

Parent Notification Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

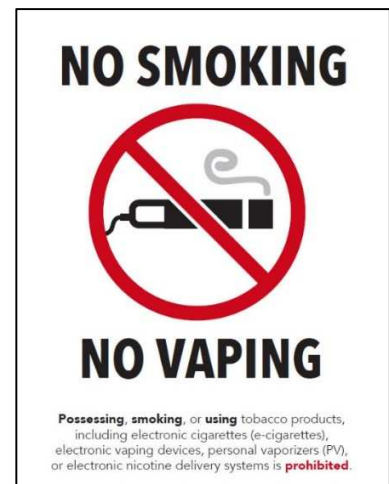
As part of your school's general health curriculum, your child will be participating in a research-based youth E-cigarette prevention program called CATCH My Breath at school. This program was developed by health education experts from The University of Texas School of Public Health in Austin and is designed to help your child make healthy choices and avoid risky behaviors when it comes to E-cigarettes.

Most teens are curious about E-cigarettes. In 2016, about 11% of high school students reported regularly using E-cigarettes. In some areas, nearly half of high school students have tried an E-cigarette.

Most teens believe that E-cigarettes are safe. In reality, E-cigarettes contain nicotine and toxins, some of which are known to cause cancer. Nicotine is highly addictive, especially to a developing teen brain. What begins as experimentation can easily lead to a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

It does not take that long for young people to become addicted to **nicotine** because:

- E-cigarettes provide nicotine in doses as large as, or larger than, regular cigarettes do.
- Children and youth become addicted to nicotine much faster than adults.
- Nicotine has more harmful effects on the developing adolescent brain, making it worse for kids than adults.
- Nicotine is thought to be a social and biological “gateway” for the use of other substances, like initiating combustible cigarette use, alcohol, and other drugs!



Did you know that underage use of E-cigarettes is illegal?

- All states prohibit the **sale, purchase, or use** of E-cigarettes or liquid **nicotine** containers by a minor (under the age of 18).
- Most states also prohibit E-cigarette use anywhere on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The CATCH My Breath program will start soon at your child's school. The national dissemination of this program is made possible with funding from **CVS Health**. This

partnership with CATCH Global Foundation is part of CVS Health's *Be The First* initiative, a five-year \$50 million effort to help deliver the nation's first tobacco-free generation.

Be sure to ask your child what he or she is learning in the program and what he or she thinks of E-cigarettes and cigarette smoking. As a parent/guardian, you have a lot of influence over your child's choices.

It is not always easy for parents and kids to talk about these topics together. Yet research has shown that when parents tell their teens not to use tobacco, they are much less likely to do so.

The parent information page at <https://catch.org/parentFAQ> contains fact sheets, web links, and videos designed to help you start the conversation.

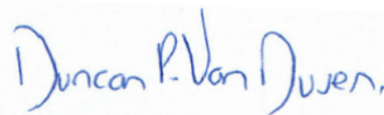
CATCH My Breath was created to give you a starting place for communicating about E-cigarettes with your child. CATCH My Breath is part of the family of CATCH healthy nutrition, physical activity, and oral health programs. To learn more about CATCH programs, materials, and training, visit the CATCH Global Foundation website at <http://catchinfo.org/>.

We hope that you and your family will find the program helpful. Please contact catchmybreath@catch.org if you have any questions about the program.

Sincerely,



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Public Health in Austin**
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