Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes (PAVe)

BIG TOBACCO MESSED WITH THE WRONG MOMS

WHO ARE WE?
Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes (PAVe) is a national grassroots group founded by three concerned moms—Dina Alessi, Meredith Berkman, and Dorian Fuhrman—as a response to the youth vaping epidemic. The catalyst was their discovery in April 2018 that a JUUL representative entered their sons’ New York City high school through an outside anti-addiction group and, without the school’s knowledge, told 9th grade students that JUUL was “totally safe” and would receive FDA approval “any day”. Both statements remain untrue. As these moms began to research JUUL and vaping, they were shocked by the scope of this adolescent public-health crisis—the most serious that our country has faced in decades—and the scope of JUUL’s predatory behavior towards teens.

Originally led by a small group of motivated moms, PAVe has quickly grown into a vibrant advocacy and education organization with active presence in more than a dozen states. PAVe’s leaders have been on the forefront of this fight testifying to Congress, meeting with the President, and presenting at the FDA. PAVe is a 501C4 and has recently launched a 501C3, PAVe Educates.

WHAT IS THE YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC?
In late 2015, two Stanford University Design school graduate students launched JUUL, a sleek, tech-chic pod-based e-cigarette resembling a flash drive. They also changed the game by patenting a “nicotine-salt formulation” that delivers an enormous amount of nicotine more efficiently to the brain, making it even more addictive. This formulation has since been adopted by the e-cigarette industry.

Stealth-by-design, JUUL was marketed to young people through kid-friendly fruit and candy flavors, the use of young-looking influencers and glitzy promotional parties, and teen-targeted social-media marketing. JUUL’s “Vaporized” campaign modernized the lifestyle-driven advertising of Big Tobacco’s past. Overnight, an entire generation was JUULing before most adults even knew what it meant.

FDA’s failure to fully regulate these products for years has led hundreds of JUUL copycats and other flavored e-cigarette brands to flood the market illegally. (The deadline to apply for the agency’s pre-market review process is May 12, 2020)

THE NUMBERS
- 5.3 million kids vaping in early 2019
- 5,700 new kids begin vaping every day
- 135% increase in kids vaping over 2 years
- More than 1 in 4 high school kids vape
- 97% use flavored e-cigarette products

THE DANGERS
- Nicotine affects adolescent brain development
- Product use can lead to chronic lung disease, asthma, and cardiovascular disease
- Thousands of vaping-related illnesses and hundreds of deaths around the country

Figures courtesy of the National Youth Tobacco Survey, American Lung Association and Centers for Disease Control

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WHAT DOES PAVe DO?

Advocacy - PAVe advocates for legislative and regulatory action on e-cigarettes, including a ban on all flavored products since research has proven that flavors hook kids. We work in partnership and in coalition with established public-health groups including the American Heart Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Lung Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Cancer Society - Cancer Action Network, and the Truth Initiative.

PAVe works up front and behind the scenes at the city, state, and national levels mobilizing our vast network of parent volunteers around the country. PAVe parents testify at hearings, meet with elected officials, write letters to the editor, and show up wherever and whenever they’re needed. Families are living this epidemic in real time and our personal stories put a human face on this epidemic.

We're on the ground in states including California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, and Washington. Our work has been instrumental in the successful passage of laws banning flavored e-cigarettes in cities, counties, and states including San Francisco, Los Angeles County, Sacramento, New York City, New Jersey, and Massachusetts.

Education - PAVe works with schools, hospitals, community centers and faith-based organizations to educate parents and other key stakeholders about the dangers of vaping and the harmful effects that e-cigarettes have on the developing brains and lungs of our kids. We work closely with state health departments and elected officials to focus attention and resources on the devastating effects that youth vaping has had on young people and their communities.

Our work has been widely featured in the media including in the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Washington Post, NPR, CNBC, NBC News, CNN, CBS News, TIME Magazine. As the only national parents group on this issue, we are committed to beating back Big Tobacco’s attempts to addict an entire generation to nicotine products, and turning the tide of the youth vaping epidemic.

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