

Tobacco-Use Prevention
Education (TUPE) Office

TUPE PROGRAM: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

California Department of Education
Whole Child Division



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July 18, 2025

Dear colleague,

On behalf of the California Department of Education, the Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Office is pleased to share this profile of California's statewide TUPE Program. It describes how the TUPE Program was created, why its work is so important, and how we pursue our mission of preventing and reducing tobacco and vape use among California school-aged youth. It outlines several overarching priorities and describes areas that merit increased focus going forward.

We understand how difficult the recent years have been for our students, families, teachers, and community members. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, it was inspiring to see how schools and districts adapted to online learning and pivoted to meet the needs of students. We are very mindful that declining tobacco-tax revenues are having a major impact on local TUPE programs' ability to implement effective tobacco-use prevention programs. We are grateful to our partners, including county offices of education, school districts, and other youth-serving organizations, for working with us to achieve the vision of a tobacco- and vape-free generation of young people. We invite all prospective partners to join us to help make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

Sarah Planche

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Education Administrator
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Figure 1. Solano County students participate in a service learning activity assessing the prevalence of tobacco product waste. Source: Vacaville Police Activities League (PAL)

Part I: TUPE Overview

The Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Office in the California Department of Education (CDE) pursues the mission of preventing and reducing commercial tobacco use among California school-aged youth, with the vision of creating a tobacco- and vape-free generation.¹ It does this by building the capacity of local educational agencies (LEAs) to help students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to make healthy decisions.



Figure 2. Contra Costa County high school TUPE peer educators share information and resources at a district-wide family engagement event at their feeder middle school.

Source: Contra Costa County Office of Education

Background

In 1988, California voters approved Proposition 99, the Tobacco Tax and Health Protection Act. This initiative

increased the state tax on packs of cigarettes by 25 cents. A portion of the revenue was earmarked for tobacco prevention and control, with various state and local agencies playing key roles. For its part, the CDE established the statewide TUPE Program, which in turn supports local programs to provide students in grades six through twelve with tobacco-use prevention education.

Proposition 99 also established the Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee (TEROC) to advise the CDE and other agencies with respect to the development, implementation, and evaluation of anti-tobacco programming. TEROC develops and regularly updates an overarching plan for this purpose.² A key objective of this plan is to prevent tobacco use among young people and empower them as advocates of tobacco prevention and control.

In 2016, California voters approved Proposition 56, the California Healthcare Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act. Proposition 56 increased the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack and placed equivalent taxes on other tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes and chewing tobacco. The law was designed to help prevent youth tobacco use, reduce tobacco-related health care costs, and accelerate the rate of decline in tobacco-related disparities. It has allowed

1 Throughout this document, tobacco-use prevention refers to commercial tobacco, not traditional tobacco used in sacred ways by some American Indian Tribes.

2 Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee, *Achieving Health Equity: Breaking the Commercial Tobacco Industry's Cycle of Addiction, Death, and Environmental Degradation*, 2023–2024.

TUPE to expand and create many of the newer program offerings described in this profile. The TUPE Office uses revenue from both propositions to support local tobacco-use prevention programs and statewide training and technical assistance providers. These programs and all TUPE activities are authorized under the California Health and Safety Code (HSC 104420–104495).³

The TUPE Office is based in the CDE Whole Child Division. Staffed by a statewide Education Administrator, four Program Consultants, one Fiscal Manager, and four Fiscal Analysts, the TUPE Office builds capacity for tobacco-use prevention by developing and managing grant opportunities, providing technical assistance to local grantees, supporting program evaluation and self-assessment, and collaborating with other agencies engaged in tobacco prevention. This profile provides an overview of the TUPE Office and its programming priorities.



Figure 3. The TUPE Office team. *Source:* The CDE TUPE Office.

³ For more on tobacco laws affecting California schools, see the CDE web page, Tobacco-Free Laws Affecting California Schools.

Why Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Is So Important

Early tobacco-use prevention education is critical because tobacco use generally starts in youth and can interfere with brain development. Youth tobacco use is associated with poorer academic performance and lower school connectedness. The reasons for this are not fully understood, but research has shown that tobacco use during adolescence disrupts the development of brain circuits that control young people's ability to pay attention and learn. Exposure to nicotine affects key brain receptors and makes young people more susceptible to addiction. It can increase stress and symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, and depression. Of course, it can also lead to a lifetime of negative health outcomes.⁴

Cigarette smoking among young people in California is at a historic low, but other forms of tobacco have taken the place of cigarettes. The tobacco products most commonly used by young people now are vapes—e-cigarettes and other battery-operated devices that generate aerosols rather than smoke. In the 2021–2022 California Youth Tobacco Survey (CYTS), 5.3 percent of high school students reported ever having smoked a cigarette, but more than three times as many, 17.6 percent, had vaped. About one in five, 20.3 percent, had used any form of tobacco.⁵ Current use rates (i.e., rates of use within the past 30 days) were 1.2 percent for cigarettes, 5.6 percent for vapes, and 6.6 percent for any form of tobacco. Considering only twelfth graders, 23.7 percent had ever used tobacco and 8.3 percent were current users.



Figure 4. A Yuba City billboard featuring the winning entry in a TUPE art contest organized by Yuba City Unified School District.

Source: Yuba City Unified School District

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- 4 For an overview of nicotine's effects on young people, see Truth Initiative, *Nicotine and the Young Brain*.
- 5 Dutra et al., *Annual Results Report for the California Youth Tobacco Survey 2022*. Ever use rates for tobacco products other than vapes and cigarettes were 3.1 percent for cigars, 2.4 percent for nicotine pouches, 2.2 percent for hookah, 2.1 percent for little cigars and cigarillos, 1.3 percent for smokeless tobacco, and 0.9 percent for heated tobacco products.

The ongoing popularity of tobacco is disturbing but not surprising given the tobacco industry's strategy of continually recruiting new users to replace those who quit or die. The industry continually develops and markets new products designed to appeal to young people, including fruit- and candy-flavored products that entice youth to initiate tobacco use. The industry uses celebrities popular with youth to endorse their products and places ads in publications popular with young people. They blanket retail locations with pro-tobacco messaging, often in ways that specifically target children. Strong measures are needed to counter these influences and reduce youth tobacco use rates, including school-based tobacco use prevention programming.

Marijuana use among California youth is also a major concern. Like tobacco, marijuana is addictive and can interfere with brain development, leading to difficulties with paying attention, thinking, and problem-solving.⁶ It can cause problems with young people's social lives and has been linked to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Unfortunately, youth use rates in California are even higher for marijuana than for tobacco. In the 2021–2022 CYTS, 21.4 percent of high school students had ever used marijuana, while 8.8 percent were current users. Over a quarter of twelfth graders, 26.7 percent, had ever used marijuana and 12.0 percent were current users; 5.5 percent used both marijuana and tobacco.⁷ Co-use is driven in part by vaping devices that can be used with either substance. With tobacco and marijuana becoming increasingly intertwined, it is critical that youth tobacco-use prevention programming also address the rising epidemic of youth marijuana use.



Figure 5. Tobacco and marijuana, which are often used together.

Source: Steinsplitter on Wikipedia

The TUPE Approach

TUPE is based on the premise that providing school-based tobacco-use prevention education for all students, along with more targeted services for those experiencing tobacco-related disparities, is the most promising approach for reducing high rates of use,

especially when paired with efforts to engage the support of important people in students' lives, including parents, families, community members, and school staff.

High-quality TUPE programming not only helps prevent and reduce tobacco use but also promotes school connectedness. Students who feel connected to school have better school attendance, earn higher grades, perform better

⁶ For an overview of marijuana's effects on young people, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Marijuana and Youth: The Impact of Marijuana Use on Teen Health and Wellbeing*.

⁷ Dutra et al., *Annual Results Report for the California Youth Tobacco Survey 2022*.

on standardized tests, and are more likely to graduate. They are more likely to have positive health behaviors such as exercising and healthy eating, and less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drinking alcohol and using tobacco or other drugs.⁸

The TUPE Office uses a five-level social ecological model to assess environmental and interpersonal factors that can encourage or discourage tobacco use among youth. Each level identifies a point of influence and opportunities to intervene, as shown in the following figure.

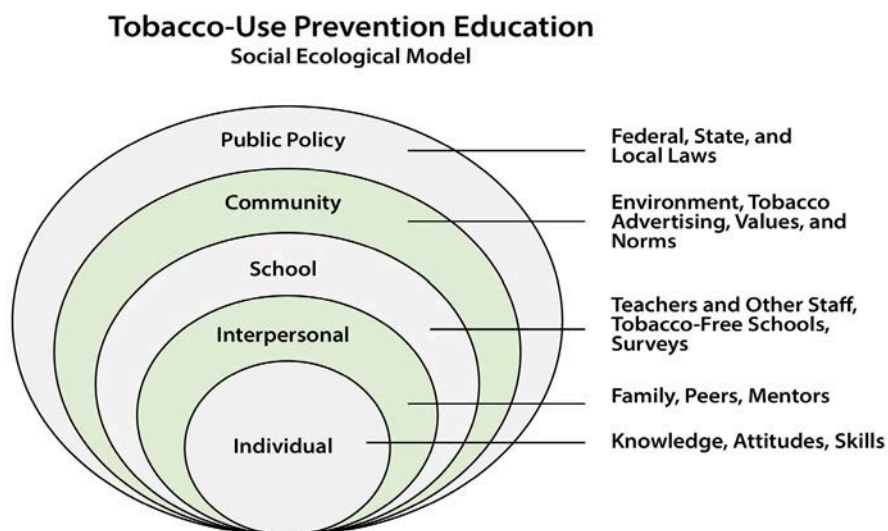


Figure 6.
The TUPE Social Ecological Model.

Source: The CDE
TUPE Office

- Individual—Personal factors such as students' knowledge and attitudes about tobacco and marijuana. TUPE programs equip students with the knowledge and skills to avoid these substances.
- Interpersonal—The influence of others in students' lives. TUPE programs enlist the support of family and community members and cultivate a social norm of tobacco-free living.
- School—The influence of teachers, staff, and schools themselves. TUPE programs implement tobacco-free policies and provide services to support tobacco-free norms and promote school connectedness.
- Community—Influences in students' broader environments, such as exposure to pro- and anti-tobacco messaging. TUPE programs collaborate with local partners to ensure that community influences are as positive as possible.
- Public Policy—The influence of laws and regulations. TUPE programs coordinate with local partners to strengthen tobacco policies and may engage students in activities such as educating policymakers about emerging products.

This holistic model provides a framework that helps TUPE programs structure their offerings most effectively.

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, School Connectedness.

The bulk of TUPE funding is allocated to services that directly engage students, their families and communities, and school staff to promote tobacco-free living. Table 1 provides an overview of the different kinds of services the TUPE Office funds, including examples of each.

Table 1 . TUPE Services

SERVICE CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
STUDENT SERVICES	Prevention services help students acquire the skills and knowledge to avoid initiating tobacco use. TUPE grantees use approved curricula to reach all students in particular grades.	Districtwide campaigns to denormalize vaping Teaching students to deconstruct tobacco ads to learn how the industry manipulates young people
	Intervention services engage students caught with tobacco or marijuana or who self-identify as users, in such a way that they are less likely to use in the future.	Referral to Youth Vaping Alternative Prevention Education (YVAPE) After school programs such as Brief Intervention
	Cessation services help students who regularly use tobacco or marijuana to quit.	Counseling by a school health provider or school counselor Referral to Kick It California, a coaching service that helps regular users quit
	Youth development services involve students in the struggle against pro-tobacco influences and help change norms around youth tobacco use.	Engaging students in educating policymakers on issues relating to youth tobacco use Training youth to conduct peer-to-peer interventions and cessation referrals
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	Family and community engagement services elicit social and environmental support for tobacco-free living from important people in students' lives.	Information distribution at back-to-school nights or other events where parents are invited Involving families in homework assignments on tobacco and marijuana
STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Staff professional development services are trainings and related activities designed to increase the skills, knowledge, and ability of school staff to support students in making healthy decisions.	Live, in-person training for front-line TUPE staff on topics such as intervening with students experimenting with substances and helping regular users quit Online, interactive training for non-TUPE staff on the basics of youth tobacco prevention

Part II: TUPE Priorities

Since the passage of Proposition 56 in 2016, the TUPE Program has made notable strides. It has

- increased the availability and use of training, technical assistance, and other capacity-building services to support TUPE programming;
- improved program implementation;
- increased the number of students reached by TUPE programming;
- increased students' awareness of anti-tobacco messaging;
- improved staff training and professional development so that school staff are better equipped to help students make healthy choices concerning tobacco use and vaping;
- modernized and streamlined grant application, management, and reporting; and
- developed standardized, digital tools to help funded programs collect data and monitor their progress.

Part II of this profile describes TUPE Office priorities and the efforts behind these successes.



Figure 7. Student artwork submitted by San Bernardino COE through a peer-led TUPE art contestl. *Source: San Bernardino County Office of Education*

Priority 1: Supporting Local Programming Through Grants

The primary means by which the TUPE Program reaches school-aged youth is through local grants. Non-competitive County Technical Assistance grants are offered to all counties in the state to support county offices of education (COEs) in

assisting their local schools and districts with program development, staff development, and technical assistance (TA) relating to tobacco-use prevention. Tier 1 grants are competitive grants that help schools and districts get started in tobacco-use prevention. Tier 2 grants are also offered competitively; they support the provision of more comprehensive TUPE services, including prevention, intervention, cessation, and youth development services. American Indian Education Center (AIEC) grants are offered competitively and support Tribes in providing comparable services to reduce commercial tobacco use among American Indian youth.

Altogether, the TUPE Office manages 138 concurrent grants worth over \$40 million per year, distributed throughout California. Table 2 provides an overview of the four main grant programs, with recent funding levels and the number of grantees in each.

Table 2. TUPE Grant Programs

GRANT PROGRAM	AMOUNTS AWARDED FOR FY 2023–24	NO. OF GRANTEES
County Technical Assistance (CTA). One-year recurring grants to help COEs assist schools and districts in their counties with program development, staff development, and technical assistance.	\$7,360,000	57
Tier 1. Three-year grants offered annually to LEAs, direct-funded charter schools, and consortia representing multiple districts to help them get started in youth tobacco prevention.	\$534,000	48
Tier 2. Three-year grants offered every third year to LEAs, direct-funded charter schools, and consortia to help them implement comprehensive TUPE programs. A health disparities component is required in all Tier 2 grants.	\$27,805,000	58
American Indian Education Center (AIEC). Five-year grants offered every five years for prevention, intervention, cessation, and youth development services to reduce commercial tobacco use among American Indian youth.	\$350,000	7
TOTAL	\$36,049,000	170



Figure 8. Girls Rising, a group of Medicine Wheel Project singers in Modoc County helping to prevent commercial tobacco use among American Indian youth.

Source: Resources for Indian Student Education (RISE), Inc.

Priority 2: Building Capacity for Youth Tobacco Prevention

Building schools' capacity

to support tobacco-use prevention is another important focus of the TUPE Office. In addition to providing technical assistance directly to grantees, TUPE also funds local and statewide organizations to provide training and TA, as described below. The TUPE Office encourages its grantees to take advantage of these capacity building opportunities. Schools are dynamic environments where student leaders, families, staff, and supporters are always moving on to new challenges, so building capacity by recruiting and training new people is a continuous need.

County Offices of Education

One way the TUPE Office supports capacity building is through county offices of education (COEs), which it funds to provide leadership, administrative oversight, training, and TA to all LEAs in their counties, not just to those with TUPE funding. COEs assist with the development and implementation of tobacco-free school policies, tobacco-use prevention education and instruction, cessation support and referral, family and community engagement, staff professional development, and program assessment. They also provide TA aimed at accelerating and monitoring the rate of decline in tobacco-related disparities with the goal of eliminating such disparities.

Each COE designates a county coordinator to engage with LEAs throughout his or her county and to provide resources, support, and guidance in preparing grant applications, planning and implementing effective and compliant TUPE programs, and other matters. TUPE coordinators serve as liaisons between the CDE TUPE Office and LEAs in their counties, helping to communicate statewide priorities, policies, and procedures. They also help facilitate interagency collaboration.



Figure 9. Plumas County TUPE Coordinator Ashliegh Boyd interacts with students.

Source: Plumas County Office of Education

The Capacity Building Project

Since 2019, the TUPE Office has funded the Orange County Department of Education to operate

the TUPE Capacity Building Project (CBP). The CBP offers a statewide system of support that incorporates collaborative learning, sharing of expertise, and a continuous loop of feedback and evaluation.

At <https://www.tupeco.org>, the CBP provides information and resources to support youth tobacco prevention throughout the state. The site is available to TUPE grantees, non-funded LEAs, and the general public. On a password-protected page, the CBP provides more targeted professional development opportunities for TUPE grantees. These include Canvas courses by Royer Studios, Music Notes, and other partners. A feature called CDE Corner provides a one-stop resource for announcements, webinars, and documents from the TUPE Office. Another feature is the Community Toolbox, a repository of locally developed resources submitted by TUPE grantees that can be used by other grantees. The CBP also facilitates access to CATCH My Breath, a popular vaping prevention curriculum.

The CBP conducts professional learning networks for TUPE grantees to share best practices, discuss needs and challenges, and plan the implementation of local prevention projects. It hosts trainings on prevention curricula and a wide range of other topics. It also hosts the California TUPE Youth Advisory Board, which elevates youth voices and integrates their perspectives into CBP services provided to TUPE programs across the state, and the TUPE Collaborative, a committee of eleven county coordinators who serve as leads for their respective regions. The Collaborative helps identify needs for training and TA and provides guidance on content development.



Figure 10. Members of the Capacity Building Project TUPE Collaborative participate in a summer planning meeting.

Source: Orange County Department of Education, TUPE Capacity Building Project (CBP)

Other Statewide Training and TA Providers

The TUPE Office partners with several other agencies to assist local programs:

- The California School-Based Health Alliance (CSHA) provides school nurses, health educators, and other staff of school-based health centers (SBHCs) with tools to improve students' access to prevention, intervention, and cessation services. SBHCs help identify students who are using tobacco or marijuana, provide information about the associated health risks, motivate them to quit, and support them in doing so. They can also help establish tobacco-free norms through student-led prevention efforts. The CSHA helps stakeholders develop and implement TUPE services through SBHCs across the state.
- The California Friday Night Live Partnership provides resources, training, and TA to help local Friday Night Live (FNL) chapters build capacity to implement youth-led extracurricular projects focusing on tobacco. FNL chapters work with young people to change norms and educate and engage their communities in reducing youth tobacco use. CFNLP assists the TUPE community with trainings on tobacco and vaping, informational webinars, service learning activities, and other youth development services.
- The Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit Team provides training and TA on its prevention curriculum, commonly known as the Stanford Toolkit. The curriculum is a theory-based, evidence-informed set of educational resources developed by the Stanford REACH Lab, including modules on vaping, alternatives to suspension and expulsion, smokeless tobacco, and hookah. Some of these are available in Spanish and other languages. The Stanford Toolkit, available free of charge, has been evaluated in multiple settings and is in widespread use across California. The team helps those who use the Stanford Toolkit, or modules such as *You and Me, Together Vape-Free*, to implement them with fidelity.

These agencies all help build the capacity of local TUPE programs.



Figure 11. California Youth Council (CYC) members at the 2024 Friday Night Live Youth Summit. The CYC is supported by the California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP). Source: CFNLP

Data and Information Systems Providers

In addition to statewide TA providers, the TUPE Office

coordinates with data and information systems providers who also help to build capacity.

WestEd is a research, development, and service agency that oversees the implementation of the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). By participating in CHKS, TUPE programs obtain access to detailed, up-to-date information about tobacco and other substance use in their student populations. Data from CHKS are accessed through the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (CalSCHLS) Public Data Dashboard, which allows users to examine state-, county-, and district-level data on youth tobacco and marijuana use. The TUPE Office also worked with WestEd to create a Private Data Dashboard, which allows authorized users to examine school-level data. These dashboards enable users to examine trends over time, disparities among subgroups, and survey response counts.

The University of California San Diego (UCSD) is another important partner. The TUPE Office worked with UCSD to develop the TUPE Grant Electronic Management System (GEMS). Launched in 2020, GEMS is an online portal that serves as infrastructure for program planning and implementation, self-assessment, progress reporting, and fiscal planning and monitoring. It also facilitates the provision of TA to local programs through a network of collaborating teams, including regional consultants in the TUPE Office, county coordinators, the CBP, and other state-directed projects.

GEMS has fully digitized the grant management process and provides a one-stop shop for applicants and grantees. The system follows LEAs through the lives of their grants from developing their application to submitting their final progress reports. GEMS has increased efficiency in the monitoring of program implementation and expenditures as it enables more precise alignment between grantees' progress and fiscal reports. By aligning application, expenditure, and progress reporting modules to bridge the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of a program, GEMS serves as a self-monitoring platform for both local grantees and the statewide program. An analytics module further allows timely identification of local program needs and best practices, enabling the TUPE Office to make data-driven decisions in providing targeted TA to grantees. GEMS is available at <https://tupegems.ucsd.edu>.

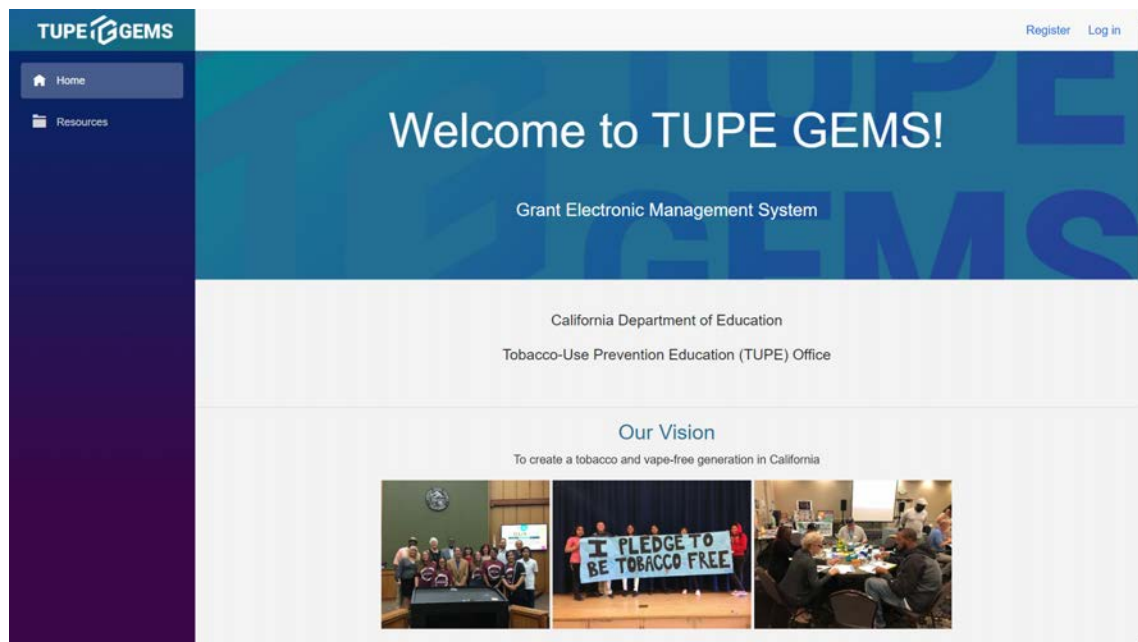


Figure 12. Screenshot of the TUPE Grant Electronic Management System (GEMS).

Source: University of California San Diego (UCSD)

Priority 3: Reducing Tobacco-Related Disparities

Another key aim of the TUPE Office is to reduce tobacco-related disparities, whether based on race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography, or other demographic factors. For example, tobacco use rates are significantly higher in rural areas than in urban areas, and higher among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) youth than among straight/cisgender youth.¹ Moreover, certain populations are differentially targeted by the tobacco and marijuana industries. For example, Black and Latino youth on average encounter more targeted, predatory marketing in their communities than White youth.² Differences such as these highlight the need to monitor use patterns and environmental factors to identify populations in need of additional support and to monitor progress in reducing disparities.

TUPE grantees are required to participate in surveys such as CHKS so they can track their local prevalence rates over time and identify populations experiencing health disparities (also known as HD populations). HD populations are subgroups of students—and their parents, families, and communities—whom a TUPE program has identified through a data-driven needs assessment as needing targeted services above and beyond those provided to the general population because they are disproportionately impacted by tobacco.

¹ Dutra et al., Annual Results Report for the California Youth Tobacco Survey 2022.

² For an overview of the tobacco industry's predatory marketing tactics, see [Undero.org](https://www.undero.org/), Story of Inequity.

The TUPE Office defines HD populations broadly to include:

- Youth of color, including African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander, American Indian, Alaska Native, and multiracial youth
- LGBTQ youth
- Youth of low socioeconomic status
- Rural youth
- Pregnant minors and minor parents
- Students experiencing homelessness or foster placement
- Students in nontraditional school settings
- Youth involved in the criminal justice system
- Youth with co-occurring disorders, such as mental health conditions and substance use disorders
- Other subgroups identified locally through a data-driven process as being at greater risk

Following passage of Proposition 56, the TUPE Office developed a grant program specifically addressing health disparities. Beginning in July 2023, to increase the uptake of disparities work, the requirements from this program were rolled into Tier 2 grants. As a result, Tier 2 grantees now provide not only general population services, but also additional, targeted services for HD populations. Targeted services are provided in the same program areas as those for the general population: student services, family and community engagement, and staff professional development.

Grantees use culturally responsive strategies to recruit and engage members of HD populations in the services and activities designed to reach them. Culturally responsive strategies are those that foster equity and belonging. They empower youth, parents, and other community members to affirm their own values, customs, genders, and ethnic/racial heritage while also affirming the lived experiences of others.

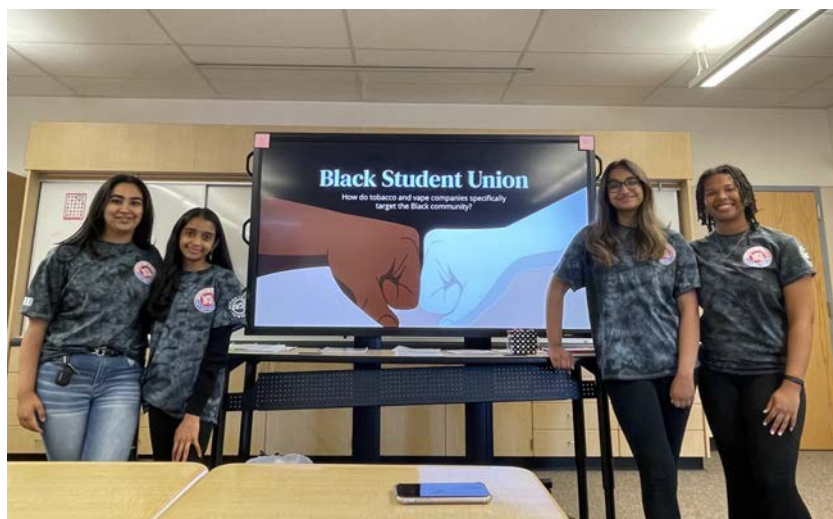


Figure 13. Alameda County students and Black Student Union members educate peers on how the tobacco industry targets the Black community.

Source: Alameda County Office of Education

Priority 4: Addressing the Intersection of Tobacco, Vapes, and Marijuana

Another priority for the TUPE Office is addressing the increasing overlap between tobacco, vapes, and marijuana. Vapes, or e-cigarettes, were originally marketed as an alternative to cigarettes. However, they quickly became popular in their own right, especially among young people—many of whom had never smoked. Driven by heavy marketing and an abundance of flavored products, e-cigarettes sparked a new epidemic of tobacco use with frequently serious consequences. For example, during the “e-cigarette or vaping product use-associated lung injury” (EVALI) health crisis of 2019–2020, thousands of people were hospitalized and/or died, including many young people. Vaping has also become popular as a way to consume marijuana, and like the tobacco industry before it, the marijuana (cannabis) industry uses predatory marketing tactics to target HD populations. These developments threaten to undo California’s progress in denormalizing and reducing tobacco use.

Moreover, the co-use of tobacco and marijuana is rising, and can take many forms. Two common ways to co-use these substances are “blunts” and “spliffs.” Blunts are cigars or little cigars that have been hollowed out, with the tobacco leaves replaced by marijuana. Blunts may also be made by purchasing blunt wraps—usually made of tobacco—and filling them with marijuana. Spliffs are a mix of tobacco and marijuana wrapped in cigarette rolling paper. Another common way to co-use is to “chase” marijuana with tobacco, for example by smoking a joint (a rolled marijuana cigarette) and then smoking or vaping tobacco. Co-using substances in these ways may produce very different sensations than using either substance alone, and may even mask some of the negative aspects of using either alone. The health effects of co-use are not yet well understood, but it seems to be associated with an increased likelihood of behavioral problems and other substance use disorders. For example, young people who co-use tobacco and marijuana are also more likely to engage in binge drinking.³

Given the ways that tobacco, vapes, and marijuana increasingly intersect, the TUPE Office has broadened its approach to encompass all three in its programming. For example, it has sponsored annual Teaching Cannabis Awareness & Prevention Conferences, has developed a Canvas course on the topic, and has encouraged grantees to adopt a similarly broad approach in their programming.⁴

3 Schauer and Peters, *Correlates and Trends in Youth Co-use of Marijuana and Tobacco in the United States, 2005–2014*.

4 Under California state law, vaping devices are considered tobacco products even when used to consume other substances (Business and Professions Code 22950.5, Revenue and Taxation Code 30121, and Health and Safety Code 104495). Moreover, vaping is prohibited wherever smoking is prohibited, to prevent secondhand exposure to harmful aerosols. Therefore, it is well within the scope of TUPE programs to address youth marijuana vaping.

Following are examples of what this broader approach often looks like in practice:

- Tobacco-use prevention education also covers the dangers of marijuana use.
- Intervention and cessation services are available to all students who experiment with or regularly use tobacco, marijuana, or both, and for all the products that they typically use.
- Youth development activities cultivate a norm of tobacco-free and vape-free living, regardless of substance.
- Families and communities are alerted to the risks to young people of both tobacco use and marijuana use.
- School staff receive training on how to help students live a completely tobacco-free and vape-free lifestyle.
- Tobacco-free school policies prohibit marijuana use in the same ways tobacco use is prohibited.
- Evaluation activities consider the wide and continually evolving landscape of tobacco and marijuana products and track usage patterns over time.

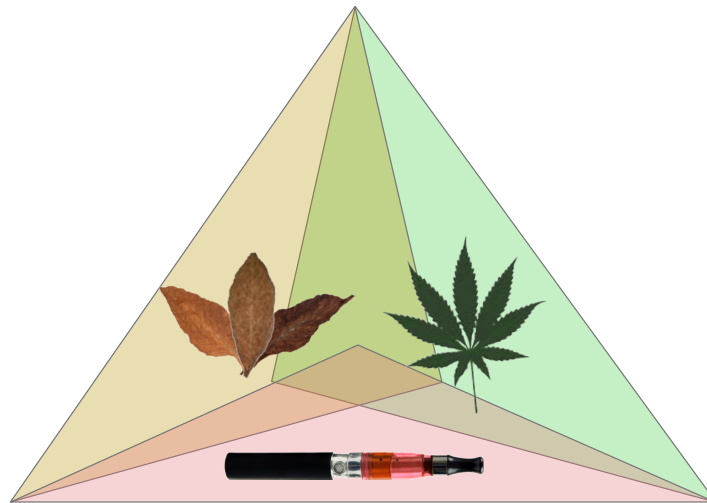


Figure 14. There is substantial overlap between tobacco use, marijuana use, and use of vaping devices. *Source: Lucy Popova*

Priority 5: Strengthening Tobacco-Free Policy

One of the most basic priorities of the TUPE Office is ensuring that all school-age youth in California have the opportunity to learn in a healthy environment. Tobacco-free school policies are critical because they provide a strong foundation to promote a tobacco-free lifestyle to students, families, the community, and staff. Such policies protect students and staff from secondhand exposure, encourage cessation, and prevent or delay initiation of tobacco use. Effective policies are clearly communicated to the entire school community via announcements in school assemblies, school and district websites, student and parent handbooks, printed information sent home with students, and staff trainings for both TUPE and non-TUPE staff.

Certification

The TUPE Office requires all funded LEAs to become certified as having implemented a tobacco-free policy, consistent with state law:

- California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 104559 requires all public school districts to prohibit the use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and other vaping devices. This includes devices used to consume other substances such as marijuana. It does not include prescription products, such as nicotine patches or gum.
- California HSC Section 104420(n)(2) requires all districts and COEs receiving TUPE funds to adopt and enforce a tobacco-free policy. The policy must prohibit the use of all tobacco products on district property, in district vehicles, at school-sponsored activities, and by all students, staff, and visitors. It must be adopted by the district's governing body. Information about the policy and enforcement procedures must be communicated clearly to students, staff, parents, and the community. Signs stating that tobacco use is prohibited must be prominently displayed at entrances to school property. Information about smoking cessation support programs must be made available. Districts and COEs that do not have such a policy implemented by the start of the fiscal year are ineligible for TUPE funding in that year.

The TUPE Office manages tobacco-free certification for all of California.



© 2017 California
Department of Public Health.
www.tecc.org J056-04/17

Figure 15. Signage clearly communicating a comprehensive tobacco-free policy. *Source:* Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California (TECC)

Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion

An effective tobacco-free policy spells out the enforcement procedures to be used when the policy is violated, particularly when students are caught using or in possession of tobacco, vapes, or marijuana. Such an occasion provides a teachable moment to educate students about the dangers of using such products. The TUPE Office strongly supports the use of alternatives to suspension and expulsion (ATSE), which are restorative practices and other positive behavioral supports that keep students engaged in the classroom while helping to address the root causes of substance use. The TUPE Office requires all Tier 2 grantees to

adopt such an approach and has developed a webinar, fact sheets, and other guidance to help districts implement ATSE.

The TUPE Office also worked with UCSD (which operates Kick It California) to develop an intervention called Youth Vaping Alternative Program Education (YVAPE). YVAPE is an evidence-informed program that includes parental

engagement, live telephone coaching, educational videos, and a post-program survey. The TUPE Office provides YVAPE free of charge to districts, and school staff can refer students directly to the program.



Figure 16. A still shot from a YVAPE educational video for students caught vaping. *Source:* University of California San Diego (UCSD)

Priority 6: Partnering with Other Agencies

Another priority of the TUPE Office is coordinating with other state agencies that play critical roles in tobacco prevention, including:

- The California Tobacco Prevention Program (CTPP), which runs the state's anti-tobacco media campaign, supports county-level tobacco programs, and awards numerous competitive grants for tobacco prevention programming.
- The Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program (TRDRP), which awards grants in all areas of tobacco research.
- The California Department of Justice (DOJ), which awards grants to local agencies to enforce tobacco laws.

The TUPE Office encourages its grantees, in turn, to collaborate with grantees of these other state agencies. The county-level tobacco prevention programs funded by CTPP maintain coalitions of volunteers and other stakeholders who are natural allies of TUPE programs and can help advance policies favorable to youth. CTPP funds other statewide and local programs, some of which address the same topics and target audiences as TUPE programs. For example, the California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN) organizes youth development activities such as the annual Youth Quest event at the state capitol, and Kick It California helps young tobacco users quit. TRDRP funds researchers to conduct studies, some of which involve youth and/or members of HD populations. The DOJ funds local law enforcement activities such as enlisting minors to assess retailers' compliance with laws prohibiting sales to people under twenty-one years old. By working together, TUPE grantees and partners such as these accomplish more than they can on their own. Such collaborations may also provide youth development opportunities in policy work, research, and law enforcement.



Figure 17. Trinity County students participate in Youth Quest, an annual event at the Capitol organized by the California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN). *Source: Trinity High School Friday Night Live*

Priority 7: Evaluating TUPE Programming

Finally, the TUPE Office prioritizes program evaluation, both locally and statewide. A comprehensive system of supports helps grantees evaluate their local programs and facilitates communication between the local and statewide levels.

Local program evaluation has three main components:

- **Planning.** Local program evaluation starts from the beginning of program planning. The TUPE Office created a grant application template in TUPE GEMS that helps applicants develop a Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. It addresses the services to be provided in key program areas, measurable outcomes, and data collection and analysis strategies. The plan serves as a roadmap for grantees to follow to monitor and evaluate their programs.
- **Self-assessment.** This component helps ensure that the services grantees intended to provide are delivered as planned, and that they reach their target populations and achieve their intended outcomes. Self-assessment drives a cycle of continuous improvement, in which grantees gain experience and lessons learned that they then apply back to their work, becoming progressively stronger.
- **Reporting.** Every year, based on the measurable outcomes in their implementation plans, grantees report on the results of their self-assessment, including implementation challenges, lessons learned, and strategies for improvement.

System supports provided by the TUPE Office to help grantees with their local program evaluation include three key platforms:

- **STARS.** The Standardized TUPE Activity Recording System is an online and mobile application that helps grantees record, track, and report their service delivery.
- **TUPE GEMS.** This proprietary grant management system facilitates alignment between applications and progress reports and helps identify local needs and best practices.

- TUPE Private Data Dashboard. This online tool allows authorized users to examine and visualize their CHKS data at the grantee, district, and school levels. The dashboard helps grantees use data to drive decision-making and evaluate progress.

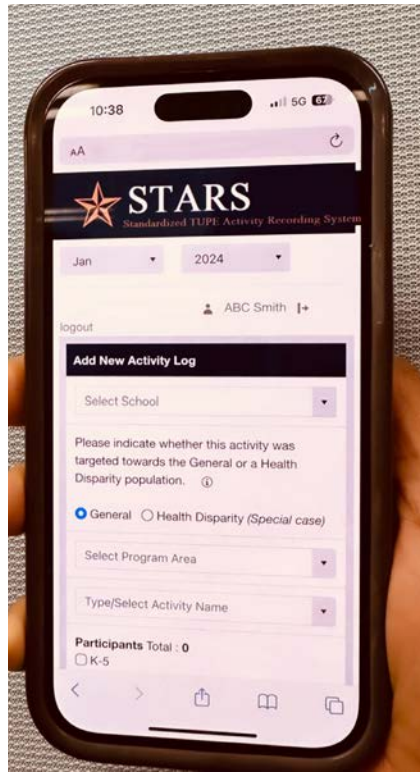


Figure 18. The STARS app helps TUPE staff track their activities.

Source: University of California San Diego (UCSD).

Statewide program evaluation both encompasses and extends beyond local program evaluation. It has three main data sources:

- Local progress reports. Local evaluation helps inform the evaluation of the statewide TUPE Program. Knowing how well grantees are doing provides the TUPE Office with valuable information regarding its own priorities. The most immediate way this occurs is through GEMS. Local data entered into GEMS can be viewed in the aggregate to examine statewide trends. For example, a Program Analytic Module in GEMS helps identify state and local program needs and best practices based on progress reports submitted in GEMS.
- Surveillance. This consists of a biannual evaluation of the statewide TUPE Program by the program's external evaluation partner. Two biennial surveys are used for this purpose. The California Youth Tobacco Survey (CYTS) collects data on tobacco and marijuana use from students across the state. The data are used to monitor tobacco-related behavior. Schools participating in CYTS also distribute the California Educator Tobacco Survey (CETS) to their teachers, administrators, and counselors to assess their views on tobacco-use prevention efforts in their schools. In general, the evaluation has found that TUPE-funded schools outperform non-TUPE-funded schools. Both students and staff in TUPE schools are more likely to participate in tobacco-use prevention activities, and students of TUPE schools are less likely to use tobacco than their peers in non-TUPE schools.
- Case studies. The TUPE Office also periodically conducts in-depth case studies of individual, successful TUPE programs to provide contextualized perspectives on program implementation and insights to inform the design of local assistance programs.

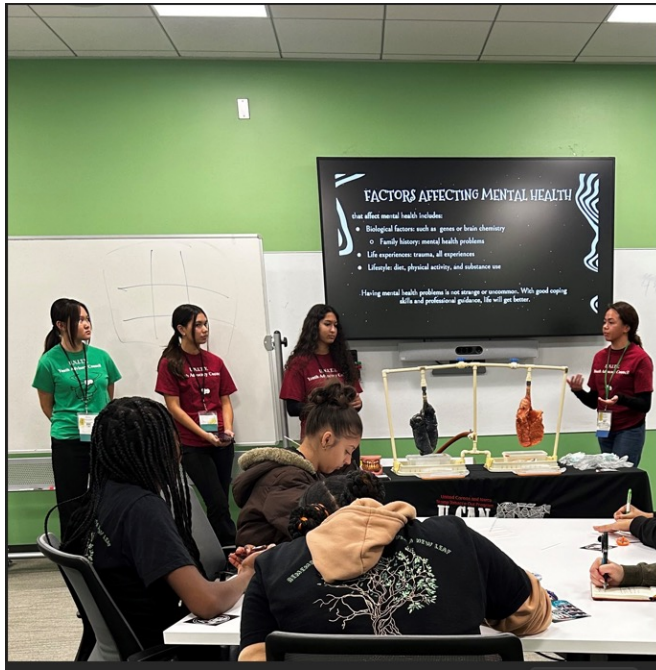


Figure 19. A peer-led workshop at California School-Based Health Alliance's 2024 Youth-to-Youth Conference by students from Corona-Norco USD's Youth Advocacy Council.

Source: Corona-Norco Unified School District

Part III: Future Directions

Here we discuss several areas of TUPE programming to receive increased focus in the coming years.

Addressing Emerging Products

The tobacco industry and the increasingly corporatized marijuana industry continually develop new products and marketing strategies to attract new users. They know that lifelong habits like smoking and vaping are usually developed in adolescence or young adulthood. They also know that young people tend to be early adopters of novel products, which then gradually spread to older age groups. For these reasons, young people are the primary targets for pro-tobacco and pro-marijuana messaging.¹

Another reason companies continually develop new products is to try to stay ahead of regulations that could limit their profits. For example, companies developed products containing synthetic nicotine instead of plant-based nicotine to evade regulation by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).² When governments banned the sale of flavored tobacco, the industry responded with non-specific concept flavors and non-menthol cooling agents.³ Besides new vaping products, the industry has developed and aggressively promoted new smokeless products such as heated tobacco (also known as heat-not-burn) and nicotine pouches. Emerging products such as these find their way into the hands of thousands of young people eager to experience the latest developments.

The main antidote to the continual dispersal of products is school-based, tobacco-use prevention education, which the TUPE Office funds on a large scale. Statewide evaluation shows that students in TUPE-funded districts are more aware of anti-tobacco messaging than students in non-funded districts, indicating that the counterprogramming reaches its intended audience. But just as the landscape of tobacco and marijuana products constantly changes, the TUPE Program must continually adapt. The TUPE Office and its TA providers will continue to support grantees by monitoring the evolving product landscape and supporting capacity building to counter industry's influence and address emerging products.

1 World Health Organization, Tobacco: Industry Tactics to Attract Younger Generations.

2 Truth Initiative, Elf Bar, Hyde, and Breeze – What You Need to Know About the Rise in Disposable E-cigarettes.

3 Styler, Big Tobacco Outmaneuvers the FDA on Flavored Nicotine Products.

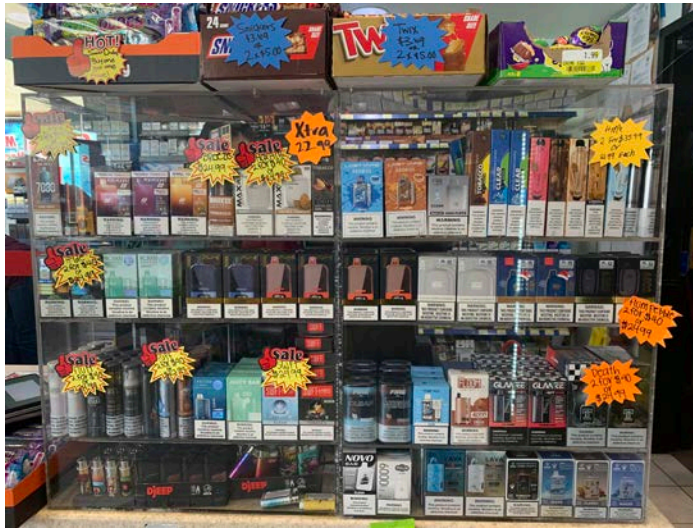


Figure 20. A tobacco retailer in San Diego displays a wide array of novel products. *Source: the CDE TUPE Office*

Supporting Mental Health

There is also a need to focus on the mental health and wellness of students who are using or experimenting with tobacco and marijuana products. For example, youth vaping is strongly correlated

with stress, depression, and decreased school connectedness. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed mental health vulnerabilities in our young people, many of whom experience increased anxiety, depression, and sadness. Often, students who experiment with, or regularly use, tobacco or marijuana are experiencing emotional or mental health challenges with which they struggle to cope. A holistic approach to tobacco intervention and cessation includes looking at students who use these substances through a “whole child” lens. This means considering their mental health and, at a minimum, connecting them to appropriate services as needed. A more integrated approach embeds treatment for tobacco or marijuana use into a mental health counseling framework, helping students understand why they are drawn to use these substances and how to develop healthier and more effective coping strategies. Focusing on the mental health needs of our students is not a new direction for the TUPE Program, but greater emphasis on this topic is needed going forward. The TUPE Office and its TA providers will support grantees in adopting a more holistic approach to intervention and cessation.

Developing Youth Leadership

An area of TUPE programming that has shown special promise is youth development. Services that engage students in activities designed to change norms around tobacco, vaping, and marijuana use not only help develop leadership and social skills among those who are directly involved, but often lead to the development of effective prevention campaigns. In the process, they may generate considerable buzz about the activity that creates a snowball effect driving further participation.

Building on this success, some TUPE programs have prioritized activities explicitly designed to build youth leadership skills by serving on a youth advisory board, running meetings, giving presentations, and assuming other leadership responsibilities. Popular youth development activities include having students research a tobacco-related topic and then educate their peers about it (peer-to-peer education), engaging them in environmental activism relating to tobacco product waste, or having them educate policymakers about

important issues, such as the need to counter the tobacco industry's predatory marketing tactics. Youth advocacy can be especially helpful in jurisdictions where a conservative political culture prevails, and where policymakers may be reluctant to restrict the sale, marketing, or use of products unless they understand how such restrictions help protect young people . Participating in meaningful activities such as these can provide powerful learning experiences for young people while also improving the policy environment for tobacco prevention. The TUPE Office and its TA providers will support grantees in exploring and making greater use of these strategies for engaging youth.



Figure 21. Stanislaus County students participate in a Protecting Health and Slamming Tobacco (PHAST) youth leadership event.

Source: Stanislaus County Office of Education PHAST Youth Coalition

Expanding Reach

A basic challenge facing the TUPE Program is that the tobacco tax revenues

apportioned to the CDE from Propositions 99 and 56 are insufficient to fund programming in all school districts. In fact, the purchasing power of these funds decreases over time because the taxes are not indexed to inflation, and as the prevalence of tobacco use decreases, revenue also decreases.

Nevertheless, the TUPE Office continually looks for opportunities to expand the reach of its programming. Most counties in California have at least one TUPE grant. However, among Tier 2 grantees, rural districts are not as well represented as urban districts. To expand reach in rural areas, and to encourage Tier 1 grantees to advance beyond basic policy work and data collection, the TUPE Office is developing an intermediate "Tier 1.5" funding opportunity for rural LEAs. Grantees of this program will receive sufficient resources to provide direct student services, family and community engagement, and staff professional development.

The TUPE Office will continue working with current grantees to build sustainability into their program implementation plans and to expand their reach by continuously improving services and providing them to a greater proportion of their students, families, and staff. Indeed, one of the main reasons for project monitoring and evaluation is to identify ways to improve the quality and reach of TUPE programming.

An Invitation

The TUPE Office invites local tobacco prevention programs, researchers, health care providers, behavioral health providers, educators, volunteers, and others to join us in creating a tobacco- and vape-free generation of

young people in California. Interested parties should contact the TUPE Office at tupe@cde.ca.gov or 916-323-1540 to become a part of this important movement to protect and empower our youth.



Figure 22. Nevada County students demonstrate in support of tobacco-free living.

Source: Nevada County Public Health Department and Nevada County Superintendent of Schools

Other Resources

California Department of Education, E-Cigarette and Vaping Prevention

Resources: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/ends.asp>

California Department of Justice, Tobacco Grant Program: <https://oag.ca.gov/tobaccogrants>

California Friday Night Live Partnership: <https://fridaynightlive.tcoe.org/Home>

California Healthy Kids Resource Center: <https://www.californiahealthykids.net/home>

California Healthy Kids Survey: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/chks.asp>

California School-Based Health Alliance: <https://www.schoolhealthcenters.org>

California Student Tobacco Survey (2020–2021): https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ResearchandEvaluation/FactsandFigures/CSTS2019-20BiennialReport_ADA.pdf

California Tobacco Prevention Program: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/Pages/CaliforniaTobaccoControlBranch.aspx>

California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN): <https://www.cyanonline.org>

California Youth Tobacco Survey (2022): <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ResearchandEvaluation/FactsandFigures/CYTS2022AnnualReportFinal.pdf>

California School Climate, Health and Learning Surveys (CalSCHLS): <https://calschls.org/reports-data/query-calschls>

Capacity Building Project: <https://www.tupeca.org>

CATCH My Breath: <https://letsgo.catch.org/bundles/catch-my-breath-international>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Smoking & Tobacco Use: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>

County Office of Education TUPE Coordinators: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/countycoordinators.asp>

DataQuest: <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>

Family Engagement Toolkit: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/documents/family-engagement.pdf>

Fix School Discipline Toolkit (Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion): <http://www.fixschooldiscipline.org/community-toolkit>

Kick It California (referral): <https://kickitca.org/student-referral-form#>

Model Smoking Prevention Program: https://www.hazelden.org/web/public/document/mspp_ss_final.pdf

Music Notes: <https://musicnotesonline.com/tupe>

Project ALERT: <https://www.projectalert.com>

The Real Cost of Vaping: https://digitalmedia.hhs.gov/tobacco/educator_hub

Royer Studios: <https://royerstudiosproductionservices.com>

Stanford Tobacco Prevention Toolkit: <https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit.html>

Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/Pages/TobaccoEducationAndResearchOversightCommittee.aspx>

Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California: <https://www.tecc.org>

Tobacco-Free School District Certification: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tobaccofreecert.asp>

Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program: <https://www.trdrp.org>

TUPE GEMS: <https://tupegems.ucsd.edu>

Undo.org: <https://www.undo.org>

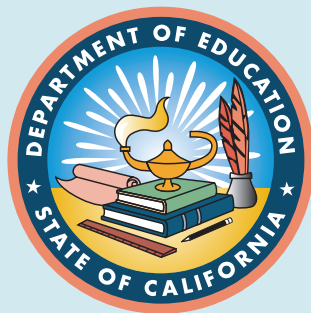
Youth Vaping Alternative Program Education (YVAPE): <https://yvape.org/en>

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Tobacco-Use Prevention Education