

Dear UCC Students,

As many of you may know, the prevalence of high school and older middle school students using e-cigarettes and vaporizers is on the rise at a rather alarming rate in Canada, and UCC is no exception. Using a 'vape' at school or any school function – including field trips, sporting events and dances – is prohibited by law, because of the health risks involved, so you should not be vaping. And if you see a friend vaping, you should encourage him to stop and kick the habit for good; our Health Centre <health.centre@ucc.on.ca> is a great resource for this if you need some help, as is your family doctor.

E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that heat and vaporize liquids for inhalation, to mimic the act of smoking. The liquids are usually flavoured in some way and often contain nicotine, which is addictive and a known carcinogen. "There is no good reason for youth – or any non-smokers – to be using e-cigarettes," says Matthew Stanbrook, respirologist and deputy editor of the Canadian Medical Association Journal. "Nothing good can come from providing vulnerable individuals with a more appealing way to become addicted to nicotine."

Analysis of data from the latest Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey of students in Grades 7 through 12 as reported in the article, Susceptibility to cigarette smoking among middle and high school e-cigarette users in Canada (Preventive Medicine, Volume 103, Pages 14-19), shows that students who 'vape' are more than twice as likely to take up cigarette smoking. The use of tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death in our country.

So, if you don't vape, excellent, don't start. But if you do vape, please stop, and reach out for help if you need to do so. Because if you don't stop, then you'll be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in our Family Handbook, in addition to endangering your own health:

- This is an unregulated product in Canada, which poses risks
- Evidence shows that nicotine use in youth (ages 13 to 17) and adolescence (up to age 19) particularly can damage the developing brain
- Public health experts are concerned about research showing the e-cigarettes could "re-normalize" smoking, undermine tobacco control efforts, and make smoking tobacco cigarettes seem "cool" again

*(The Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2016)*

We hope that you make the time to speak openly with your parents or guardians on an ongoing basis about important health-related issues, such as e-cigarettes and vaping, or even smoking in general. For our part, we are committed to being accessible to all of our students so they can be aware of the risks of using e-cigarettes.

Thank you,

The UCC Health Centre