

# Oxford County Schools Dedicated to Addressing Youth Tobacco Use

Throughout the 2020 school year, Oxford County Schools have worked hard to address youth tobacco use and vaping. Eight Schools received educational programming and two school districts updated their tobacco policies.

Oxford County experienced one of the largest increases in Maine high schooler's reporting vaping. According to the 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS), 30.9% of high schoolers reported that they had used an e-cigarette at least once in the past 30 days, compared to 12.3% in 2017.

Oxford County middle schooler's 30 day use of electronic vapor products increased from 2.6% in 2017 to 9.4% in 2019, according to the 2017 and 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS).

Healthy Oxford Hills engaged with five of six school districts in Oxford County. SAD17 and SAD72 updated their policies to be in line with LD152, which was adopted in Spring 2019. This law prohibits all people from possessing tobacco/nicotine products on school property or at school events at all times.

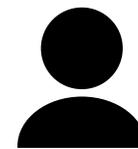
27 vaping presentations occurred at 6 different schools. The focus of these presentations is to inform students that the majority of e-cigarettes contain nicotine and that flavors are used to target young people. Students also learn information about health effects of vaping, including risk for addiction. Frequently, the school social worker attended these presentations and was available to follow up with students as needed.

11 SideKicks trainings occurred at 3 different schools. SideKicks educates youth about the risks of vaping and smoking, but also empowers them to be part of the solution. SideKicks involves multiple skill-building activities that support youth to develop active listening skills and in the process, learn how to support their peers.

The interactive nature of the presentations provided space for connection and discussion among the students who were eager to contribute their thoughts. Students were engaged in critical thinking especially when scrutinizing tobacco industry use and advertising of flavored products. The recent efforts are the start of a strong relationship, which is likely to lead to further engagement and more comprehensive programming. We plan to leverage this and look forward to incorporating skill-building opportunities into future education and engagement efforts.



*"If that didn't have nicotine or if I didn't know it had nicotine, I would be carrying it around all the time because I really like sweets and it looks yummy."*  
-5th grader at Molly Middle Ockett School referring to e-cigarettes.



628 students  
received SideKicks  
training or Vaping  
Presentations



2 School Districts  
updated their  
tobacco policy

## For More Information contact us at:

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