

Children's Services
The Woolwich Centre
35 Wellington Street
London
SE18 6HQ

Main number 020 8854 8888

24 July 2024

Message from the Local Public Health Team to Parents/Carers

The Risks Concerning Children and Young People's Use of Adulterated Vapes

Public Health teams across London are aware of several incidents in recent months, where secondary school-aged children have become unwell after using adulterated vape devices. In some instances, this has resulted in young people requiring hospital treatment.

Across London, adulterated vape liquids have been found to contain illegal substances, including the synthetic cannabinoid known as Spice. This is a particularly dangerous substance that can cause a serious threat to the health of young people.

In most instances the young people were unaware of the substance they were using.

Please talk to your young people about the risks of buying adulterated vapes.

There is no way of knowing the substance they contain and, therefore, the potential danger.

Locally, Public Health is working closely with the substance misuse service, the Police, and Trading Standards. Action is being taken to understand the ongoing issues around the supply of these substances, to prevent harm and help keep our young people safe.

Parents and carers can play an important role in helping young people understand the risks, so that they don't choose to use adulterated vapes without realising the harm they could be exposing themselves to.

It is important to advise young people that regardless of what they have been told, even by a close friend, that it is impossible to know what is actually contained in these substances. All drugs, whether alcohol, illegal drugs or prescription medication, carry risks. Please have an open, honest and non-judgmental conversation with those in your care to explore these risks and prevent further harms. This could provide valuable tools for a young person to make the right decision and stay safe. It is clear that young people have accessed adulterated vapes through social media apps, such as Instagram. So, it will also be important to stress the risks of young people buying devices through social media.

Please note that, in any case, it is illegal to sell nicotine vapes to anyone under 18 or for adults to buy them on behalf of under 18s.

If you are aware of any shops in Greenwich selling vapes to young people (under 18), you should contact the Trading Standards Team on 020 8921 8157. You can also report online anonymously at:

<https://www.londontradingstandards.org.uk/report-consumer-crime/>

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Your cooperation and awareness are crucial in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our young people in Greenwich.

Yours sincerely



Director of Public Health, Royal Borough of Greenwich



Director for Children's Services, Royal Borough of Greenwich

Support and advice for parents and children in Royal Greenwich

Online family support: dedicated family support through online counselling
adfam.org.uk/greenwich (to complete the online form)

Children and you people: [Children and Young people's substance misuse service](#) support for children and young people 11-18, (and up to 25 for care leavers and SEND)

Email: Substancemisuseservice@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Call: 020 8921 6907

Adults: Visit [Via Greenwich](#) – drug and alcohol support for adults (18 and over)

Email: greenwich@viaorg.uk

Call: 0300 303 4552

Further advice and information can be found online at:

www.talktofrank.com

www.substancemisuseresources.co.uk

[Spice harm reduction information](#)