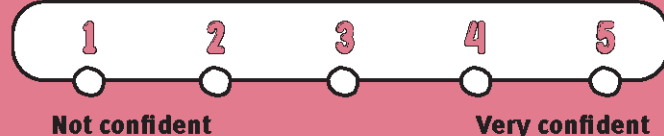
**What would you like to do about your vaping? (tick)**

- I want to cut back vaping
- I want to quit vaping
- I don't want to cut back or quit vaping right now (skip to section 6)

**On a scale from 1 - 5, how worried are others about your vaping? (e.g. family/ friends)**



**If you want to cut back or quit, how confident are you that you can make it happen?**



## Section 3 – Motivations to vape and not vape

The start of section three asks how much money they're spending and what this would equal over a year. A calculator may be useful here. Working this out and then exploring other ways to spend this money can be a motivator for change. Skip this section if the young person doesn't purchase their vapes.

### 3

Weekly

If you buy your vapes, how often do you buy a new one? (skip if not relevant)

\$ 30

How much does each vape cost you?

\$ 1560

How much would this be per year? (You may need a calculator for this section.)

What else could you do with this money?

Put it towards the car I want to buy

### What do you like about vaping?

e.g. "it's fun to do with friends", "I like the taste", "I find it relaxing"

I like to do it with my friends

It helps me relax when I'm feeling stressed

It's good to know the reasons why you vape.

### What are the not so good things about vaping?

e.g. "I can't leave the house without it", "I'm getting in trouble at school"

I might get suspended/expelled from school

I sometimes feel short of breath at training

I think I might be getting addicted

It's helpful to think about ways to reduce negative impacts (even if you're not ready to stop) and keep an eye out if these impacts are getting worse or if the list is growing.

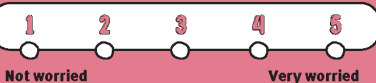
Next is a decisional balance activity. Asking "what do you like about vaping" is designed to understand the young person's perspective, because substance use is often driven by a perceived benefit or function. We need to understand what this is for each person. For example, if a young person answers that a good thing about vaping is it helps them relax when they're feeling stressed, we have learned something important about their motivation to vape. This can lead to further conversations like, "Can you tell me more about what's making you feel stressed?"

The question "What are the not so good things about vaping" helps to identify potential motivators for making a change. It can be worth spending more time here. For example, "what will happen if you get suspended from school again?" Or "if you continue to vape, what else might be on this list in twelve months time?" Conversations like this where we are exploring reasons for change using a non-judgemental approach, can strengthen motivation to make a change.

## Section 4 – Readiness for change

### 4

On a scale from 1-5, how worried are you about your vaping?



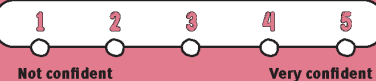
What would you like to do about your vaping? (tick)

- I want to cut back vaping
- I want to quit vaping
- I don't want to cut back or quit vaping right now (skip to section 6)

On a scale from 1 - 5, how worried are others about your vaping? (e.g. family/ friends)



If you want to cut back or quit, how confident are you that you can make it happen?



Section four starts by asking how worried a young person is about their vaping. Then how worried family or friends might be about their vaping. This provides an opportunity for the young person to consider what they would like to do about their vaping.

They're given three options:

1. cut back vaping
2. quit vaping
3. continue vaping.

It's important we accept the young person's choice. For those not ready to make changes, skip to section six, which explores harm reduction strategies. Those who would like to cut down or quit are asked about their confidence in making these changes. It's helpful to identify young people who are less confident in making changes, because they are likely to require extra support. However, it's also important to note that young people sometimes overestimate their abilities. So even those who identify as confident, may end up requiring extra support too.



Cutting back or quitting can be easy for some people and tricky for others. You may experience withdrawal symptoms – things like difficulty concentrating, being irritable, feeling anxious or having cravings to vape. These withdrawal symptoms will fade within a couple of weeks.

**My goal is to...** (e.g. cut back to 1 vape a month, stop vaping at school/work, improve my fitness, quit by Christmas)

**I'm making a change because...**

**People who could support me...**

**Things that might make it tricky to reach my goal...** (e.g. "I find it hard to say no if a friend offers their vape", "If I get stressed, I will want to vape")

**Some steps to help reach my goal are...** (Tips: Include steps that use your support people. Come up with a plan to deal with the challenges listed above.)

#### Other strategies you might like to try (tick)

**Resist the urge to vape with the "3Ds"**

**Delay:** If you can delay the decision to vape for a few minutes or more, a craving (urge) can pass on its own.

**Distract:** It's easier to delay the decision if you are doing something to distract yourself (e.g. message a friend, go for a walk, look at social media, listen to music, have a lolly the same flavour as your usual vape, drink some water).

**Deep breathing:** Breathing and other relaxation techniques can help you to stay calm during a craving.



**Remember:** *cravings are like a stray cat – if you feed them, they will keep coming back.*

**Learn ways to relax**

Learning relaxation strategies can help reduce stress/anxiety and may improve overall physical and mental health. Apps on relaxation strategies or related topics like mindfulness can be really helpful.

**Reduce the temptation to vape**

If your goal is to quit vaping, throw your vape out. If your plan is to cut back, put your vape out of reach between use so you're not tempted to use it more. To avoid vaping in places you shouldn't (like schools/public indoor spaces), leave your vape at home. If this is too difficult, consider nicotine replacement therapy (NRT - like nicotine patches, gum, sprays, or lozenges). These can help reduce cravings and other nicotine withdrawal symptoms.



You can get NRT at supermarkets or pharmacies without a prescription. In Queensland, you may qualify for free NRT through Quitline. NRT can be used by people 12 years and older. It works best when combined with other strategies (like those listed above), you use it in the correct way, and find the right product and strength to fit your needs. A health professional, like your doctor, or a Quitline counsellor (call 13 78 48) can help you work this out. People under 12 years should check in with a doctor before using NRT.

## Section 5 – Making a plan (for those ready to change)

Section five is only to be completed with people wanting to quit or make other changes, like to reduce their vaping. Young people may need help formulating strategies, but where possible, they should lead the conversation and be encouraged to come up with their own ideas.

**My goal is to...** As a worker you should encourage specific, achievable, and realistic goals in this section.

**I'm making a change because...** It can be helpful for the person to explicitly identify motivators (internal or external) for making change.

**People who could support me...** Where it's appropriate to do so, young people should be encouraged to share this plan with their family (or friends) and recruit them as support people to assist in achieving their goal.

**Things that might make it tricky to reach my goal...** This section provides an opportunity to identify possible barriers to successfully making a change. This could be anything from navigating difficulties with friends who still vape, to dealing with cravings or other withdrawal symptoms. It may also be helpful to reflect with the young person on things that were discussed in the decisional balance activity in section three. For example, if the person identified what they like about vaping as that "it helps me relax when I feel stressed", then stress may be noted as something that might make it tricky to reach their goal.

**Some steps to help reach my goal are...** In this section, you can help the young person to think about planning for making changes. This could be practical things like throwing out their vape, planning a reduction schedule, or exploring alternative coping strategies for previously identified barriers, like how they will manage cravings or stress. Some examples for this are provided in the tool.

**A note on craving management** – To address craving management, we recommend using behavioural strategies first. There are some examples outlined in the tool (e.g. leaving your vape at home and using the 3Ds). However, if a young person is finding this difficult, a conversation regarding the use of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) may be warranted. Even if the person is not ready to completely quit, NRT may help them to avoid vaping in places they're not allowed (e.g. at school/home/work) by managing their cravings and other withdrawal symptoms. There is a conversation box at the bottom of section five to prompt a conversation around NRT.

We recommend the following resources to learn more about helping someone to quit or reduce their vaping:

Dovetail: worker resource - [Tips for working with young people experiencing nicotine dependence](#)

Quit HQ: short videos - [Quit methods](#)

Academic paper - [Assisting young people aged 12–25 years to cease e-cigarette use in general practice](#)

**My goal is to...** (e.g. cut back to 1 vape a month, stop vaping at school/work, improve my fitness, quit by Christmas)

Cut back to 1 vape a fortnight and stop vaping at school

**I'm making a change because...**

I don't want to get expelled, and I want to spend less money so I can save for a car

I want to do better in training/make it to regionals

**People who could support me...**

Mum, Alex and Mrs Smith

**Things that might make it tricky to reach my goal...** (e.g. "I find it hard to say no if a friend offers their vape", "If I get stressed, I will want to vape")

Using the toilets at school where everyone vapes will be hard

It will be hard to say no at school if one of my friends offers me theirs

I'll want a hit if I'm feeling stressed

My mood

The cravings and feeling crappy

**Some steps to help reach my goal are...** (Tips: Include steps that use your support people. Come up with a plan to deal with the challenges listed above.)

I will reduce my use by just having a few puffs each time I vape, then I will put it out of easy reach so I vape less each day

I won't take my vape to school - if this gets too hard, I'll consider calling Quitline to learn about NRT and if this will help me

I will use the bathrooms at the start of break before people go in there to vape

I'll tell my friends I'm cutting back and ask them not to offer me theirs

I'll spend more time with Alex who doesn't vape

When I feel stressed, I'll put my headphones on and listen to music to calm down

I'll distract myself by having a lolly when I feel a craving

# 6

## Reducing harm from vaping

The long-term harms of vaping are unknown, so the safest option is to not vape at all. However, for those who choose to vape, here are some strategies to help reduce risk of harm. **Tick the strategies that you think might work for you:**

Yes No Maybe



### Only purchase vapes from a pharmacy

Vapes from a pharmacy are regulated, meaning they must meet set product standards. Vapes from the illicit market are unregulated and may increase exposure to banned/harmful ingredients. Buying vapes from the illicit market may also put you in risky situations.



### Quit tobacco smoking

If you also smoke cigarettes, it's advised to switch to vaping only. This may reduce harm in the short to medium term. Once you feel confident you won't go back to smoking tobacco, consider quitting vaping too.



### If it tastes bad – stop using it!

A bad or strange taste indicates something is not right and is linked with increased harm. So throw bad tasting disposable vapes away. With reusable vapes, replace the coil/wick or pod and refill with new e-liquid.



### Monitor your mental health

Nicotine can impact your mood and make conditions like anxiety or depression worse. Monitor your mood and seek support if you're worried.



### Set limits on your vaping

Try taking fewer puffs and put your vape out of easy reach between use.



### Only use vapes as they're intended to be used

It's unsafe to modify e-liquids or devices. This can cause chemical reactions linked to increased harm. Tampering with batteries can cause explosions or fires.



### Maintain re-usable devices

The coil/wick will wear out and require frequent replacing. Avoid mixing different e-liquid types or flavours (use separate pods/tanks). Keep batteries away from heat and out of direct sunlight. Recharge with the charger provided; other chargers can overload the battery, causing fires.



### Avoid using your device dry

When a vape runs out of e-liquid, the internal parts start to overheat/burn. This creates toxic chemicals and when inhaled (called a 'dry hit'), can be harmful. Top up re-fillable devices when the liquid is low. Allow enough time for the wick to fully soak before use when the coil/wick is replaced.



### Avoid vaping in places it's not allowed

Vaping may cause harm to other people so respect their choice not to vape and avoid vaping in places it's not allowed. If you struggle with this, you might be addicted to nicotine. Even if you're not ready to quit, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) like nicotine patches, gum, spray, or lozenges may help you to avoid vaping in places you're not allowed by reducing cravings. (See previous page on how to access NRT.)

**My next steps will be to...** (Tips: Think about how you might get started on your plan to cut back/quit or when you might implement some of the strategies above. Choose easier strategies first to get started).

### It might also help to...

Catch up again to discuss my progress

See a doctor or other health professional

Call Quitline 13 78 48 for free confidential support on vaping or smoking

### Warning

Store nicotine liquid away from children and pets. Nicotine liquid can be absorbed through the skin and is toxic when ingested. Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 if you are concerned, and call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency.



## Section 6 – Harm reduction strategies

All young people who vape can benefit from a discussion about ways to reduce harm. However, harm reduction conversations are particularly useful for young people who are not interested in reducing or ceasing vaping. These approaches accept that despite our best efforts, some young people will continue to vape. The harm reduction strategies provided in Vape Check are not exhaustive. This is an emerging topic that requires more research. The strategies have been developed from existing evidence, the principles of harm reduction, practice-based experience, sector consultation and through lived experience of people who vape.

Before exploring the list provided, you may like to clearly state “the safest option is not to vape. However, if you choose to vape, there are some strategies you could try that may help to reduce risks of harm. Is it ok if we have a conversation about this now?” You may like to follow this with first discussing things the young person might already be doing that reduces harm. Young people are often interested in their health and may already be taking steps to reduce risks.

### Harm reduction strategies provided in Vape Check:

#### “Only purchase vapes from a pharmacy”

The only legal place to buy vapes (devices, e-liquids, and accessories) in Australia is from a pharmacy. It can be helpful to explain to a young person that these products are regulated, meaning they must adhere to set product standards. This includes things like safety measures on packaging, clearly labelled nicotine concentrations and that the product must not contain known banned/harmful ingredients.

You can learn more about ‘[Product standards: unapproved therapeutic vapes](#)’ on this link.

Vapes that come from the illicit market are unregulated, so they come with additional risks. These include possible exposure to banned/harmful ingredients, variable amounts of nicotine and possible harmful contaminants. Poor quality parts and poor manufacturing processes can also lead to additional harms, like increased exposure to metals. There are also risks related to acquiring vapes from the illicit market (e.g. exploitation). Encourage those buying from the illicit market to take caution with products, dispose if concerned and avoid risky situations when acquiring vapes.

In Queensland, young people under 18 will require a prescription from a doctor or nurse practitioner to purchase vapes from a pharmacy. Those over 18 do not require a prescription. If you’re not in Queensland, the following link for the TGA website outlines the different rules for people under 18 in each State/Territory. [Prescribing and dispensing of prescription only therapeutic vaping goods to patients under 18 years of age.](#)

#### “Quit tobacco smoking”

Tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Australia. People who use tobacco as well as vapes (dual use) and aren’t ready to quit nicotine, should be encouraged to switch to vaping only. It’s likely this switch will reduce harm in the short to medium term. Long-term harms of vaping are unknown. Therefore, once the person feels they won’t relapse to smoking, it is recommended they quit vaping.

#### “If it tastes bad – stop using it”

It can be helpful to explain to a young person that a bad or strange taste indicates something is not right with their vape and is associated with increased harm. People who use disposable vapes (now banned in Australia) should throw them away if they taste bad. With reusable vapes, people should check if the coil/wick or pod needs replacing, wash e-liquid reservoirs (like tanks) that can be cleaned and refill with new e-liquid.

#### “Monitor your mental health”

Some young people report that vaping is having an impact on their mental health. This could be through exacerbating underlying mental health conditions, or it could be because the nicotine dependence and withdrawal symptoms are impacting their mood. Have a conversation about any changes the young person may have noticed in their mood or mental health since they started vaping. This can be helpful in raising awareness of the interaction between the two. It is also an opportunity to discuss options for seeking additional support if required.

#### “Set limits on your vaping”

A vape contains many “puffs” so it can be easy to vape more frequently and for longer than intended. Encourage young people to vape mindfully by monitoring and setting limits on their vaping. Examples include: putting your vape out of easy reach between use (not in your pocket), not vaping in bed, only vaping at parties.

Note: when setting limits on use, people should be mindful they don’t compensate for less frequent puffs by adjusting they way use their vape e.g. inhaling deeper.

#### “Only use vapes as they are intended to be used”

Disposable vapes are now banned in Australia, but it is possible they will still be accessible via the illicit market. We know people sometimes pull these vapes apart to recharge the battery and top up the e-liquid so they can reuse the device. These devices are not made to be reused. The internal parts wear out, exposing users to toxic chemicals that would not be released otherwise. Additionally, tampering with the batteries to recharge them can cause fires/explosions.

#### “Maintain reusable devices”

It is helpful for people to understand that the coil/wick in any device they use will wear out, but they can be replaced in reusable devices. Encourage people to keep replacement parts handy and change them as required/instructed. Also discourage mixing different e-liquid types or flavours (use separate pods/tanks). As with any battery-powered device, people should be encouraged to keep them away from heat and out of direct sunlight. They should also take care to only recharge with the charger provided and as instructed. Other chargers can overload the battery, causing fires.

#### “Avoid using your device dry”

A “dry puff” or a “dry hit” is a slang term that describes using a vape when the wick is dry. When the taste of the vape changes (usually unpleasant, burnt or metallic tasting), the person should be encouraged to throw disposable vapes away if they are dry or top up refillable vapes before the liquid runs out. When a new coil/wick is being used, the person will need to let the e-liquid sit for a few minutes before using their vape to allow enough time for the e-liquid to soak into the wick. Using a device dry can result in inhaling toxic chemicals released as the metals and other components overheat or burn.

#### “Avoid vaping in places where vaping is not allowed”

If a person is dependent on nicotine, they may have difficulties controlling where and when they vape. Cravings can start around an hour or two after last use. For those that struggle to avoid vaping where they’re not allowed, it might be worth considering using nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to manage withdrawal symptoms in these places (e.g. schools, workplaces etc). Even if they’re not ready to quit, NRT may be effective in helping them to avoid vaping in these places. While NRT can be purchased over the counter from a pharmacy or supermarket, it is recommended people seek support from a health professional or Quitline to discuss product options and learn how to use them correctly to get the most benefits.

The final section provides space for identifying next steps. This may be about what the young person needs to do to put their plan or harm reduction strategies in motion. Additionally, where it's appropriate, you may also use this time to encourage the young person to talk with their family or carers about their vaping.

**My next steps will be to...** (Tips: Think about how you might get started on your plan to cut back/quit or when you might implement some of the strategies above. Choose easier strategies first to get started).

Share my plan with my support people

Tell my friends I'm cutting back and ask them not to offer me a vape at school

Get a playlist ready for when I feel stressed

### It might also help to...

Catch up again to discuss my progress

See a doctor or other health professional

Call Quitline 13 78 48 for free confidential support on vaping or smoking

This section also includes prompts to book a follow-up appointment or to refer onto further supports. For those who planned to quit or to cut back, a follow-up appointment is strongly recommended. This provides an opportunity to review what worked, what didn't, make changes to the plan and encourage the young person to keep trying.

The young person may also be encouraged to seek assistance via a GP, other relevant health professional or Quitline. Quitline offers support to people (including young people) who vape and want to quit or reduce their use. It's a confidential service where the person can receive support and discuss NRT if this is appropriate. Workers can assist a young person and call Quitline together if required.

We suggest the young person takes the Vape Check handout with them for future reference if they wish. You may like to take a copy for your own records if it's appropriate to do so.

## A final word

Being a brief intervention, this tool is not able to cover everything that may come up in a conversation on vaping. Therefore, other resources may need to be used in conjunction with this tool. We recommend using relevant Australian resources (where possible) that provide factual and well-balanced information. Resources that use fear tactics or exaggerate harms are ineffective and should be avoided.

You can find more information and resources on vaping by visiting the [Dovetail vaping toolkit](#).

## Vape Check feedback

Vape Check was developed in consultation with workers from the Queensland youth alcohol and other drug sector and then further refined with feedback from over 100 professionals in relevant fields. In 2024, Vape Check was updated in consultation with workers who had used the resource. Changes were also made to align the resource with National and State regulation/legislation changes.

Further feedback on this tool is always welcome and encouraged via [dovetail@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:dovetail@health.qld.gov.au) or (07) 3837 5621.

### Resource URLs (sequenced in order of appearance in this guide)

- Overall conclusions - Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update main findings - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nicotine-vaping-in-england-2022-evidence-update/nicotine-vaping-in-england-2022-evidence-update-main-findings>.
- Influencing Gen Vape: summary report - <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/resources/resource-download/influencing-gen-vape-summary-report>
- Tips for working with young people experiencing nicotine dependence - <https://insight.qld.edu.au/shop/tips-for-working-with-young-people-experiencing-nicotine-dependence>
- Quit HQ – Videos on quit methods - <https://www.quithq.initiatives.qld.gov.au/getting-ready/choose-your-method/videos-on-quit-methods>
- Assisting young people aged 12–25 years to cease e-cigarette use in general practice - <https://www1.racgp.org.au/ajgp/2024/may/assisting-young-people-aged-12-25-years-to-cease-e>
- Product standards: unapproved therapeutic vapes - <https://www.tga.gov.au/resources/resource/reference-material/product-standards-unapproved-therapeutic-vapes>
- Prescribing and dispensing of prescription only therapeutic vaping goods to patients under 18 years of age - <https://www.tga.gov.au/products/unapproved-therapeutic-goods/vaping-hub/vapes-information-prescribers/prescribing-and-dispensing-therapeutic-vapes-patients-under-18-years>
- Dovetail vaping toolkit - <https://insight.qld.edu.au/toolkits/vaping/detail>