

MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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Vaping Prevention Walk on Sept. 28

Erie, PA — Students ages 12 to 18 and their educators are invited to attend the Escape the Vape Awareness Walk on Sept. 28 at Perry Square Park, Erie. The free event aims to educate youth on the harmful effects of vaping and healthy alternatives.

“The event’s call-to-action is ‘I Choose My Health Over Vaping.’ That is what we want the youth of Erie County to do,” said Amy Chevalier, health educator with the Nicotine Free Northwest PA program.

Registration starts at 4:30 p.m. The walk begins at 5:00 p.m. Health educators will be available for questions. Giveaways and refreshments will be provided. Free shirts will be given away to the first 50 registrants.

The event also wants to encourage students to join Tobacco Resistance Units or TRU groups at their schools. TRU is a movement throughout all of Pennsylvania to help youth stay nicotine-free with fun activities while doing community outreach, education, prevention and quitting the use of tobacco products that cause nicotine addiction like vapes or e-cigarettes, cigarettes and chew.

Vapes or e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. In Pennsylvania, 24% of high school teens use vapes. Every day, approximately 8,000 new kids start vaping. “Encouraging students to join TRU groups is one way to teach them how to be tobacco-free,” said Chevalier. Details will be available at the event for educators, parents and community leaders interested in forming TRU groups at their schools.

TRU groups in Erie County are overseen by the Nicotine Free Northwest PA program. For details, contact 814-451-7866, 814-451-7872, achevalier@eriecountypa.gov or kssison@eriecountypa.gov.

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Overseen by the Erie County Department of Health, the **Nicotine Free Northwest PA** program provides free education, prevention, reducing exposure and quitting resources for tobacco products that cause nicotine addiction such as cigarettes, vapes or e-cigarettes and dipping. The program serves Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango and Warren counties. For details, contact 814-451-7857 or lbeckes@eriecountypa.gov.