

# E-cigarettes (vapes)

Information for parents & carers



## What does the law say?

While it is not illegal for someone to possess a vape if they are under 16, the police can confiscate it in a public place. It is, however, illegal for shops to sell vapes to those under 18, or for an adult to buy or attempt to buy a vape for someone who is under 18. Those who break the law could face a £50 fixed penalty notice or be fined up to £2,500.

If you know of a retailer who is selling vapes to those under 18, you can report this to the relevant local authority's trading standards department using the methods below:

### Via online reporting forms:

[Northumberland County Council](#)  
[Newcastle City Council](#)  
[South Tyneside Council](#)  
[Sunderland City Council](#)

### By email to Gateshead Council:

[tradingstandards@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@gateshead.gov.uk)

### By email to North Tyneside Council:

[trading\\_standards@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:trading_standards@northtyneside.gov.uk)

## Counterfeit Vapes

You cannot be sure what is in these products both in terms of the construction of the vape itself (poor quality materials e.g. batteries) and the contents of the liquid. [This article](#) gives information about how to spot fake vapes. Any trader selling these counterfeit items should be reported to Trading Standards as above.

## Vapes containing THC and synthetic cannabinoids ('SPICE')

THC is the psychoactive component of cannabis (the part that gives the 'high') and 'Spice' is a synthetic form of cannabis which has a similar but much stronger effect to that of cannabis. It's illegal to produce, possess or supply cannabis (THC) in the UK, and it's illegal to produce or supply Spice (as well as it being illegal to possess Spice in a prison), including in vape form. The use of these illegal vape products is on the rise. Users can experience side effects such as nausea, loss of coordination, seizures and overdose. As with the consumption of any drug no one can be sure how their body will react, and when taking illegal substances you can never be sure what they contain or the strength of those ingredients. [The Talk to Frank website](#) contains lots of information about drugs and their side effects. You can report the supply of illegal substances to [Northumbria Police](#) or to [Crimestoppers](#).

## Further information

The following e-leaflet for parents and carers contains tips on how to speak to children and young people about vaping: [Vaping and e-cigarettes - The facts for parents and carers.](#)

If you'd like to know more about vapes and the pressures young people feel to vape or smoke, visit these websites:

[Vapes | FRANK \(talktofrank.com\)](#)

[Smoking | Childline](#)

**If you have concerns about your child's use of vapes and their health, please seek advice from a pharmacist or your GP.**