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## E-CIGARETTES CREATING EPIDEMIC IN SCHOOLS

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Teen tobacco smoking is down nationwide but students are becoming addicted to electronic cigarettes, creating an epidemic that school districts across the state are trying to stop before it gets worse.

E-cigarettes are sold as a safer alternative to combustible cigarettes and to help adults quit smoking. However, they have become a major draw to minors with developing bodies and brains, creating attention and mood disorders. Federal officials recently announced that they are investigating 35 reports of seizures in young e-cigarette users since 2010.

They are mostly using an e-cigarette called a JUUL™ device that resembles a USB drive and can be charged in a laptop or computer. It is popular among young people because it can be concealed and use popular flavors which taste and smell good.

The device contains a mouthpiece, a heating component that is powered by a battery and the e-liquid cartridge or a JUUL™ “pod.” The e-liquid contains twice the amount of nicotine in other

e-cigarettes and one pod has the same amount of nicotine as one pack of cigarettes. In addition, the pods contain cancer-causing chemicals like benzyne and nicotine salts from tobacco leaves that are absorbed in the body at the same rate as combustible cigarettes.

Once the device is warmed up, it produces an aerosol or vapor containing particles which have toxic chemicals linked to cancer and heart and respiratory diseases. Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling this vapor which can vary in quantity and toxicity depending on the device.

“Vaping has become a critical issue in our schools as students are able to vape, sometimes undetected, in the bathrooms and classrooms. This is odorless and colorless, so it becomes difficult to address as it is occurring,” said Lorna Lewis, Plainview-Old Bethpage. “These devices come with flavored products, sometimes marijuana based, that are meant to

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