

## Take Action

Kids pay more attention to what you say and do than you might think. Studies show that parents and caring adults can have a powerful impact on young people's choices.<sup>1</sup> So talk with the kids in your life about the dangers of tobacco use, and share what you've learned with those around you. You can create lasting change in your community.

### What You Can Do:



#### At Home

- Learn about the dangers of youth tobacco use.
- Set a good example by living tobacco-free.
- Talk to your kids about tobacco.
- Get to know the tobacco industry's products and tactics.
- Keep an eye out for tobacco products in your home.



#### At School

- Let school leaders know you expect schools to follow tobacco-free policies.
- Let school leaders know tobacco prevention matters to you.
- Get involved with your school's parent-teacher organization.
- Ask if the school provides tobacco prevention lessons and quit resources.
- Have kids join activities that discourage tobacco use, like sports or the arts.



#### In Your Community

- Let local leaders know tobacco prevention matters to you.
- Share what you know about tobacco with others.
- Join the tobacco prevention coalition near you.
- Support tobacco prevention best practices and policies.
- Write a letter to the editor about preventing youth tobacco use.

# TOBACCO IS CHANGING

## 6 Tips for Talking to Your Kids

You don't have to be an expert to talk to your kids about the dangers of tobacco use. Just let your kids know how you feel about tobacco and make sure they have the facts they need to make healthy decisions on their own. Here are a few tips that can help:

### 1. Get them talking

Make it a conversation, not a lecture. Ask them about the tobacco use they see at school, on TV and social media, and in the world around them. Inviting your kids to share their thoughts about tobacco use can help you understand their perspective and keep the lines of communication open.

### 2. Make it personal

Most people who use tobacco want to quit. If you or someone you love has struggled with nicotine addiction, or a tobacco-related illness, talk to your kids about it. Your honesty may help your child understand how damaging tobacco use can be, in any form.

### 3. Focus on right now

Kids have a hard time imagining long-term health effects like cancer, lung disease, or death. So talk about consequences they can relate to, like shortness of breath, mouth sores, yellow teeth, or addiction instead. Anything that may affect their health, interests, or social life right away.

### 4. Talk about social costs

Tobacco marketing can make these products seem sexy, cool, and attractive. But using tobacco can have some pretty unappealing effects. Nobody wants to smell bad, have yellow teeth, or get red and itchy eyes. Discuss how tobacco impacts first impressions and first dates.

### 5. Remember, tobacco-free is popular

Ads and social media make it easy for kids to believe that "everybody is doing it." But that simply isn't true. Most Missouri youth have never used tobacco. Remind your kids that living tobacco-free is the popular choice.

### 6. Ask them to ask you

Make sure your child knows they can always ask you about tobacco products first (instead of turning to Google, social media, classmates, or friends). You may not know everything, but you can find answers from credible sources together.

Source: <sup>1</sup> Youth-Adult Connectedness: A Key Protective Factor for Adolescent Health". American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Volume 52, Issue 3, Supplement 3, March 2017, Pages S275-S278.



## Help Your Child Quit

**Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or text VAPEFREEMO to 873373 for free help to quit using tobacco, including e-cigarettes.**

Nicotine is powerfully addictive in any form. If you or your child use tobacco, there's a network of free and affordable resources—including quit coaches, peer support groups, apps, and more—that can help your family live tobacco-free for good.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more.



Learn more about the state and local tobacco prevention policies that need your support at [TobaccosChangingMO.org](http://TobaccosChangingMO.org).



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