



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

November 30, 2019

Dear School Principal or Administrator:

According to the 2019 Mississippi Youth Tobacco Survey, e-cigarette use among public high school students has increased by 1700%, leading to 26,623 more young e-cigarette users. E-cigarette use among middle school students has also increased at an alarming rate. E-cigarettes and other vaping devices can be hard to identify and emit little odor or smoke. The pods and e-liquids in these devices often have candy flavors and contain the same amount of nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. More recently, vaping has led to a multistate outbreak of lung injury and deaths.

While THC is suspected to play a role in the majority of these illnesses, any e-cigarette use is harmful. Nicotine is dangerous for the developing adolescent brain and can disrupt learning, memory, and attention. Nicotine is highly addictive, and youth nicotine use can lead to a lifetime of addiction.

In response to the many requests for assistance in addressing this epidemic, The Mississippi State Department of Health has developed this toolkit to educate adults and parents about e-cigarettes and available cessation resources. The toolkit and other resources such as signage and lesson plans and available for free on our website at [www.healthyms.com/ecig](http://www.healthyms.com/ecig).

In addition to the toolkit, the Department of Health has Tobacco-Free Coalition directors across the state that provide free training to schools and communities. To find your local coalition director, call 1-866-724-6115 or go to [www.healthyms.com/tobacco](http://www.healthyms.com/tobacco).

We encourage you to review the toolkit and to distribute the information to your staff. Please visit [www.healthyms.com](http://www.healthyms.com) for updates and call the Office of Tobacco Control at 1-866-724-6115 with any questions you may have.

Thank you for protecting Mississippi youth and keeping the next generation tobacco free.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Thomas E. Dobbs, III in blue ink.

Thomas E. Dobbs, III, MD, MPH  
State Health Officer

Handwritten signature of Carey M. Wright in blue ink.

Carey M. Wright, EdD  
State Superintendent of Education