

Community Consultation Summary Report

Hearing from schools, youth workers and other agencies working directly with young people to understand how we can reduce vaping in our community.

What we did

In March 2023, a community consultation was held in Geelong collecting a range of experiences and views from key local stakeholders to inform and develop effective strategies aimed at reducing e-cigarette use among young people (aged 12-25) in the Geelong region. Ten community members representing nine different agencies attended.

We utilised a Group Model Building process which recognises the complexity of this area. The process engaged diverse perspectives and empowered participants to define the factors influencing vaping in young people

Participants explored the connection between factors and identified possible solutions where agencies might collectively act. These connections were mapped and themed using STICKE, a digital application developed by Deakin University.

We developed a visual map highlighting the complexity of the issue for our community and identified where we could act to reduce vaping among young people.



What we heard

During our conversations we identified a range of factors that influence vaping in young people.

The major themes which we identified are outlined below:



Social factors



Parental influence



Age & stage



Education



Mental health



Product factors and controls

Next we used these discussions to form ideas for action!

What the community said

"Curiosity and a sense of belonging are linked. One person is curious, then someone else in the group becomes curious. Then as more (in their friendship circle) try it, their curiosity and drive to be part of the group compounds."

"Schools can't be the only ones who participate, it needs to be everyone."

"Parental knowledge and parental skills are completely different. Building the capacity of knowledge and skills is very critical."

"They start because it is the social thing and they want to belong, but then the addiction kicks in. They want to stop but they don't have the tools in their toolkit."

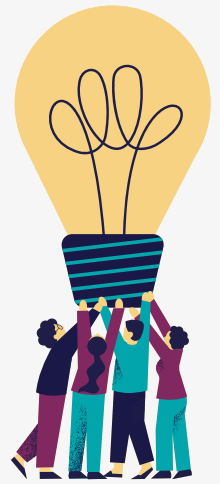
Turning ideas into action

Our attendees reported several actions occurring locally to reduce the incidence of vaping and discussed the limitations and opportunities of these in their settings.

They recognised there was a role for individual families and schools to take action, but prioritised those actions that were at a regional, community-wide level.

Attendees prioritised actions supporting students to understand and manage the implications of vaping such as addiction and health consequences as well as the impacts on their academic and leadership opportunities.

Several opportunities emerged for Barwon Health, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, to support the community to reduce vaping in young people.



Opportunities for action



Support

Support parents to build knowledge and skills to intervene within the cycle.



Peer Pressure

Young people can develop practical skills to manage peer and media influences.



Information

Resources that can be implemented within schools 'usual business' rather than an 'add-on'.



Direct Care

Provide direct health support to assist young people manage and recover from nicotine addiction.

Where to next...

The ideas planned to be shared at a regional forum of agencies in hope of working together, and with our community, to reduce tobacco and e-cigarette related harm

The results will be shared in a regional webinar about vaping on Tuesday 30 May 2023.

We also hope to share the results online, through journal articles and conference papers.



We aim to re-run the conversations next year to report how we are all (individuals and agencies) progressing.

So, watch this space!
We're just getting started.