

2023
APRIL - MAY

Surveillance of Vaping Device Retailers

in Barkhamsted, New Hartford and Winsted



NORTHWEST HILLS
**PREVENTION
CONNECTION**

Winchester Youth Service Bureau



What We Did

In April and May 2023, the Winchester Youth Service Bureau conducted a surveillance of 13 registered vape retailers in three communities.

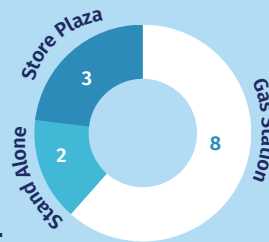
Several areas were assessed during the visits including the existence of signage around 'We Card,' and Tobacco 21, if and where the retailer displays their license, the type and amount of advertising found on store windows, the types of vaping products sold, and location of vape products within the store.

In addition, it was noted if advertisements were promoting vaping as a method to stop smoking cigarettes, if any health warnings were displayed, and if any specific groups were targeted in the advertisements.

If available, owners or managers were asked about the financial impact of selling vape products. Both owners and clerks were also asked if they knew about the health risks of vaping, if they believed vaping was a safer alternative to smoking cigarettes, the bestselling brands at the shop, the most popular flavors among young people and a description of the typical customer.

What We Found

Of the 13 retailers that were visited, 2 were located in Barkhamsted, 3 in New Hartford, and 8 in Winsted.



License

All retailers had a current license.

- 7 retailers had their license visible, and 6 they did not

Store Entry Requirements

- 2 stores required customers to be 21 to enter

We Card and Tobacco 21 signage

- 10 retailers had a 'We Card' sign on the entrance door
- Only 1 store had a 'We Card' sign by the cash register
- 9 retailers had a Tobacco 21 sign on the entrance door
- Only 2 retailers had a Tobacco 21 sign by the cash register

Location of Vaping Devices

- Behind the counter (not accessible to kids) -7 Locations
- In front of the counter -5 Locations

What We Found

The most popular vape brands sold include Airis, Vuse, Elfbar, and JUUL



9 out of 10 stores carried
Airis, Elfbar and Juul

3 stores carried
Vuse & Leap

1 to 2 stores carried
Blu, Sol, Lava, Orion, Logic, Flair, Raz, Exotic Bar

of Advertisements in Store Windows

6 stores

had advertisements for vapes in the window (ranging from 1 to 6 in total)

3 stores

had health warnings displayed - Sol advertised, "Nicotine is an addictive chemical"

1 store

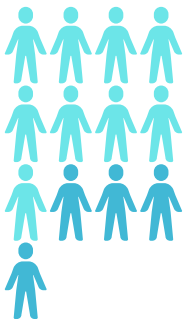
had an advertisement that promoted vaping as a method to stop smoking cigarettes - "Juul, Make the Switch"



YOUTH MARKETING

Although JUUL discontinued selling fruit flavors in 2019, there are still numerous replacements available. In this region popular brands include Airis Puff and LEAP GO which are available in over 15 kid-friendly flavors including Grape, Blue Razz, Pink Lemonade, Gummy Bear and Sour Apple.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT PERCEPTION OF HARM?



9 out of 13

owners/managers /clerks were aware of the health risks of vaping

"It is bad for you but I have one in my pocket"

-Discussion with store worker

8 believed vaping was a safer alternative than smoking cigarettes and **4** did not.

1 clerk did not know.



"I think it's no good, it is all artificial..."

-Discussion with store worker

NEXT STEPS

- ✔ **Conduct compliance checks utilizing local youth, including retailers that are not registered with the state.**
 - Follow up with all retailers who fail to offer support and trainings that may be required.
 - Publicly commend retailers that pass compliance.
- ✔ **Provide "Tobacco 21" and "We Card" signage to all retailers.**
- ✔ **Continue to educate youth, parents, school staff, and caregivers on the health risks associated with youth vaping nicotine.**
- ✔ **Provide youth opportunities and resources to help quit nicotine use.**