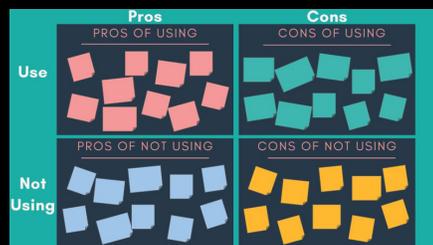
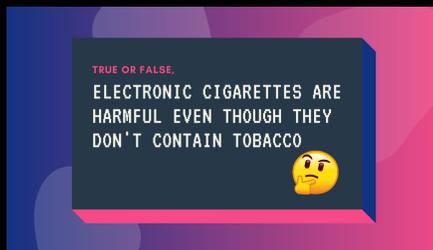




CLICKING INTO VIRTUAL LEARNING!

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

"I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED WITH HOW YOU ENGAGED THE STUDENTS AND GOT THEM TO PARTICIPATE. ALSO, THE PRESENTATION HAD SO MUCH GOOD INFORMATION (SOME OF WHICH WAS NEW TO ME)."
-REBECCA TURKEWITZ
(BAXTER ACADEMY ELA TEACHER)



••••• AT A GLANCE •••••

City of Portland revamps their ENDS (electronic nicotine delivery systems, aka vape products) presentation to better align with virtual learning platforms. In order for youth to continue receiving prevention messaging and education around vape use, it is critical for prevention strategies to adapt to the new virtual climate.

••••• PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE •••••

Since the onset of COVID-19, many individuals have had to switch to a virtual setting in their work and learning environments. It became quite a challenge to convert in-person connections into online interactions. As schools became overwhelmed with organizing distance learning, youth prevention efforts were put on hold. Alongside the challenges of disseminating resources to youth through virtual settings, emerging data reported that those who vape "face a much higher risk of COVID-19 than their peers who do not vape" (Stanford Medicine).

••••• APPROACH •••••

Seeing that vaping can lead to a higher risk of poorer COVID-19 outcomes, it became even more imperative to reach youth through prevention efforts regarding vaping. The Tobacco Prevention Team at City of Portland revamped and created a new fun, interactive, youth-friendly presentation/workshop filled with engaging activities. Topics range from covering health effects, chemical components, addiction, the adolescent brain, marketing tactics, tips on healthy decision making, and other discussion topics based on feedback from students. This virtual presentation has been offered to school districts, including health classes, within Cumberland County.

••••• RESULTS •••••

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science in Portland, Maine jumped on board and planned to integrate prevention work into their schedule to better reach all of their students within the first semester of the new school year. By allowing 4 district tobacco prevention partners to simultaneously present during advisory periods over the span of 2 weeks, Baxter Academy was able to reach their entire student body (around 400 students) to share tobacco prevention education. Additionally, this presentation was later presented at two virtual health classes at Deering High School, reaching over 40 students. With City of Portland's new virtual presentation, students showed engagement and interaction throughout the presentations.

••••• SUSTAINING SUCCESS •••••

The tobacco prevention team will continue to offer this virtual presentation to schools and youth serving entities throughout Cumberland County, and they will be committed to being flexible and work with schools to find the best way to reach youth through their virtual learning. City of Portland also looks forward to adapting the presentation for a variety of audiences such as middle schools students, parents, and faculty as well.

"We hope to continue to be partners and work together. We only heard great things about your colleagues and presentations, our staff were especially impressed (and learned a thing or two!)." -Emily Kelly (Baxter Academy School Counselor)

"Working with you has been a pleasure. Thank you." -Mary King (Baxter Academy Assistant Principal)



For More information contact us at
City of Portland
Public Health Division
hshir@portlandmaine.gov

