

Unbox the Truth: A Targeted Anti-Vaping Campaign Strategy for Middle Adolescents (Ages 14–17)

Social Epidemiology and Public Health Development

Module: LCHS7000

Lecturer: Ihinosen Ovbude

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A 6-8 week interactive, school-and-community- based programme.

Weeks 1-2: The Algorithm & The Aisle
(Unpacking targeted TikTok/social media marketing).

Weeks 3-4: Brain Chemistry (Understanding nicotine, dopamine, and the developing prefrontal cortex).

Weeks 5-6: The Social Script (Role-playing refusal skills and navigating peer environments).

Weeks 7-8: Counter-Strike (Youth-led creation of peer-to-peer anti-vaping media).



Campaign Rationale & National Guidelines

Rationale: To address the epidemic of youth vaping by targeting the intersection of peer influence and predatory marketing.



National Guidelines: NICE Guideline [NG209] explicitly states vaping must be discouraged in children and young people. Selling nicotine vapes to under-18s is illegal in the UK.



Are we meeting guidelines? No.

- *Data:* 19% of 11-17-year-olds in Great Britain have tried vaping (approx. 1.1 million youth) (ASH, 2026).
- *Data:* 6% are current users, with the 16-17 age bracket showing acute vulnerability (ASH, 2026; NHS England, 2026).



Short-Term & Long-Term Consequences

- **Short-Term (Daily Life):** Nicotine addiction leading to mood instability, sleep disruption, financial strain, and disruptions in education (leaving class to vape).
- **Long-Term (Future):** Impaired neurodevelopment (specifically the prefrontal cortex), unknown long-term pulmonary risks (e.g., impact of inhaled flavourings), and the debated "gateway" risk to combustible tobacco.

Key Campaign Aims & Measurability

Reduce

Aim 1: Reduce current vaping prevalence within the target cohort by 15% over a 6-month period. (Measured via anonymised, validated pre- and post-intervention self-report surveys).

Increase

Aim 2: Increase critical media literacy regarding vape marketing tactics by 40%. (Measured via pre- and post-intervention cognitive quizzes).

Enhance

Aim 3: Enhance peer-refusal self-efficacy by 30%. (Measured using a validated resistance self-efficacy psychometric scale).

1. CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Unbox the Truth: A Targeted Anti-Vaping Campaign Strategy for Middle Adolescents (Ages 14–17)



Focus

Reduce vaping among middle adolescents (14–17 years) by increasing awareness, building refusal skills, and promoting healthier choices.



Why It Matters

Vaping can harm brain development, lung health, and well-being. Early use increases the risk of nicotine addiction.



Goal

To empower 14–17-year-olds with facts, skills, and support to stay vape-free.



Target Audience

Middle adolescents in schools, online platforms, and community spaces.

“The truth empowers. Knowledge protects. Choices define your future.”

2. TYPES OF EVALUATION & HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

Type of Evaluation	How It Will Be Achieved	Measures of Success
Process Evaluation	Monitor implementation of campaign activities (workshops, social media posts, peer talks, distribution of materials).	• Number of activities held • Number of participants • Social media reach & engagement
Outcome Evaluation	Assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, and intentions regarding vaping.	• Pre/post surveys • Increased knowledge scores • Improved attitudes • Increased intention to stay vape-free
Impact Evaluation	Determine long-term impact on vaping behavior.	• Reduction in self-reported vaping rates • Fewer students trying vaping for the first time
Economic Evaluation	Assess cost-effectiveness of the campaign.	• Cost per student reached • Resources used vs. outcomes achieved

Success = More informed minds, stronger refusals, healthier futures.

3. CAMPAIGN POSTER

UNBOX *THE TRUTH*

VAPING MAY LOOK COOL.
THE DAMAGE IS REAL.

ADDICTION
Starts Early

DAMAGES LUNGS
Not Just Water Vapor

BRAIN FOG
Hurts Focus & Memory

HIDDEN CHEMICALS
Not Safe. Not Harmless.

CHOOSE WHAT'S REAL. CHOOSE WHAT'S RIGHT.



REAL FACTS



STRONG MIND



BETTER HEALTH



BRIGHT FUTURE

OUR ACTIVITIES

- Interactive Workshops
- Peer-Led Talks
- Social Media Challenges
- Posters & Digital Content
- Fact Quizzes & Giveaways

BE VAPE-FREE. BE YOU.

#UnboxTheTruth #VapeFree #YourFutureYourChoice

4. CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES & BENEFITS

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES



1. Interactive Workshops

Engaging sessions with facts, myths, & real stories.



2. Peer Ambassador Program

Train and empower student leaders to spread the message.



3. Social Media Challenges

Short videos, memes, and reels to promote vape-free living.



4. School & Community Events

Booths, quizzes, pledges, and competitions.



5. Informational Resources

Posters, infographics, wallet cards, and digital content.

BENEFITS



Better knowledge = Smarter choices



Stronger refusal skills = More confidence



Healthier lungs, sharper mind, better mood



Save money and build brighter futures



Supports a vape-free culture in schools & community

5. POTENTIAL PARTNERS – LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Working together for a vape-free community.

headspace
Local Centres

Aims to support young people's mental health and well-being.

Youth Action Council

Empowers youth voice and leadership in community health initiatives.

Local Schools & Colleges

Provide access to students, spaces, and support for campaign activities.

Local Health District

Promotes healthy lifestyles and prevents substance use.

PCYC
(Local Branch)

Engages youth through sport, mentoring, and positive activities.

6. NATIONAL PARTNERS & THEIR CAMPAIGN AIMS

ash.

Aims to end smoking and vaping through education, and policy change.

Cancer Council

Aims to reduce cancer risk factors including tobacco and vaping through prevention and support.

Quitline 137848

Aims to help people quit smoking and vaping with confidential advice and resources.

ReachOut.com

Aims to support young people's mental health and provide tools to live well.

Healthy Heads

in Trucks & Sheds

Aims to improve mental health and reduce substance use in young people.

7. RESOURCES WE WILL USE & REPLICATE

We will leverage proven resources and adapt them for our audience.



Fact Sheets & Infographics

From ASH & Cancer Council



Quitline 137848 Resources

Digital tools, posters, and tip sheets



Social Media Toolkits

From ReachOut & ASH



Lesson Plans & Activity Guides

From Headspace & Cancer Council



Personal Stories & Videos

From real young people & influencers



Vape Facts & Myth Busters

Evidence-based content

We will adapt, localize, and co-create to make the message relatable and real.

8. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE



Month 1

PLAN

Partner meetings, planning, content development, recruit peer ambassadors.



Month 2–3

LAUNCH & ENGAGE

Launch campaign, run workshops, social media challenges, distribute materials.



Month 4–5

AMPLIFY

Host events, peer talks, contests, strengthen online presence.



Month 6

EVALUATE & REFLECT

Collect data, evaluate outcomes, share results, plan next steps.

Consistent message. Youth-led. Community-powered.

Background of the Problem

Our anti-vaping campaign for 14-17 year olds (Middle Adolescents) is called “Unbox the Truth”.

This group had the highest vaping rate, 25.9%, in a Spanish survey (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

However, it did not change the behavior, as 90.13% of respondents were aware of the harms of vaping (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Teens also believe that e-cigarettes are less harmful than cigarettes (Aly, Mamikutty and Marhazlinda, 2022).

Benefits of change

Physiological: preventing the development of nicotine addiction and damaging lungs and brains (Becker and Rice, 2022).

The psychological effects were such as young nicotine users reported more depression and stress (Wade et al., 2022).

Psychological: vapers also reported reduced concentration, thus maintaining a vape-free environment aids concentration for Middle Adolescents (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Sociological: There was still not enough evidence to support the "everyone does it" myth, as only about three-fourths of 14-18-year-olds vaped (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

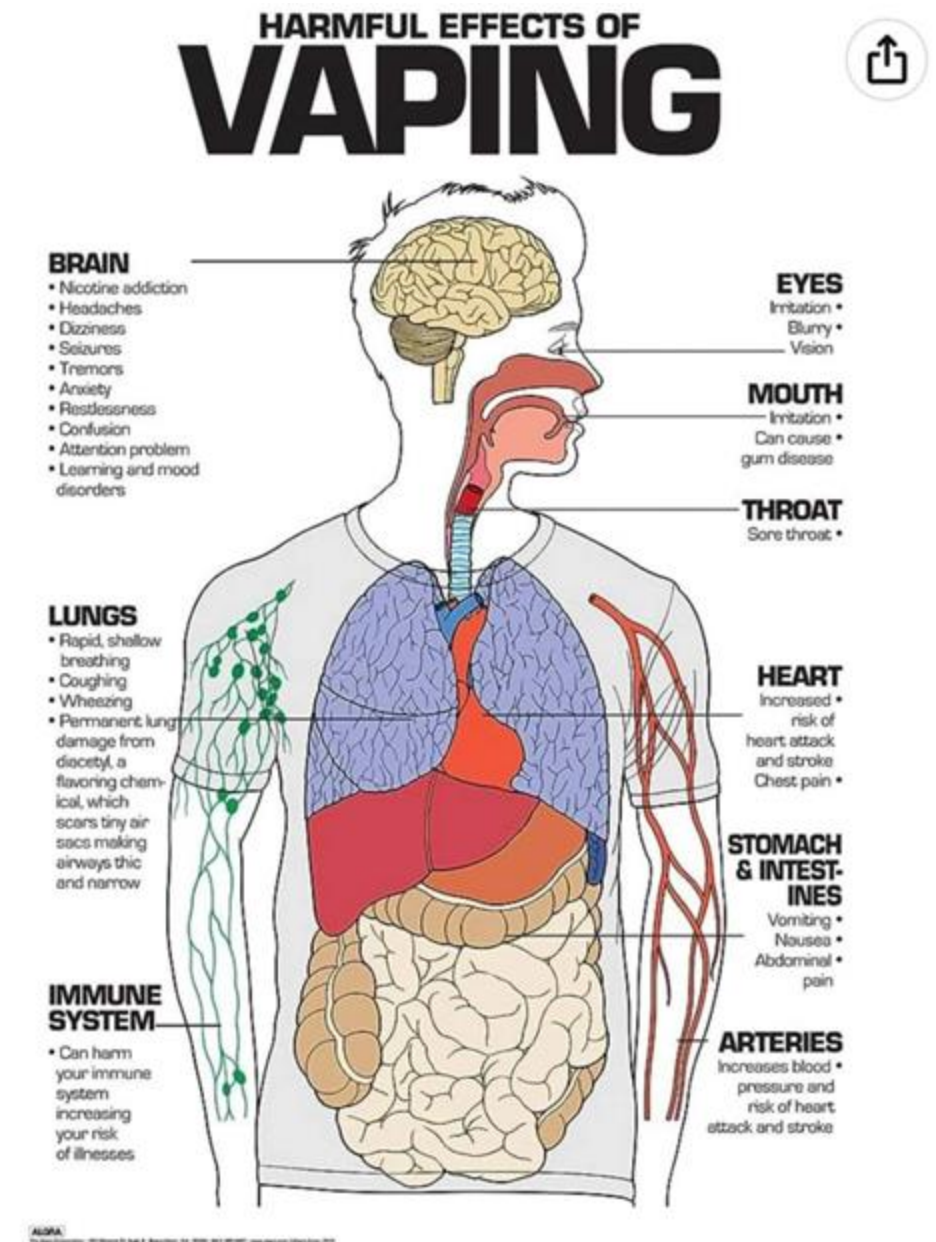


Figure 1: Harmful effects of vaping

Source: (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Health Belief Model

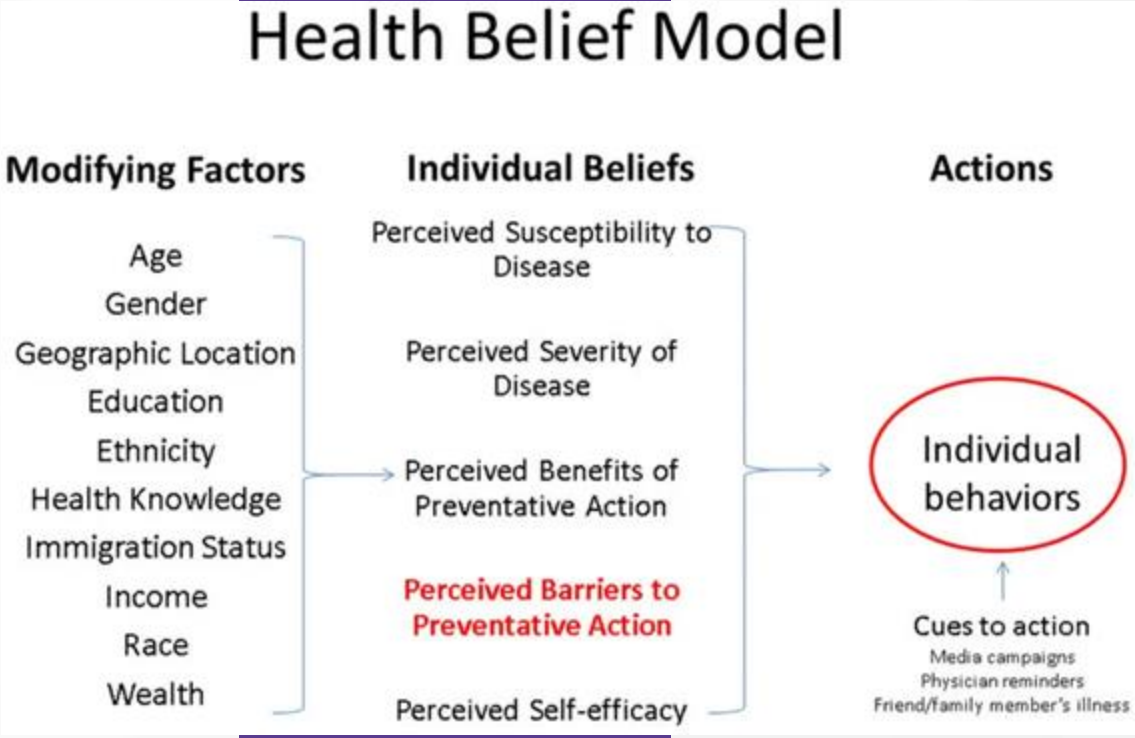
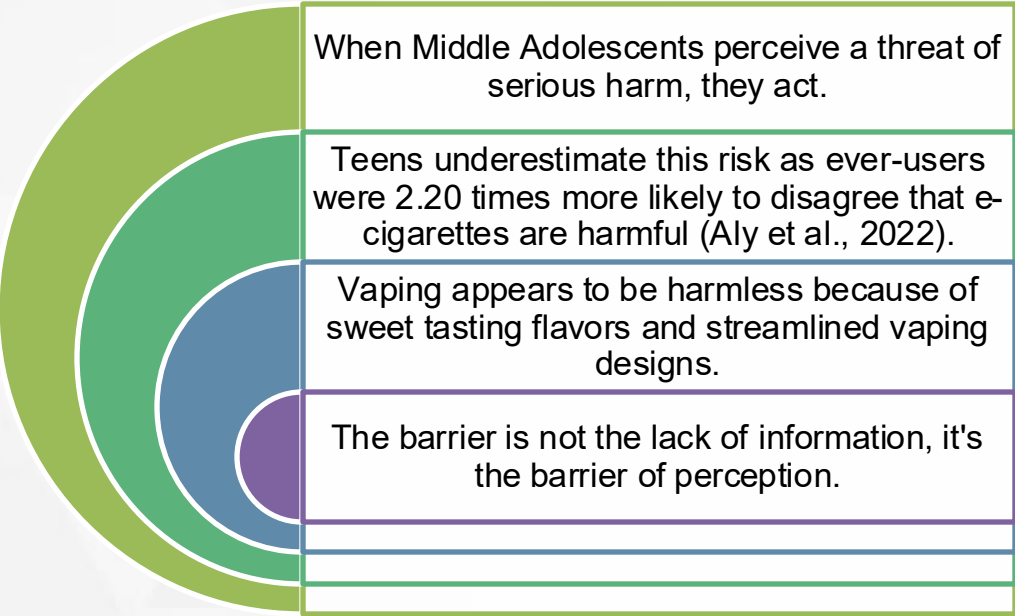
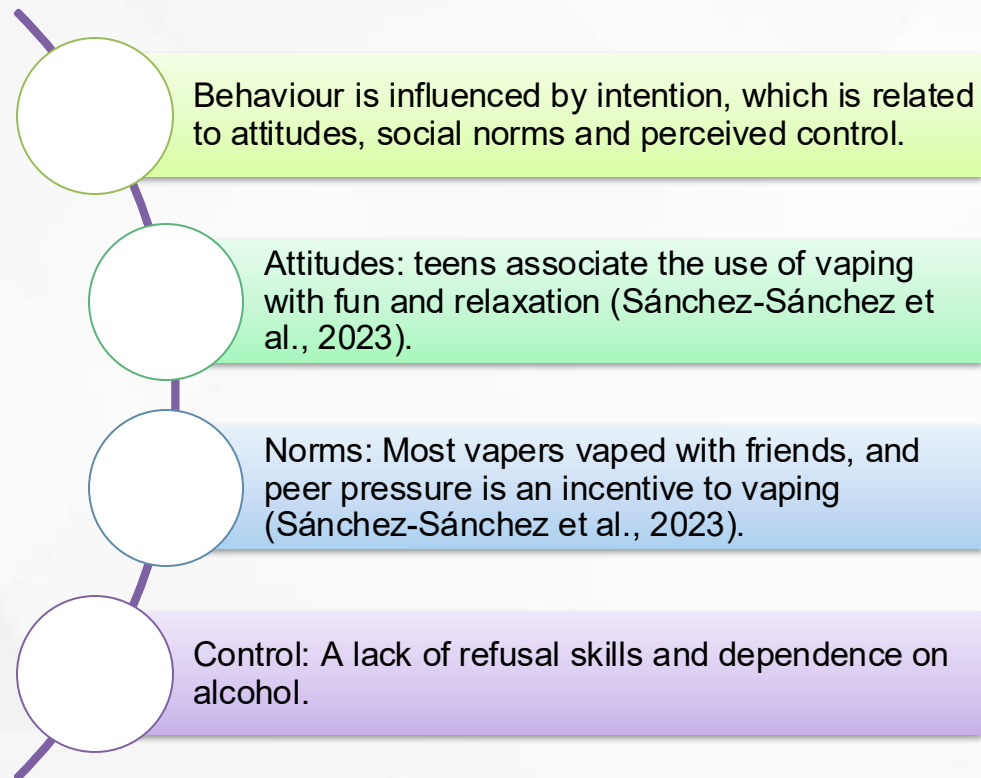


Figure 2: Health Belief Model
Source: Adapted from Janz and Becker (2021)

Theory of Planned Behaviour



Ajzen (1991) The Theory of Planned Behaviour

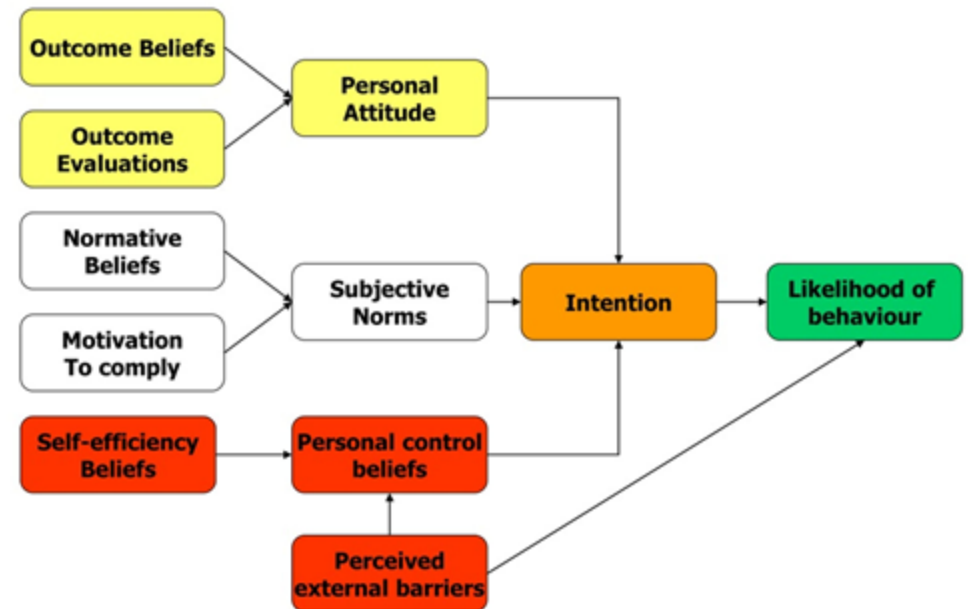


Figure 3: Theory of Planned Behaviour

Source: Ajzen (2021)

Transtheoretical Model

Change as occurring in stages: Precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination for Middle Adolescents (Ages 14–17).

Teens are in varying stages and a message that is one size fits all won't fit.

Some understand the dangers, but have not done anything yet as 25.9% of 14-18-year-olds are vaping (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Change is a process, it's not failure if it relapses.

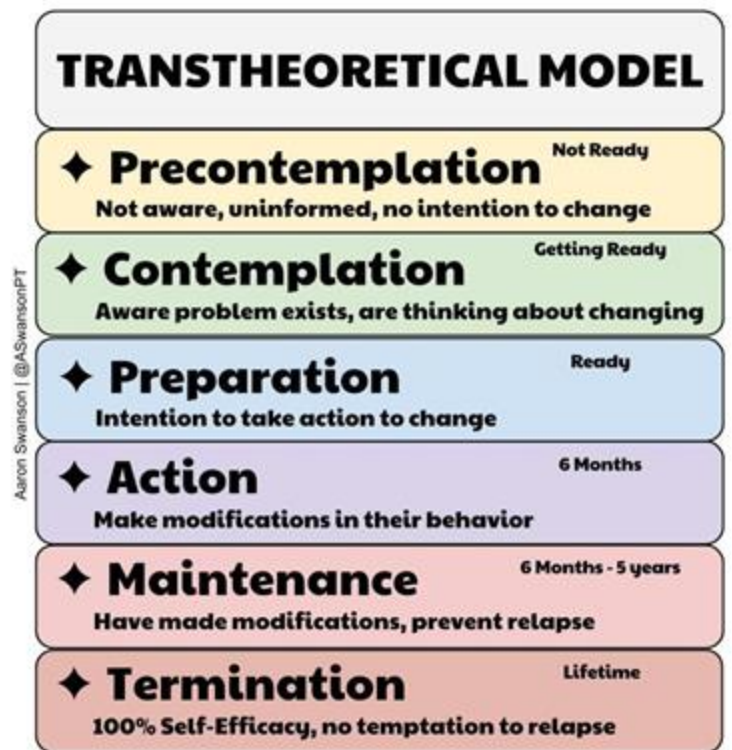


Figure 4: Transtheoretical Model

Source: (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

Perceived Barriers to Quitting

Tobacco dependence can make it more challenging for teenagers to quit vaping even if they know it's harmful for their health (Becker and Rice, 2022).

The reduced perceived risk (Aly, Mamikutty and Marhazlinda, 2022) can be caused by flavours, attractive designs and the feeling that vaping is less harmful.

When friends are involved, the habit of quitting can be challenging due to the association of vaping with friend and social activities (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

The campaign needs to tackle individual beliefs, as well as social influences.

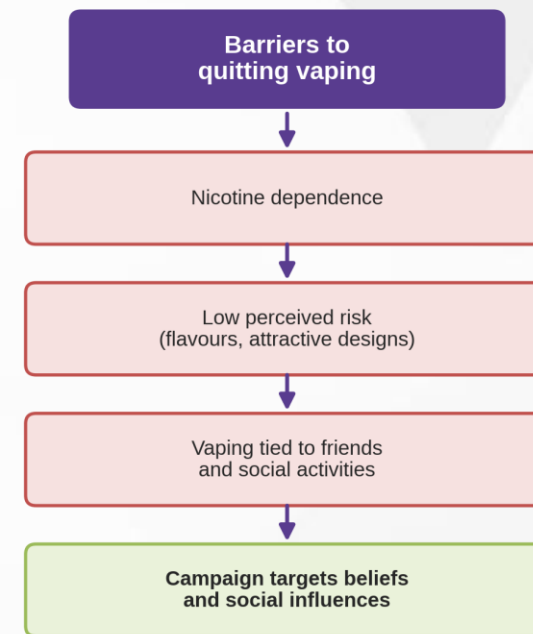


Figure 5: Barriers to quitting vaping

Source: Other

Social and Peer Influences

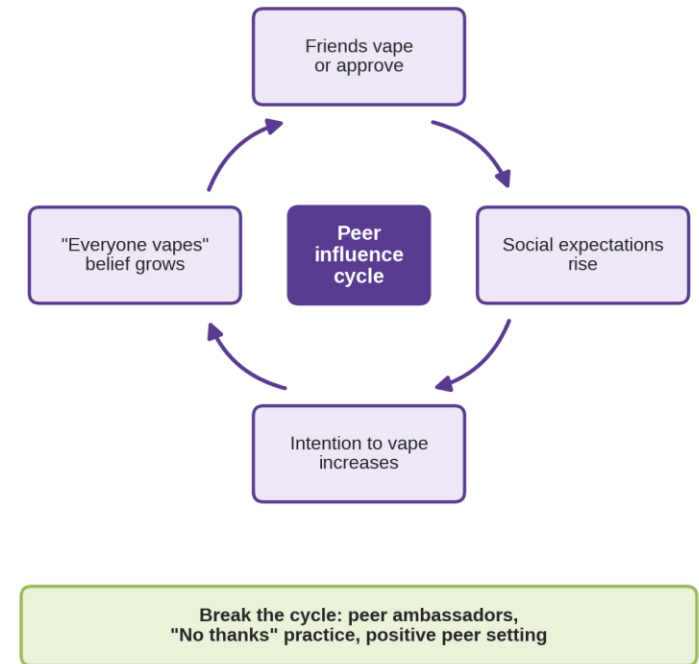
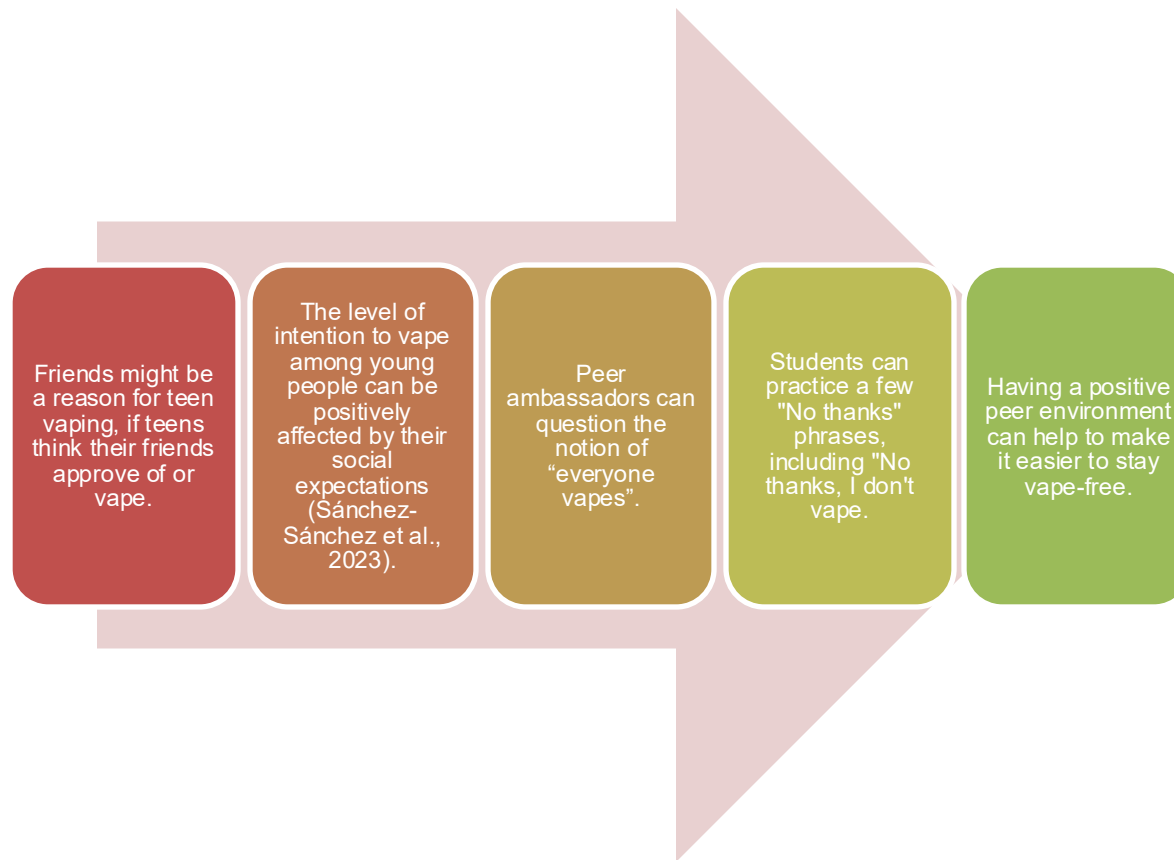


Figure 6: Peer influence on teen vaping
Source: Other

Campaign Messages

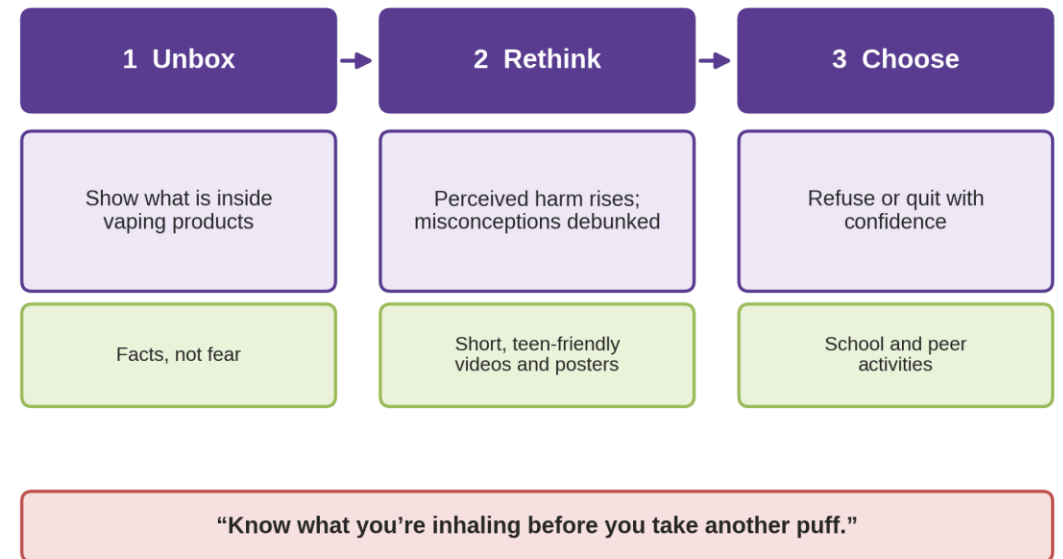
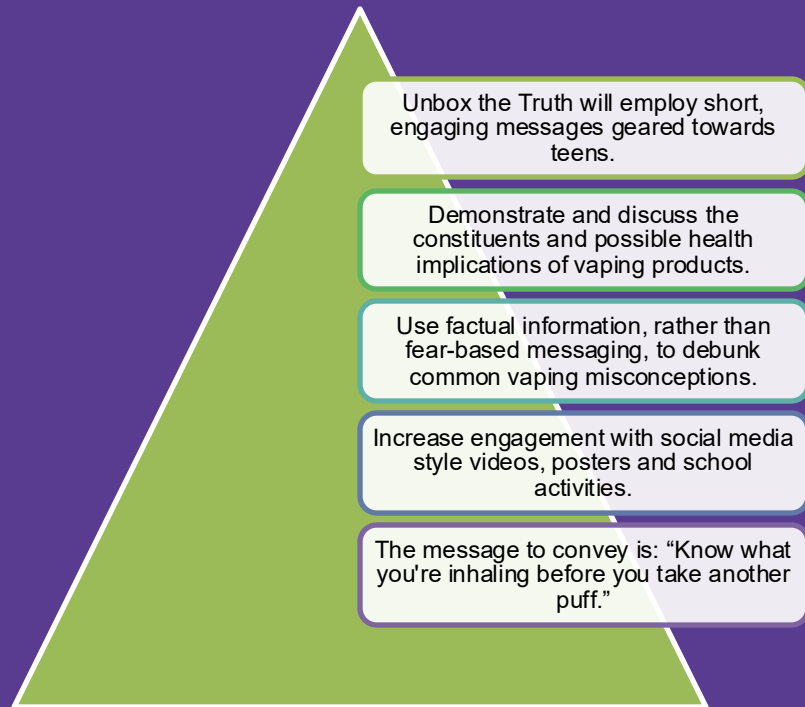


Figure 7: From awareness to action: campaign message flow

Source: Other

Campaign Implementation

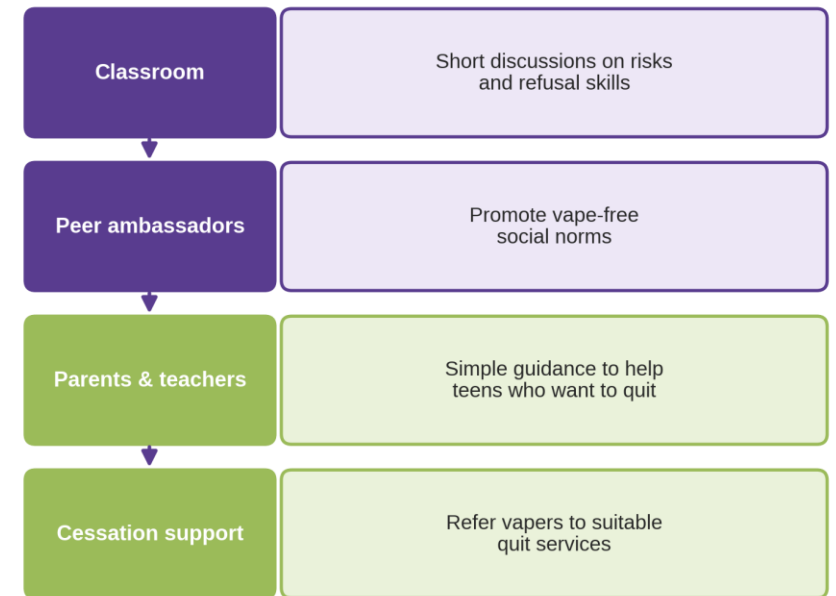


Figure 8: Campaign implementation channels

Source: Other

Measuring Campaign Success

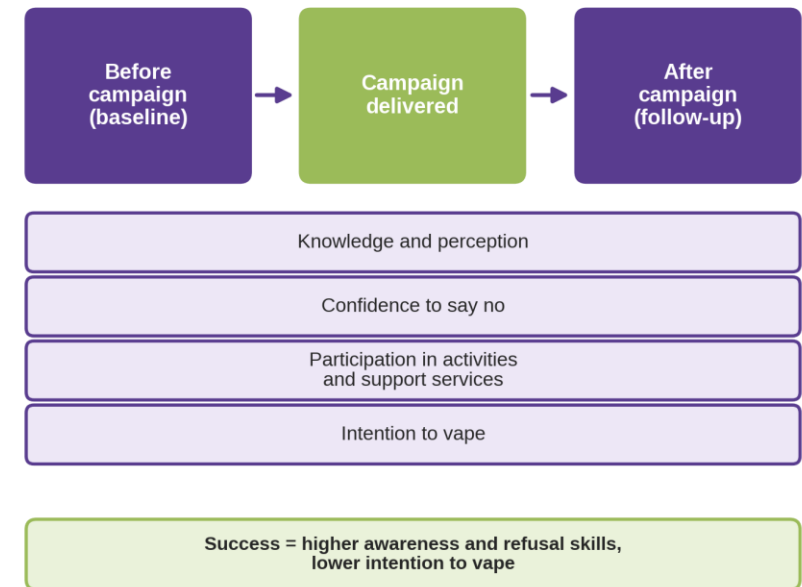
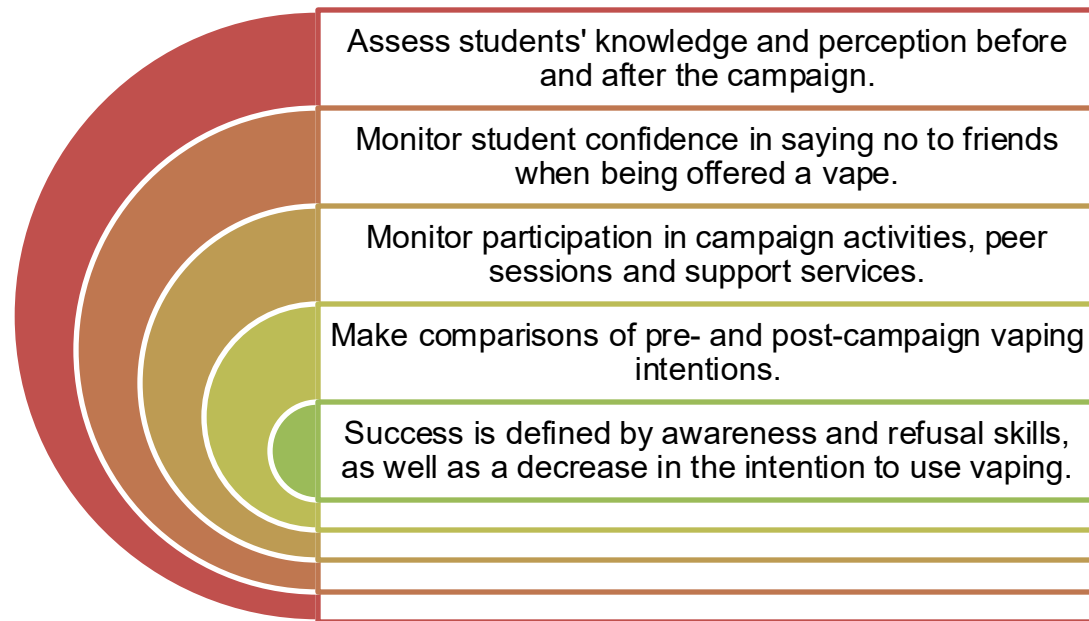


Figure 9: Measuring campaign success

Source: Other

Campaign solutions and conclusion

Challenge	Solution
Harm seems low Health Belief Model	Unboxing videos reveal vape contents (Aly et al., 2022)
Peer pressure Theory of Planned Behaviour	Social-norm messages and peer ambassadors
Weak refusal skills Theory of Planned Behaviour	Refusal-skills practice
Different readiness Transtheoretical Model	Stage-matched quit support

Conclusion

- Schools and policy partners reinforce the message; awareness alone is not enough (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).
- Change benefits body, mind and society. “Unbox the Truth” removes the barriers.

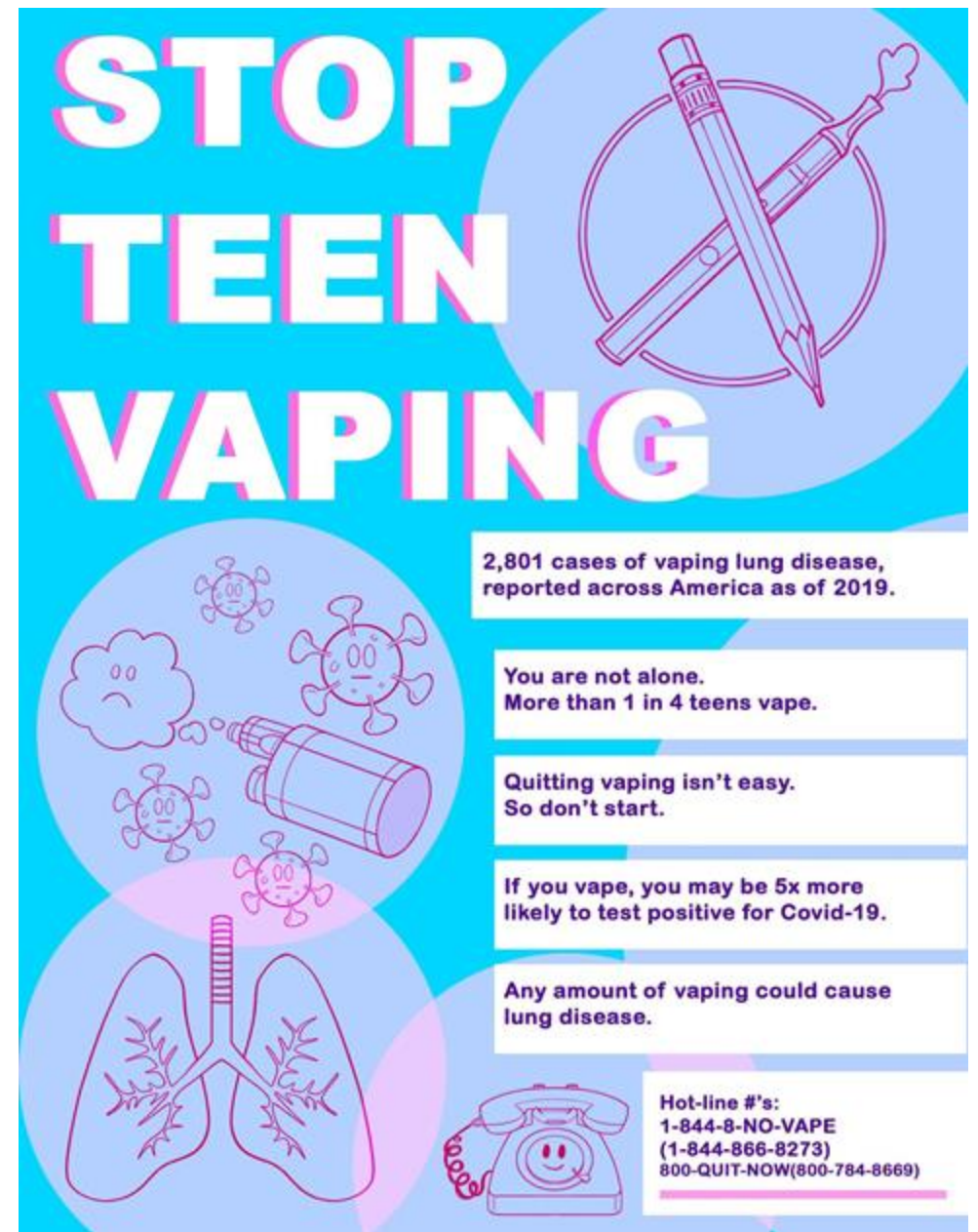


Figure 10: Anti-vaping campaign poster

Source: (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2023).

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