

TRAIIP ACADEMY FRESHMAN LEARN RISKS OF VAPING & E-CIGARETTE USE

Entire freshman class at R.W Traip Academy in Kittery receives vital education on prevalence and dangers of e-cigarettes

ISSUE/NEED

A study released in September of 2021 by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S Center for Disease Control (CDC) "estimated that more than two million U.S middle and high school students reported currently using e-cigarettes..." (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Despite a decrease in the number of reported users from 2020, e-cigarettes still remain the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014.

Acknowledging that millions of our youth are regularly putting their short and long-term health at risk is an important first step in addressing the youth e-cigarette epidemic. However, District Tobacco Prevention Partners at Partners for Healthier Communities (PHC) in Sanford, ME have made it a goal to educate as many York County students as possible on the many dangers that these products pose.

INTERVENTION

At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, PHC staff promptly began contacting schools to address their needs around e-cigarette use among students. Many schools responded voicing their concerns about prevalence of use and what they believed to be a lack of understanding of what e-cigarettes (commonly referred to as "vapes") really do. One of these schools was R.W Traip Academy, the local high school in Kittery, ME.

During the month of December, District Partner Alissa Wigglesworth presented a total of five highly interactive hour long presentations outlining the health risks of vaping and the marketing strategies big tobacco uses to knowingly get young people addicted to nicotine products.

RESULTS

Both during, and following the presentations, the entire freshman class of approximately 101 students at R.W Traip Academy had a chance to learn and asks questions regarding the products they are so often seeing or hearing about. The discussion prompted numerous questions, and resources were provided to all students on helping oneself, friends, peers, or family members struggling with e-cigarette or other tobacco use. Access to the free and confidential Maine Youth Text to Quit Line was highlighted.

SUSTAINABILITY

Because of the success at Kittery Traip Academy, discussion has begun between the school and PHC staff about conducting additional presentations for the remaining students at the school during the second semester beginning in 2022.

"I know that we can't prevent every young person from using e-cigarettes through education, but I am confident that I provided Traip Academy's freshman with the tools to make a highly informed decision that is right for them."

- Alissa, Tobacco Prevention Partner at PHC

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:



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