



# Youth Mental Health and Vaping During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified youth mental health challenges and ENDS use.



## A needs assessment led by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing found

**44%**

of youth ages 13-18 report feeling stressed

**27%**

feel lonely

**25%**

feel worried or anxious

**24%**

feel depressed



As depression and anxiety among youth has increased during the pandemic, so has the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), also known as e-cigarettes and vapes.

A [recent study](#) found that **81%** of youth who used e-cigarettes, did so to cope with feelings of stress, anxiety and/or depression.

Another [recent study](#) showed that a diagnosis of COVID-19 was **FIVE TIMES** more likely among youth who used e-cigarettes only and **SEVEN TIMES** more likely among dual users compared to those who didn't use e-cigarettes or cigarettes.



## Providers Can Help! Start the Conversation Today

Mental health and substance use treatment providers can use thoughtful engagement, support and evidence-based interventions to educate and encourage teens and young adults to quit vaping and improve overall mental wellness.

Starting the conversation around e-cigarette use and cessation can be challenging.

Learn more about how to best support youth by engaging in prevention and treatment conversations, as well as evidence-based strategies and other cessation resources:

**1.**

Get [tips for starting the conversation](#) around youth substance use prevention, developing tailored messaging and making the case for behavior change by focusing on the future and the risk of nicotine dependency to encourage commitment to change.

**2.**

Utilize [Youth Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment \(YSBIRT\)](#), an evidence-based practice to prevent and reduce risky substance use among adolescents ages 12 to 18. [YSBIRT.org](#) equips those in the primary care field with resources and support to implement SBIRT in clinical practices. Check out [upcoming training opportunities](#).

**3.**

[Motivational interviewing \(MI\)](#) is a collaborative intervention that provides a framework to create a dialogue around an individual's willingness and commitment to behavior change.

**4.**

Refer youth to free text-based quit-lines such as Truth Initiative's [This is Quitting program](#) or the National Cancer Institute's [SmokefreeTXT for Teens](#). These programs give 24/7 tips, advice and encouragement to help youth become and stay nicotine-free.

