

Wesleyan University: Tobacco and Vape Free Policy 2022 Fact Sheet

Top 10 Benefits of a Tobacco and Vape Free Campus

1. It eliminates on-campus cigarette butts, vape cartridges, and other wastes, making for a cleaner and more eco-friendly campus environment and reduces the risk of on-campus fires.
2. It eliminates second hand smoke and reduces associated health risks, such as cancer, respiratory infections, asthma exacerbation, and other illnesses, protecting those who do and do not use these products. It considers the needs of people with medical conditions triggered by second hand smoke.
3. It supports the preference of the majority of people to live, learn, and work in nicotine-free environments by creating a healthy environment for all members of our community.
4. This policy helps to address health inequalities, especially those in lower socioeconomic groups, the LGBTQ+ community and people of color.
5. It helps those who have decided to live nicotine-free, stay nicotine-free. This is done by eliminating a tobacco and vape-friendly environment.
6. It reduces nicotine use initiation by creating a new social norm free of tobacco and vape products, reduces the social acceptability of nicotine product use, and prepares everyone for nicotine-free workplaces and living environments.
7. It promotes cessation by helping the 70% of nicotine users who want to quit, successfully quit. Cessation support is available to all members of our campus.
8. It reduces exposure to the leading preventable causes of death in the U.S.
9. It helps those who have already quit, stay tobacco or vape-free by eliminating triggers found in tobacco- and vape-friendly environments.
10. It helps all of us breathe easy.

Risks of Nicotine on the Developing Brain

- Primes the brain for addiction to other drugs
- Negative impact on attention, learning, and memory
- Can worsen anxiety and other mood disorders, irritability, and impulsivity
- More susceptible to nicotine addiction, & more likely to use other nicotine products including a variety of nicotine-based products.

Health Risks of Vaping Nicotine

- Second hand aerosol includes harmful ingredients including ultrafine particles, chemicals linked to serious lung diseases, volatile organic compounds such as benzene which is found in car exhaust, and heavy metals such as tin and lead.
- Can cause irreversible lung damage and disease, and increases the risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Increases oral bacteria in the mouth which increases the risk of infection, gum disease, and cancer.
- Emerging evidence suggests that exposure to aerosols from e-cigarettes harms the cells of the lung and diminishes the ability to respond to infection.

COVID-19 and Nicotine Use

- Close to one-third of young adults are medically vulnerable to severe COVID-19 illness. Smoking is the strongest risk factor for young adults. Young adults who smoke are twice as likely to be medically vulnerable to COVID-19.
- Smoking is associated with a higher likelihood of COVID-19 disease progression, including increased illness severity, intensive care unit admission, or death.
- Smoking and vaping damage the lungs and weaken the body's immune system. This allows viruses, like the coronavirus, to attach more easily to lung cells and enter the lungs. Those who vape are 5x more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19. Those who smoke are 7x more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19.

Ensure a Healthy Campus Environment for Everyone

- Now – more than ever - our lungs matter.
 - Smoking and second hand smoke exposure compromise lung function, and even brief exposure to second hand smoke makes breathing difficult.
 - Campus environments should not induce coughs, sneezes, wheezing, or shortness of breath, behaviors that can spread or exacerbate the virus.
- One bad apple does, in fact, spoil the whole bunch.
 - It only takes one smoker to affect the hearts and lungs of everyone nearby.
 - Second hand smoke travels indiscriminately and has the potential to compromise immune systems, particularly for those with underlying conditions.
- Living, learning and working on campus should be as worry-free as possible.
 - Everyone wants to feel confident about returning to regular activities. A tobacco and vape-free campus will let everyone know that we are committed to protecting our community.
 - A tobacco and vape-free campus will let everyone know that you are committed to protecting their health, even in the absence of the coronavirus

Deaths in Connecticut from Smoking

- Adults who die each year in Connecticut from their own smoking: 4,900
- The proportion of cancer deaths in Connecticut attributable to smoking: 27.0%
- Connecticut kids who have lost at least one parent to a smoking-caused death: 2,900
- Kids alive in the state today who will ultimately die from smoking: 56,000 (given current smoking levels)
- Nationally, smoking alone kills more people each year than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined.
- For every person who dies from smoking, at least 30 more are suffering from serious smoking-caused disease and disability.



Tobacco-Related Monetary Costs in Connecticut

- Annual health care expenditures in the State directly caused by tobacco use: \$2.03 billion
- State Medicaid program's total health expenditures caused by tobacco use: \$520.8 million
- Estimated annual health care expenditures in Connecticut from second hand smoke exposure: \$60.8 million
- Individual state/federal taxes to cover smoking related government costs: \$843/household