



James Bowie High School

❖ Pride In Performance ❖

Friday, September 27, 2019

Bulldog Nation,

This edition of the Bowie Star is dedicated to addressing the vaping epidemic at James Bowie High School and across the country. Yesterday, the [Associated Press](#) confirmed that hundreds of Americans have reported vaping-related breathing illness and the death toll across the United States has now risen to 12. The [Centers for Disease Control](#) have reported over 800 cases of lung injury related to e-cigarette product use or vaping. Unfortunately, Bowie is not immune to the surge of teens and young adults using e-cigarettes.

In Texas, [SB 21](#) went into effect on September 1, 2019, raising the legal age from 18 to 21 to buy, sell, or possess cigarettes or tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, unless the person is in the military, as punishable by a Class C Misdemeanor. Despite that legislation, we are still seeing an increase in the possession and use of e-cigarettes, also known as ‘vapes’ or ‘juuls’ at Bowie. [Juul Labs, Inc.](#) is an electronic cigarette company which makes the Juul e-cigarette, which packages nicotine salts from leaf tobacco into one-time use cartridges. Juul is amazingly discreet and can look and even charge like a flash drive, so it is easy for teens to hide at school or home. Juuls now account for about 72 percent of the market share of vaping products in the United States.

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. The term is used because e-cigarettes do not produce tobacco smoke, but rather an aerosol, often mistaken for water vapor, that actually consists of fine particles. Juul's flavored vapor leaves no lingering odor and the aerosol dissipates quickly so it is extremely hard to detect or catch. Many of these particles contain varying amounts of toxic chemicals, which have been linked to cancer, as well as respiratory and heart disease. According to the [American Lung Association](#), using electronic cigarettes or vaping, particularly the flavored varieties, can cause bronchiolitis obliterans. First seen in the lungs of popcorn factory workers inhaling chemical flavorings, bronchiolitis obliterans, also known as “popcorn lung,” is a serious and irreversible disease that damages the bronchioles, the lung's smallest airways. Over time, inflammation associated with popcorn lung causes lung tissues and airways to scar and narrow, causing breathing difficulties.

We are calling your attention to this trend as the safety and well-being of all students is our highest priority. We all already know that nicotine is a highly addictive substance. A single Juul pod (a cartridge of vape liquid) contains as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes, or 200 cigarette puffs. This powerful nicotine dosing is putting a new generation of youth at risk for nicotine dependence. Not only does nicotine consumption during adolescence have long-term negative impacts on brain development, but because addiction is a form of learning (which happens at an accelerated rate during brain development) young adults can get addicted to nicotine more easily than adults. The nicotine in e-cigarettes and other tobacco products can even train your brain to be more easily addicted to other drugs like meth and cocaine. While e-cigarettes are marketed as a ‘safer’ alternative to cigarettes, anyone who does not currently use tobacco products should not start using e-cigarette

products. Homemade or black market e-juice refills are even worse because we have no idea what is in these pods.

The presence of our teachers and administrators on campus is crucial to supervise students during unstructured times and passing periods at Bowie. All teachers have committed to an assigned “duty” at a specific location before school, after school, or during one of the lunch periods every other day for this school year. Per AISD policy, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, pods, and any other accessories are not permitted on Bowie’s campus, and students found in possession of, using, or distributing them will receive disciplinary consequences. Consequences for possessing and/or using a vape anywhere on campus begins with three days of In-School Suspension. Further offenses will result in Home School Suspension, and if it's determined to be an illegal/controlled substance, it is a potential removal to the Alternative Learning Center.

Our goal is to make parents aware of this so they may assist schools in battling the growing epidemic. Today, the student newspaper, the Dispatch, published an article by our student journalists to educate their peers about the dangers of e-cigarettes. Last year as the principal at Bowie, I wrote a [letter to the editor](#) of the Dispatch appealing to our students to stop vaping. We encourage you to use these references as well as online resources like [TIPS FROM TEACHERS: HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT VAPING](#) to discuss this with your students.

The following articles may also assist you with these conversations:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/31/health/vaping-marijuana-ecigarettes-sickness.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur>

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease/need-to-know/index.html

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/e-cigarettes.html>

Thank you for working with the staff at Bowie to address this growing concern. We know that our young people come together every day to learn and that as a generation, they learn a lot from each other. As people who care about kids, we have the power to start the conversation. We need to work together to educate our young people, reinforce that the reason e-cigarettes are not legal for adolescents to purchase is because they are harmful, and create an environment in which e-cigarettes are not acceptable in Bulldog Nation.

Sincerely,
Mark Robinson

Principal
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