

Lloyd Harbor/West Side Schools

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Kurt Simon, *Principal West Side School*

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Dear Parents:

As school leaders, the safety, health and welfare of our students is our first priority. We are writing to alert you to a growing concern regarding the use of e-cigarettes and vaping devices. These two activities have become increasingly more popular for children in middle school and high school. Below you will find important information regarding these behaviors:

Some Basic Facts:

- E-cigarettes and vaping devices produce a vapor. Using them is called vaping.
- E-cigarettes and vaping devices use cartridges filled with a liquid that often contains nicotine, flavorings, and/or THC (the main psychoactive substance found in marijuana).
- Most e-cigarettes and vaping devices do not look like cigarettes at all. Many look like pens, highlighters, small flashlights or USB ports.
- These devices and liquids that are sold are currently unregulated by any government health or safety agency.
- Liquid vapors and e-cigarette paraphernalia are sold in local tobacco and vape shops and are readily available online.
- The liquid that is "vaped" does not necessarily have an odor and therefore may not be easily recognized for the substance it may contain.

Tips for Parents:

- Research shows that teens who have conversations with their parents and learn the risks of using drugs are 50% less likely to use them.
- Talk early and often. Health risks are being studied.
- Set clear expectations.
- Discuss rules and enforce reasonable consequences. Let them know they are illegal to possess under the age of 21 in NY. School prohibits any possession or use of vaping devices.
- Be vigilant! Vaping is discrete and allows for more covert use.
- Remember, you are the #1 influence in your child's life.

Some available resources:

- www.drugabuse.gov
- www.cdc.gov
- www.safekidsamerica.org

As always, our health educators, mental health staff and administrators welcome any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Valerie Massimo, *LHS Principal*
Kurt Simon, *WSS Principal*