

Smoke-Free Ontario Act: Facts for Schools

Halton Region's public health programming aims to:

- **Prevent** young people from starting to smoke or vape
- **Protect** people from second-hand smoke and aerosol (vapour);
- Help people who would like to **quit** smoking and/or vaping;

Prevention and Protection: The Law

The *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* states that smoking and vaping is not allowed in public and private schools. This includes the school grounds, and public areas within 20 metre of any point on the perimeter of school property.

The changes in the Act are in effect at all times and applies to staff, students, parents, and visitors on school property including parking lots, inside vehicles, on sports fields and public areas within 20 metres from the perimeter of the school property.

Smoking refers to the smoking or holding of lighted tobacco or cannabis (includes medical)

Vaping refers to inhaling or exhaling vapour from an electronic cigarette/vape or holding an activated electronic cigarette/vape, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine or cannabis.

Responsibilities of School Administration:

- Ensure that employees, students and visitors are aware of the smoking and vaping prohibitions, including not smoking or vaping within 20 metres of the schools grounds.
- Ensure that employees, students and members of the public do not smoke or vape on school property.
- Ensuring ashtrays and any object(s) that serve as one are removed from the property.
- Ensure that a person, who does not comply with the Act, does not remain on the property.
- Posting appropriate signage at all entrances, exits, and other locations in order to inform everyone that smoking/vaping is prohibited.



SFOA No Smoking and No Vaping signs

Enforcement:

Public Health Inspectors from the Halton Region Health Department carry out inspections and investigate complaints regarding smoking and vaping on school property and public areas within 20 metre of the school property to enforce the Act.

Penalties:

| Offence | Minimum Fine | Maximum Fine (first offence) | Maximum Fine (multiple offences) |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Smoke or vape on or within 20m of school grounds (People 16 years or older) | \$305 | \$1000 | \$5000 |
| Smoke or vape on or within 20m of school grounds (People younger than 16 years) | Must attend court | \$1000 | \$5000 |
| Selling tobacco or vapour products to a person who is less than 19 years old | \$490 | \$8000 | \$200,000 |

Cessation Help!

Young people underestimate the power of nicotine addiction.

- Nearly 9 out of 10 adult tobacco users started before age 18, and nearly all started by age 26. It is also estimated that about 3 out of 4 high school tobacco users will become adult smokers- even if they intend to quit in a few years.ⁱ
- Vapes are not a proven cessation aid.
- Research shows that youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to use other tobacco products like cigarettes.

Halton Region offers resources to help people [quit smoking](#) such as [The Stop Smoking Clinic](#), or check out:

- KidsHelpPhone.ca
- BreakItOff.ca
- Quit4Life.com
- LeaveThePackBehind.org
- MyLastDip.com

Curriculum support and resources on tobacco, vaping and cannabis for schools

Contact the school years program by calling 311, email schoolhealth@halton.ca, or visit Halton.ca

ⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Printed with corrections, January 2014.