



Western CT Coalition is the Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization servicing the 43 towns of western Connecticut. We work with strategic partners to recognize the strengths in our communities that help build resilience and prevent the harms related to substance use, suicide risk, and problem gambling. We plan, educate and advocate for a high level behavioral health system addressing needs across the lifespan.

The Underage Nicotine Prevention Program in Western CT

Youth and young adults deserve wellness, facts and a nicotine-free life!

Most young people are choosing not to vape or use nicotine.

Past 30 Day Use of E-Cigarettes and Cigarettes (Region 5)		
	E-Cigarettes	Cigarettes
8th Grade	7.5%	1.1%
10th Grade	12.6%	0.96%
12th Grade	25.8%	4.1%

Source: Western Connecticut Coalition Epidemiological Profile on Tobacco and ENDS, 2023

Why the under 21 focus?

- Nicotine is an addictive substance; the younger brain is more susceptible to addiction
- The tobacco industry has targeted youth with products and marketing that is appealing to young people
- The legal age to purchase tobacco products in CT is 21

Current use of e-cigarettes among those age 18-24 in CT was 14.5% (Source: BRFSS, 2023)

wctcoalition.org



vapefreeect
Free help is available to those looking to quit.

For those age 13-24 Text VAPEFREEECT to 88709 for free and anonymous text support from Truth Initiative. Or DEJELOCT to 88709	For those under 18: My Life, My Quit is free and confidential with available cessation coaches. Text START MY QUIT to 36072
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Underage Nicotine Prevention, Awareness and Cessation Supports 2025-2026 Goals



Assess regional impact of underage use of nicotine, and available resources using surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews



WCTC staff devoted to this focus including collaboration between Nicotine and Cannabis Prevention Program Managers



Disseminate materials at community and campus events, through social media and our webpage



Provide education across the region



Build relationships with retailers to educate and improve compliance



Engage with local government and **advocate for local zoning regulations** of smoke shops

The Region 5 Breathe Easy Workgroup
focused on underage nicotine and cannabis
prevention, meets monthly on the first
Thursday 11:00AM-12:30 PM
All are welcome!

Contact Kathy Hanley
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to learn more
wctcoalition.org