# Recommendations for Schools including Alternatives to Suspension

School policies on student use and possession of tobacco have often involved punitive discipline approaches. Substance violations typically lead to suspensions, increasing student absenteeism without addressing root causes. For students who are caught using or possessing tobacco products, including e-cigarettes (otherwise known as vaping), staying connected to school and accessing support services is vital for long-term well-being.



REFRAME – Shift student tobacco use, including use of e-cigarettes, from a discipline issue to an opportunity to provide support.



REVISE POLICY – Update your district’s tobacco free school policy to include the following language:

1. “Any tobacco product” includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco, snus, tobacco strips and sticks, dissolvable tobacco products, hookah, e-cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery devices and any new and emerging tobacco products.
2. “Any person” includes students, staff, visitors, all groups using school property and ANY other persons. Include all alternative and vocational programs in this prohibition.
3. “Any time” means 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year.
4. “Any location” includes the school’s property, grounds, buildings and vehicles, even when school is out of session or the event is sponsored by another organization (e.g., a sporting event, all district event, etc.)
5. “Any event” includes ALL school-sponsored events, whether on or off school property.

*Source: MI Department of Health and Human Services Tobacco Control Program*



Screen students caught using tobacco or electronic cigarettes for substance use and mental health. Refer to services as needed and offer alternatives to suspension.



Support participation in intervention groups, treatment services and student assistance programs, including alternatives to suspension programs.

Adapted from: <http://www.k12.wa.us/PreventionIntervention/pubdocs/RedFlagForStudentSupports_SmokingVaping_2018.pdf>

 

# Alternatives to School Suspension

**My Life, My Quit**- National Jewish Health (who also offers the Ohio Tobacco Quitline)

My Life, My Quit is a youth quit tobacco and vaping program that offers free and confidential help from a quit coach specially trained to listen to teens, help teens navigate social situations that involve tobacco or vaping, and find healthy ways to cope with stress. My Life, My Quit offers:

* The first comprehensive program designed just for teens
* Teen focused messages and educational materials created with youth input
* Five real time coaching sessions via live text messaging, online chat or phone
* On-going text messages for encouragement throughout the quit process
* A water-marked certificate of completion of the program that can be given to school administrators

TOLL FREE: **1-855-891-9989 mylifemyquit.com**

**Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit** – Healthy Futures Curriculums:

The Healthy Futures Curriculum provides 3 alternatives to suspension options: 1, 2, or 4 hours. This give a school flexibility to use this at multiple stages with youth. There is also a sample letter to parents. <https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/curriculums/HealthyFutures.html>

**INDEPTH** - American Lung Association’s alternative to suspension interactive program

INDEPTH is a four, 50-minute sessions program that can be facilitated either one-on-one or in a group setting. The goal of every program is to educate students about nicotine addiction and cravings and ultimately guide them through the process of identifying their own reasons for nicotine use. Training for facilitators is free. <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit/indepth>

**N-O-T Not on Tobacco -** American Lung Association’s youth cessation program

N-O-T is newly designed in 2020 and training for facilitators is free. There are 10 sessions that help teens quit by addressing total health in order to develop and maintain positive behaviors. Youth will learn to identify their reasons for smoking or vaping, healthy alternatives to nicotine use and finding people who will support them in their efforts to quit.

<https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit/not-on-tobacco>

**Aspire** – MD Anderson Cancer Center

Aspire is a bilingual, online tool that helps middle and high school teens learn about being tobacco free. It explains the dangers of tobacco and nicotine use, so they never start using tobacco. Or, if they already do, it gives information and ways to quit. Students can earn a certificate of completion upon finishing the program. Click on “Student Log In” to begin. Teachers/administrators can see students’ progress by logging in to the Admin site. <https://www.mdanderson.org/about-md-anderson/community-services/aspire.html>

**This is Quitting** – The Truth

A free, electronic nicotine delivery devices digital quit program for youth. Students can access the program by texting ‘QUIT” to 706-222-QUIT. <http://www.thisisquitting.com/>

**Prime for Life** – Prevention Research Institute

Prime for Life is an evidence-based motivational prevention, intervention and pretreatment program specifically designed for people who might be making high-risk choices. <https://www.primeforlife.org/programs/prime_for_life_prevention>

**CATCH My Breath** – University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health

A best-practices youth E-cigarette and JUUL prevention program. <https://catchinfo.org/modules/e-cigarettes/>