



PRESS RELEASE **May 28, 2020**

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WORLD “NO TOBACCO” DAY EDUCATES YOUTH ON DANGERS OF SMOKING AND VAPING

(Santa Barbara, Calif.) – Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and the Coalition Engaged in a Smoke-free Effort (CEASE) encourage local residents to go smoke free on World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) which is observed annually on May 31.

WNTD is a global campaign that encourages a 24-hour abstinence from all forms of tobacco consumption. On [WNTD 2020](#), CEASE invites the Santa Barbara community to join the effort to go tobacco free with a special emphasis on educating youth on the dangers of vaping and smoking tobacco products.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cigarette smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths annually, while more than 16 million Americans are reported to live with a tobacco-related disease. There is also growing evidence that vaping is harmful to lung health. These factors put smokers, and in all likelihood vapers, at greater risk when confronted with the coronavirus.

Although traditional smoking is declining, e-cigarette use is rapidly inclining especially among youth. In a recent publication, the CDC reported:

- a 78% increase in e-cigarette use from 2017 to 2018 among high school students; and
- a 49% increase in e-cigarette use from middle schoolers in just one year.

Data from the 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey shows a total of 6.2 million young people are using some type of tobacco product. Percentage-wise this total can be broken down into:

- 31% of high school students (the highest rate among high school students in 19 years); and
- 12.5% of middle school students.

“Many teens believe electronic cigarettes are safer to inhale,” explains Shantal Hover-Jones, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department’s Program Coordinator for the Tobacco Prevention Program. “The truth is, smoking tobacco and vaping are both harmful to the lungs and both contain nicotine proven to be harmful to adolescent brain development.”

Neuroscientific research indicates teenagers are especially vulnerable to the effects of nicotine. A teenager’s brain isn’t fully developed until around the age of 25 and the use of nicotine products can rewire their brain impacting their attention, memory, and ability to learn.

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In addition to nicotine, e-cigarette aerosol contains harmful substances, including known cancer-causing chemicals; volatile organic compounds; as well as heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead. Flavoring chemicals linked to serious lung disease have been effectively used by the tobacco industry to attract youth to tobacco products. This is evidenced by the fact that 80% of kids who currently use tobacco products report starting with flavored tobacco.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors recently passed an Ordinance that bans the sale of all flavored tobacco products in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County. “This ordinance will greatly support our mission to address the needs of the community as a whole, providing leadership and policy direction to promote the health and well-being of those living in Santa Barbara County,” said Hover-Jones. “The goal of the ordinance is to protect all residents of Santa Barbara County from tobacco-related addiction and disease, especially youth.”

On World No Tobacco Day 2020, Santa Barbara Community members are [encouraged](#) to visit the [Coalition Engaged in a Smoke-Free Effort \(CEASE\) Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to connect and help spread the word about the rising numbers of youth smoking and vaping.

Community members can also visit countyofsb.org/phd/tobacco for more information.

If you need help quitting smoking call 1-800-NO BUTTS.

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County Public Health: www.PublicHealthSBC.org, [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

County of Santa Barbara: www.CountyofSB.org, [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

County Call Center: (833) 688-5551

Recorded Information Line: (805) 681-4373

Community Wellness Team Information and Referral Line: (805) 364-2750

Behavioral Wellness Crisis Line: (888) 868-1649