

## **Illegal and contaminated vapes and health risks – information for parents/ carers**

It has come to our attention that there have been national reports of young people experiencing serious health harms following the use of vapes containing illegal substances including [synthetic cannabinoids](#) such as Spice, or THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol).

THC is the principle psychoactive constituent of cannabis. THC vape pens are illegal and therefore their contents are unregulated. Vaping illegal drugs and unknown substances carries significant health risks and can lead to hospitalisation.

In light of these incidents, we encourage parents and carers to be extra vigilant and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of our young people. Support and guidance on managing smoking and vaping among young people can be found at [The Wrap](#), [Talk to Frank](#) or by contacting [Project 28 – B&NES Young people's substance service](#).

Parents and carers are asked to be aware of the risk that vapes may be illegal and contaminated and the potential associated health harms. The effects of vaping cannabis and synthetic cannabinoids can be unpleasant and unpredictable. Below are some of the signs to look out for where use is suspected:

- inability to move.
- dizziness
- breathing difficulties
- chest pain
- heart palpitations
- seizures
- extreme anxiety
- paranoia
- suicidal thoughts
- psychosis
- vomiting or diarrhoea

If you are concerned that a young person has experienced harm from a contaminated vape, please seek medical advice and in an emergency dial 999. Further information on the risks and effects of synthetic cannabinoids can be found at [Talk to Frank](#).

Although there is currently a lack of information on the reported incidents, we feel it is necessary to raise awareness of such incidents among young people.

Please be reassured that we have not had any reports of incidents locally, however, if you have any information or suspicions of similar incidents in your local area, we strongly encourage you to complete a [Local Drug Information System \(LDIS\) Form](#) and contact [Project 28](#) who will be able to offer information and confidential support.

If you find a vape, which you suspect contains cannabis or Spice, it is advisable to ensure that the police are notified and that any products are handed in and sent for testing.

If you have any further questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact [office@dhiproject28.org.uk](mailto:office@dhiproject28.org.uk)

### **Key messages on vaping and young people**

- Regular vape use among young people is increasing.
- Vaping is not risk free and should be discouraged in children and young people.
- The law protects young people from vapes through restricting sales to over 18's, limiting nicotine content, refill, and tank size, labelling and advertising restrictions.
- The purpose of vapes is to help adult smokers stop smoking.
- Most children and young people don't vape or smoke.

**DON'T SMOKE? DON'T START TO VAPE.**

### **Useful contacts and resources**

B&NES Council – Public Health and Prevention team

Email: [public\\_health@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:public_health@bathnes.gov.uk)

Public Health Programme in Schools Resources [The Hub smoking and vaping](#)

DHI Project 28 – [Young people's substance service](#)

Telephone: [01225 463344](tel:01225463344)

Email: [office@dhiproject28.org.uk](mailto:office@dhiproject28.org.uk)

Online portal: [The Wrap](#)

[Talk to Frank](#)

[Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping](#)

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