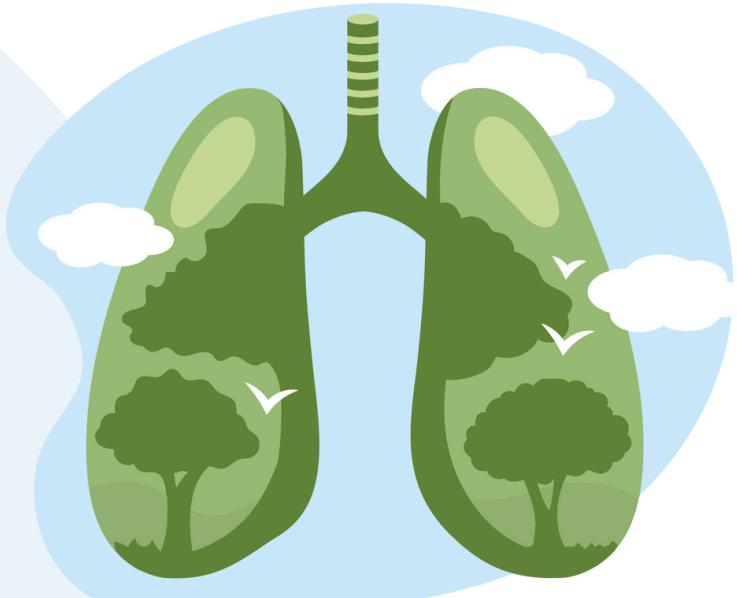


Smoke and Vape-Free

Toolkit For Schools in

Bass Coast and South Gippsland



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The South Coast Prevention Team acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We celebrate, value and include people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures and abilities.

Introduction

Preventing young people from taking up smoking and vaping is crucial to protecting their physical, social and mental wellbeing.⁽⁴⁾ Schools can play an important role in prevention by creating a supportive smoke and vape-free environment.⁽⁴⁾ Creating a supportive smoke and vape-free environment using a whole-school approach can improve the health and wellbeing of young people, their families and school staff.^(3,4,5)

The Smoke and Vape-Free Toolkit for Schools includes a range of resources to assist schools in Bass Coast and South Gippsland shire to create supportive smoke and vape-free school environments. The toolkit provides evidence-based information for use by school staff, students and families.

The resources in this toolkit use a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing based on five domains; leadership and commitment, healthy physical environment, healthy culture, student teaching and learning, supported staff, and families and community partnerships.⁽¹⁾

The Smoke and Vape-Free Toolkit for Schools has been developed by the South Coast Prevention Team (Health Promotion workforce of Bayside Health Regional and South Gippsland Hospital).

"No one 'chat' about vaping will be enough for students not to be tempted by vaping, but constant instruction and awareness will help"

**(Secondary School Teacher,
South Gippsland)**

"Please keep educating our children so they can make informed decisions about vaping"

(Parent, Bass Coast)

Benefits of creating a smoke and vape-free school environment

Students, staff and families are aware and understand the risks associated with smoking and vaping ⁽¹⁾

Students have good health literacy about smoking and vaping, empowering good decision making ⁽¹⁾

Students know what services are available to support them or a friend to quit ^(1,5)

Helps to reduce the number of students who start smoking or vaping ⁽¹⁾

Students have a supportive and healthy learning environment ⁽²⁾

Creates a supportive approach to managing students found smoking or vaping on school grounds ⁽⁵⁾

The whole school community are protected from the toxins in second-hand smoke and aerosols ^(1,2)

Fosters a smoke and vape-free culture among students, staff and families

Normalises being smoke and vape-free among young people ^(1,2,3)

Families have tools and resources to have informed conversations with their child ⁽⁴⁾

1. Department of Health Tasmania - [Smoke Free and Vape Free: A Toolkit for a Whole School Approach](#)

2. American Heart Association - [Tobacco-Free Schools Toolkit](#)

3. World Health Organisation - [Freedom From Nicotine and Tobacco: Guide for Schools](#)

4. VicHealth - [Vaping Conversation Guide for Parents](#)

5. Victorian Department of Education - [Smoking and Vaping Ban](#)

School Checklist

School Settings Checklist

Creating a supportive, smoke and vape-free school environment.

The School Settings Checklist is a recommended tool to strengthen a whole school approach to reducing tobacco and vape-related harms in school environments. By working through the checklist, schools can identify actions that promote a healthier community and foster a smoke and vape-free culture for students, staff, and families. While tailored for Victorian schools, the checklist can be adapted and applied in other jurisdictions to support a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing.

Leadership and Commitment

Establish and communicate a shared commitment to smoking and vaping prevention and cessation.

School leadership acknowledges and demonstrates their commitment to smoking and vaping prevention and cessation.

This commitment is regularly communicated to staff, students, families and visitors through multiple communication channels.

The school is compliant with relevant smoking and vaping legislation and Government policy.

Partnerships, sponsorships or engagement with the tobacco industry are avoided.

Physical Environment

Ensure the physical school environment actively supports smoke and vape-free practices.

Staff are informed about the legislative requirements that ensure the school environment remains smoke and vape-free.

Smoke and vape-free signage is clearly displayed at all school entry points and within other areas of the schools as deemed appropriate.

Staff, visitors and families are informed that smoking and vaping are not permitted on school grounds.

External organisations using school facilities are informed of the smoke and vape-free commitment and this is reflected in formal agreements.

School events (on and off-site) are promoted as smoke and vape-free.

Teaching and Learning

Embed smoking and vaping prevention education into curriculum and classroom practice.

Smoking and vaping education is integrated into the Alcohol and other Drugs Focus Area of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

Quit's *Seeing Through the Haze* vaping education is delivered as part of classroom learning.

Teachers have access to professional learning and evidence-based resources to support effective delivery of smoking, vaping and cessation education.

School Culture and Wellbeing

Provide clear and accessible response and support pathways for staff and students.

School wellbeing teams have clear procedures for responding to student smoking and/or vaping incidents with a supportive, educational approach.

Staff and students have access to cessation support services such as Quitline, Aboriginal Quitline, local health services, or in-school support.

Opportunities are identified to work with local health or community organisations to support school smoking and vaping prevention and cessation initiatives.

The checklist closely aligns with the whole-school approach of the Healthy Schools Achievement Program. Schools can register with the Achievement Program for free access to further resources, support and the opportunity to be recognised by the Victorian government as a health promoting school.

A partnership between:



[View the school checklist from Quit Victoria](#)

Information for School Staff

Review, update or develop a Smoking and Vaping Policy

A Smoking and Vaping Policy demonstrates strong leadership support and a shared commitment to creating a safe and supportive school environment that protects and promotes health and wellbeing for the whole school community.⁽¹⁾

When developing and reviewing the policy ensure staff, students and families are provided with opportunities to have input and provide feedback on the policy. This will ensure the policy is realistic, effective in practice, and promotes shared ownership.

Having a customised policy helps to bring about sustainable changes that address the needs and aims of your school.

Smoking and Vaping Policy – Template

Purpose
[Insert school name] acknowledges the importance in preventing and reducing harm from smoking and vaping, and in supporting the health and wellbeing of students.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure [insert school name] contributes to creating a supportive, healthy school environment. This policy confirms our commitments to:

- Ensuring a smoke and vape-free environment for students, families, staff, volunteers and visitors
- Delivering smoking and vaping education in one or more learning key areas of the curriculum as a part of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing (e.g. developing knowledge, resilience and help-seeking skills of students)
- Providing information to staff and families about the benefits of not smoking and vaping
- Providing a safe, inclusive and empowering school environment
- Implementing strategies to prevent and minimise harm caused by smoking and vaping
- Establishing supportive procedures to support students needing support to quit smoking and/or vaping.

Background
Smoking and vaping prevention and education is most effective when it is delivered in a context of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing. Children and young people begin experimenting with smoking and vaping around the age of 11 and continue to do so throughout their adolescence during this period. Teachers and parents are in a particularly influential position as their behaviour can have an impact on how children and young people behave. For example, smoke- and vape-free school environments send a clear message that a healthy lifestyle does not include smoking and vaping. Likewise, education can play a counterbalancing role in shaping a normative culture of safety, moderation, and informed decision-making.

There are a range of risk and protective factors related to the environment, knowledge, attitudes and skills of students that influence the likelihood of them experimenting with tobacco or e-cigarette products, alcohol and other drugs.² Research suggests that young people who have a number of protective factors in their lives are less likely to engage in long-term risky behaviour, including:

¹DEA and Other Drugs - Student Policy <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/secondary/other-drugs-student-policy>
²DEECD, 2008. Smoke Free Schools: Tobacco Prevention and Management Guidelines for Victorian Schools <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/schools/safetyhealth/tobacco/guidelines.pdf>

[Download a sample policy](#)

Signage for your school environment

Display 'No Smoking or Vaping' signs at your school including entrances, main reception and bathrooms. This helps to reinforce that smoking and vaping are prohibited on school grounds and within 4 metres of entrances.



[Print and display signs](#)

South Coast Smoke and Vape-Free School Challenge 2026

Teachers are invited to get Year 8 students involved in the South Coast Smoke and Vape-Free Challenge. Students are encouraged to take on the role of community health researchers to create innovative and engaging campaigns that promote a smoke and vape-free future for everyone.

Students may choose to do this by (but not limited to) creating a video, poster, social media campaign, advocacy letter or persuasive essay.

The challenge could be implemented across curriculum areas including Health and Physical Education, Science, English, Civics and Citizenship, and Media Arts.

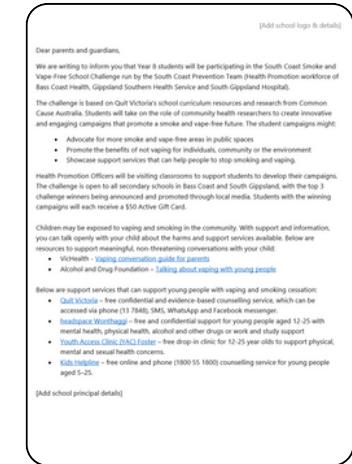
The challenge runs across Term 2 and Term 3 2026.

To enter, school staff can submit their top 5 campaigns by Friday 18 September 2026. The students who create the top 3 campaigns will each receive a \$50 Active Gift Card.

 If your school is participating in the South Coast Smoke and Vape-Free School Challenge, inform parents and guardians using the letter.



[View the challenge flyer](#)



[Download the parent letter](#)

If you would like the South Coast Prevention Team to visit your class to support students to develop their campaigns, please call 0438 057 040 or email prevention@basscoasthealth.org.au

South Coast Smoke and Vape-Free School Challenge 2025

In 2025, 128 students from 3 secondary schools participated in the South Coast Smoke and Vape-Free School Challenge. Please see below to hear what they said about their involvement in the challenge.

“The students were really engaged in being able to make their own campaign. It was great for communication and teamwork among students”

(Health and Physical Education Teacher, South Gippsland)

“I felt empowered to create change for a positive smoke and vape-free future. This was a chance for students like myself to engage in solving an issue that many people struggle with. When we work together, we can help people in need and not judge but be respectful about it”

(Year 8 Student, South Gippsland)

“I really enjoyed the opportunity to work with my peers to raise awareness for a problem that is close to my heart. It was rewarding to be able to learn about the challenges and better my understanding of this complicated topic”

(Year 8 Student, South Gippsland)

Seeing Through the Haze education resources

Quit Victoria has developed evidence-based curriculum-aligned vaping education resources for use in Victorian schools across Years 5-10. The resources aim to equip students with critical thinking skills to create change for a smoke and vape-free future. The resources are structured as a three-part learning sequence:

- Module One: Getting the Facts
- Module Two: Seeing Through the Haze
- Module Three: Making Change

[Year 5-6 student resource](#)

[Year 7-8 student resource](#)

[Year 9-10 student resource](#)

 The teaching guide is designed to be used alongside the student resources. It includes teaching and learning information, lesson planning suggestions, curriculum links and answers to the student resource activities.

[Access the teaching guide](#)

 The lesson cards provide educators with flexible and tailored delivery options. They offer flexible delivery formats across 2 or 3 lessons, while maintaining key learning outcomes. These lesson cards can be used when:

- There is limited capacity to deliver the full suite of activities in the student resource
- A tailored approach to activity delivery is needed to better suit student needs
- Responding to vaping incidents within school settings or other needs of the school community.

[Access the lesson cards](#)

Useful resources

 For further information please use the links below.

- Better Health Channel: [E-cigarettes and vaping](#)
- Blurred Minds: [Free resources for educators](#)
- Department of Education: [Smoking and vaping ban](#)
- Quit Victoria: [Australia's vaping regulations](#)
- Quit Victoria: [Practical tips on talking to a teen about vaping](#)
- Quit Victoria: [School resources](#)
- Tackling Indigenous Smoking: [Facts about vaping](#)
- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne: [Vaping and e-cigarettes](#)

Sign up to the South Coast Healthy Schools Newsletter to stay up to date with opportunities and resources to help improve the health and wellbeing of your school



Welcome to our first edition of the South Coast Healthy Schools and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Newsletter for 2025. This newsletter is filled with ideas and resources to help improve the health & wellbeing of your school and OSHC community. If you would like support to deliver any of the projects listed below please contact prevention@basscoasthealth.org.au or call 0438 057 040.

In this newsletter:

- [What's Coming Up](#)
- [The Achievement Program](#)
- [Vic Kids Eat Well](#)
- [\\$200 Incentive Opportunity](#)
- [Seeing Through the Haze Year 5-6 Curriculum Resources](#)
- [SAKGF Mindfulness Activities](#)
- [SunSmart](#)
- [Meet the South Coast Prevention Team](#)

[**Learn more about the \\$200 incentive opportunity**](#)

Seeing Through the Haze Year 5-6 Curriculum Resources

By creating supportive smoke and vape-free schools and educating children from an early age we can protect them from the harms of smoking and vaping. Below are some ways you can create a smoke and vape-free primary school:

- Utilise Quit Victoria's newly released evidence-based [vaping curriculum resources](#) for years 5-6. A [teaching guide](#) is also available to support the implementation of these resources.
- Be inspired by Camperdown Kindergarten to have a '[Fresh Air Day](#)'.
- Update 'No Smoking' signs at school entrances to '[No Smoking or Vaping](#)'.



[**Download the Quit Victoria curriculum resources**](#)

Information for Families

Provide information to families

Parents and carers play an important role in influencing the values and beliefs of their children.

Share these resources with parents and carers:

- VicHealth: [Vaping conversation guide for parents](#)
 - This guide can help parents and carers to have meaningful, non-threatening conversations with their teen about vaping. They are encouraged to plan the conversation in two parts:
 1. Determine where their teen is at with vaping
 2. Identify the group that best describes their teen right now and the most relevant tips to use.
- Quit Victoria: [Vapes and the effects of vaping](#)
- Lung Foundation Australia: [Vaping and young people](#)
- Alcohol and Drug Foundation: [Talking about vaping with young people](#)



Support for Students

Encourage students to utilise support services

Quitline

- Free confidential and evidence-based telephone counselling service
 - Phone: 13 7848 (Monday-Friday, 8am to 8pm)
 - Text 'call back' to 0482 090 634
 - Webchat at quit.org.au
 - Message on Facebook Messenger @quitvic or WhatsApp 61 385 832 920
 - Request a callback using the online form at quit.org.au
 - Online tools and tips to help you quit smoking and vaping.

headspace Wonthaggi

- Offers free and confidential support for young people aged 12-25 with mental health, physical health, alcohol and other drugs or work and study support
- Address: 5b Murray Street, Wonthaggi, Victoria 3995
- Phone: 5671 5900
- Email: info@headspacewonthaggi.org.au

Youth Assist Clinic (YAC) Foster

- Free drop-in clinic for 12-25 year olds to support with physical, mental and sexual health concerns.
- Address: 87 Stations Road, Foster, Victoria 3960
- Phone: 0492 844 000 (Mondays during school term from 12pm - 4:30pm)
- Email: youth.services@sghs.com.au

Kids Helpline

- Free and confidential phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 - 25.
- Phone: 1800 551 800

References

1. Cancer Council Victoria (2025), 'Healthy Schools', accessed 21 January 2026.
2. Quit Victoria (2026), 'School Settings Checklist', accessed 20 January 2026.
3. American Heart Association (2021), 'The American Heart Association's Tobacco-Free Schools Toolkit', accessed 21 January 2026.
4. Department of Health Tasmania (2025), 'Smoke Free and Vape Free: A Toolkit for a Whole School Approach', accessed 21 January 2026.
5. World Health Organisation (2023), 'Free from nicotine and tobacco: guide for schools', accessed 21 January 2026.
6. VicHealth (2024), 'Vaping Conversation Guide for Parents', accessed 21 January 2026.
7. Victorian Department of Education (2024), 'Smoking and Vaping Ban', accessed 21 January 2026.

Smoke and Vape-Free Toolkit For Schools in Bass Coast and South Gippsland

Thank you for using the Smoke and Vape-Free Toolkit for Schools.

We hope you found this resource useful.

If you have any feedback on this toolkit or would like to contact the South Coast Prevention Team please email prevention@basscoasthealth.org.au or call 0438 057 040.