Teen Vaping in Rural Massachusetts

Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance

Emily Adler, Annie McClements, Rachelle Kelley, Simone Thibault
Meet the Team

We are medical and pharmacy students working with the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance to examine how teen vaping is being addressed in clinics, schools, and local government.
Outline

1. Population of Focus
2. Current Legislation
3. Interprofessional Exposure and Community Experience
4. PURCH Advocacy Pitch: Service Project
5. Acknowledgements
6. References
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Defining the Population:

Where is the Quaboag Hills Region?

Region spans the most rural areas of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties

Population of Interest:

Teens, advocates, and school officials in public schools in the Quaboag Hills Region

Source: Quaboag hills chamber of commerce
Defining the Region: Resource Vacuum

“If I had a magic wand I would improve access to transportation in this region”
- Local Pediatrician

https://www.census.gov/geographies/mapping-files/time-series/geo/kml-cartographic-boundary-files.html
https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-tobacco-cessation-and-prevention-program-mtcp
Teen Substance Use Data:  
Quaboag Hills Substance Use Survey:  
Students Who Vaped at Least Once in the Last 30 Days

- 2019: 20% Vaped (8th Grade), 28% Vaped (10th Grade), 46% Vaped (12th Grade)
- 2017: 10% Vaped (8th Grade), 20% Vaped (10th Grade), 28% Vaped (12th Grade)

Data Collected by the QHSUA and compiled by Nekr Jenkins for Quaboag Hills Vaping Round Table
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MA Legislators Respond to Vaping ‘Epidemic’

Massachusetts to ban sale of all vaping products for 4 months in toughest state crackdown

Massachusetts DPH reports more vaping-related lung injury cases to CDC

Amid Record Rise In Teen Vaping, Mass. Officials Call For Adults To Act

'We're Done': Boston-Area Shop Extinguished After Vaping Ban

Vape store owners are suing to stop the product bans in New York and Massachusetts
Current Related Advocacy:

Ban Information and Impact

- Support from teen substance use advocates
- Opposition from retail owners
  - Loss of revenue and not reimbursed for inventory
- Impact on e-cigarette users
  - Teens report they’re still able to get vapes
  - Some are going back to cigarettes
- Ban expires in January

“We know eating red meat every day is detrimental to your health, but when there is E.Coli H.157 in that same product I have to pull it from the shelf immediately. The same principal applies to tobacco products.”

- Director of the Quabbin District Board of Public Health

Massachusetts Vaping Product Ban

On September 24, 2019, Governor Baker declared a public health emergency in the Commonwealth due to severe lung disease associated with the use of e-cigarettes and vaping products and the epidemic of e-cigarette use among youth.

The Commissioner of Public Health has temporarily prohibited the sale and display of all vaping products and e-cigarettes until further notice.

For help quitting:
MakeSmokingHistory.org
1-800-QUIT-NOW
Current Related Advocacy:
**MA Legislation: Bills S.2357 and H.4089**

Ban the sale of flavored tobacco products across the Commonwealth

Limit sale to adult only smoking bars (ex. hookah lounges)

**Goal:** Limit the power companies have to target young people with fruity and sweet flavors

*“No fifty-year old smoker wants strawberry lemonade flavored juul pods”*

-Ware High School Student

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Who is coming to the Table?

- Legislature
- Guardians
- Teachers
- Mentors
- Teens
- Pediatricians
- School Nurses
- School Deans
- Guidance Counselors
- Community Organizers
Interprofessional Networks of Care and Exposure: Teen Advocates and Professionals

“There is no question they are targeting kids and that’s a problem” — State Senator
Under the MIAA rules athletes lose 25% of their season [if they’re caught vaping]. You’d think that they would stop but they don’t”
“Vaping is the same leash as cigarettes, it’s just a prettier leash”
“Students are coming up to me saying they need help but I don’t know what resources to provide them”
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There are currently prevention efforts and programs for teens with diagnosed substance use disorders. Yet, for students who vape but do not have a diagnosed disorder, doctors, teachers, caregivers, legislators, and town advocates do not have the resources to support a primary intervention.

- Doctors “just don’t have enough time” to dive into the issue if a student does not have an emergent substance use disorder (S. Siege, personal communication, 10/22).
- Teachers and caregivers feel “unprepared to have these conversations” and “just don’t know appropriate resources” (Ware High School Teacher, personal communication, 10/28).
- Town advocates explain that government “refuses funding for a project that is not yet evidence-based” (N. Jenkins, personal communication, 10/25).
PURCH Advocacy Pitch:

Service Project for Primary Intervention

With the help of Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance leaders, Nekr Jenkins and Gail Gramarosa, we propose piloting a substance-free stress management group in schools to benefit adolescents who need assistance quitting vaping before a child develops a substance use disorder.

Please take action and consider funding a pilot study to:

- Allocate time of a trusted teacher to lead a support group of 5-10 students
- Compensate an expert to design curriculum and provide teacher training
- Provide transportation to allow for teens to access the support group on weekends in order to maintain anonymity
PURCH Advocacy Pitch:

Uncle Sam wants YOU to call/write your legislators!

- Search for your state legislators here: https://malegislature.gov/search/findmylegislator
- Ask them to support the ban on the sale of flavored tobacco
- Propose piloting a primary intervention
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References

Jenkins, N. Quaboag Hills Drug Free Communities Project Coordinator. (2019, October 25). Interview by E. Adler.


Ware High School Students and Staff. (2019, October 28). Focus group by A. McClements, R. Kelley, S. Thibault, and E. Adler.