



YOUTH, FAMILY, COMMUNITIES

Extension helps communities navigate opioid, vaping crises

YOUTH, FAMILIES LEARN ABOUT DANGERS OF DRUG USE

Across the nation, opioid drug addiction and the use of electronic cigarettes have become hot topics and major areas of concern. As communities grapple with these problems and their consequences, Extension experts have stepped up to educate people—particularly youths—about the dangers of opioids and vaping.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THAT WORK:

- In **North Carolina**, 4-H specialists launched the Empowering Youth and Families Program for middle schoolers and their families. It includes two components: one that seeks to improve parent-child communication and behavior; and another that encourages participants to resist opioid misuse and to share information about the subject with their communities.
- The PROSPER program in **Vermont** teaches families about substance abuse. Children are taught about resisting peer pressure, and parent participants are urged to try to see things from their kids' point of view and become more comfortable talking with them.
- Extension employees in **Alabama**—where about a quarter of high schoolers report using e-cigarettes—developed the Escape Vapes initiative, which seeks to reduce vaping. In 10 counties, more than 9,100 youths were educated on the dangers of vape products through community events, presentations and social marketing.

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