

RESOLUTION NO.: 2019 - 01

SUBJECT: Declaring Youth Vaping a Public Health Crisis in El Paso County

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 23, 2019

RESOLUTION OF THE EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

WHEREAS, the mission of El Paso County Public Health is to promote and protect the public health and environmental quality in the community through people, prevention, and partnerships; and

WHEREAS, tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, contributing to the death of over 480,000 people each year including 5,100 Coloradans; and

WHEREAS, almost half (44 percent) of youth in El Paso County have tried an e-cigarette, or vape, making it the second most tried substance by youth; and

WHEREAS, nicotine, the highly addictive ingredient in cigarettes, is also found in e-cigarettes and has been proven to lead to lifelong addiction for youth and negatively impact adolescent brain development, for example, by affecting working memory and attention; and

WHEREAS, youth who vape are four times more likely to start using traditional cigarettes after just one year; and

WHEREAS, the vaping industry aggressively markets their products using the same tactics that have been proven to increase youth smoking. E-juice flavors like cotton candy, banana split, gummy bears and others appeal to kids, and the vaping industry uses these flavors and other advertising tactics to draw youth in; and

WHEREAS, interventions targeting youth, such as the Tobacco-Free Schools policy, provider screening and referral, and cessation support, are effective at reducing initiation and use of tobacco and nicotine products and improving cessation outcomes for youth; and

WHEREAS, tobacco-free environments and policies have been demonstrated to encourage smokers to quit, discourage youth from starting, and alter the perception of adolescents as to the social acceptability of tobacco use; and

WHEREAS, protecting youth from tobacco and nicotine by implementing proven prevention and intervention strategies, as well as policy, systems and environmental change strategies, in collaboration with partner organizations and policy makers is strongly recommended as “one of the most important things that a society can do to protect children’s health;” and

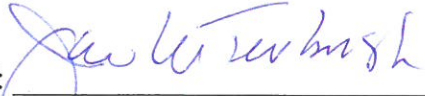
WHEREAS, decreasing risk factors by changing social norms, encouraging more caregiver involvement, helping kids feel safe at school, and increasing positive social opportunities for our community's youth are proven methods for reducing youth substance use, including use of tobacco/nicotine products, as well as reducing violence, hopelessness and anxiety.

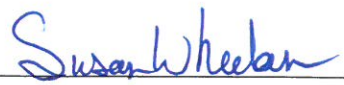
NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the El Paso County Board of Health that, in order to protect the health of youth in our communities and to prevent the lifelong consequences of addiction and associated negative health consequences, and to serve as a model for other organizations and communities, we are committed to addressing the problem of youth vaping by designating this as a public health crisis in El Paso County and to leveraging leadership, resources and support to, at a minimum:

1. Partner with schools, local governments, law enforcement, and other community partners in El Paso County to advocate for comprehensive policies that protect youth from initiation and use of and access to all tobacco and nicotine products.
2. Promote comprehensive tobacco-free environments including, but not limited to, public outdoor areas, sports arenas, parks and open spaces, thus promoting tobacco-free choices and norms.
3. Support data-driven programming and resource allocation by conducting ethical, culturally responsive and effective data collection and evaluation activities in our communities including, but not limited to, The Healthy Kids Colorado Survey.

MOVED, SECONDED AND ADOPTED BY THE EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AT ITS REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 23, 2019.

EL PASO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

BY: 
President

ATTEST BY: 
Secretary