

20 May 2021

Dear High School PDHPE Teachers,

Re: Video: “*Know When You’re Being Played*” and accompanying class room activity resources.

The phenomenon of *vaping and e-cigarettes* is relatively new. Vaping and e-cigarette usage is increasing in schools across Australia and in some parts of the Western World, has reached epidemic levels within this environment.

Giant tobacco corporations are often behind marketing strategies aimed at young people. Some research indicates that such strategies are designed to create a new generation of people addicted to nicotine via the pathway of e-cigarettes and vaping. Nicotine, which is toxic and addictive in all forms, is found in many vaping liquids, although is not always labelled as such.

The risk is that e-cigarette usage could re-normalise smoking, especially in younger generations and create a new wave of people addicted to nicotine with the consequent health damage fallout that that we have seen over many decades from smoking.

The accompanying resources are designed to assist High School PDHPE staff to take some direct action against this international trend, at a local level.

They are also aimed at highlighting to young people the issue of marketing and market forces; who is behind these tactics and where they, the young person, fits as a potential consumer of e-cigarettes and related products.

The Video “*Know When You’re Being Played*” and accompanying class room activities have been developed by PDHPE Teaching Staff and Murrumbidgee Local Health District Health Promotion Officers.

These resources are designed to assist you in addressing youth-focussed issues pertaining to ‘choice’ with a focus on tobacco knowledge and the increasing presence and use of e-cigarettes by young people.

The larger theme of marketing and manipulation by (tobacco) corporations is also addressed.

The video “**Know When You’re Being Played**” and accompanying **9 Activities** are free for use by all high school staff and are linked to the PDHPE curriculum.

The video is for use with Activity 5. The resources are designed for Stage 5 students, but may be deemed by PDHPE staff to be appropriate for other Stages.

PDHPE Teachers do not need to incorporate all the Activities into class lesson plans. The aim is for teachers to use the Activities that are most suited and relevant at any given point in time with a view to utilising other Activities as needed at a later date.

It is recommended that presentations and information be provided *across* the school community targeting the following three groups to ensure that all receive the same information:

- Students (Year 10s and above)
- Teachers
- Parents

The delivery of high quality and accurate information to parents is essential if a community-based approach to drug education (smoking, vaping and other) is to be adopted by the school.

Parent information sessions can cover a range of issues, including resilience and the importance of connectedness. These topics are covered to some degree in the Learning Package.

These sessions can be used to accentuate positive norms and empower parents in the controversial area of vaping and e-cigarettes.

Link for Cancer Council Factsheet on e-cigarettes for inclusion in school Newsletters:
<https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Cancer-Council-NSW-Factsheet-e-cigarettes-Sep2020.pdf>

Drug and Alcohol Research and Training Australia - Fact Sheets (one on Vaping for Teachers) <http://darta.net.au/factsheets/>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tracey Oakman', written over a horizontal line.

Tracey Oakman
Director Public Health Unit