



BE EPIC
ESCAPE the VAPE

2025-2026 Impact Report

extension.usu.edu/be-epic

Youth Vaping Prevention in Carbon, Emery, and Grand Counties

After six years of award-winning service, the Be Epic, Escape the Vape (Be Epic) youth vaping prevention program continues to provide high-quality, evidence-based prevention programming throughout Utah's Four Corners District, including Carbon, Emery, and Grand counties. Using a multi-component approach, Be Epic empowers youth, parents, educators, and community members through educational events, skill-building workshops, and practical resources designed to reduce risk factors and promote healthier, more resilient communities. Since its launch in 2020, the Be Epic program has contributed to positive youth health outcomes. Rates of youth vaping have steadily declined in both the Four Corners District and across Utah (see figure 1), while youth mental health indicators measured through the SHARP Survey have also shown promising improvements (See figure 2). This work is possible due to grant funding from the Southeast Utah Health Department.

Percentage of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade youth who reported vaping in their lifetime

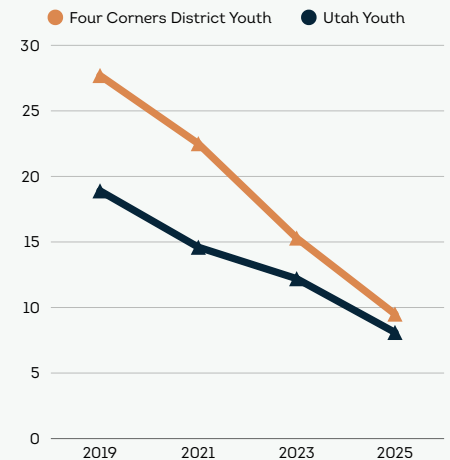


Figure 1 (above), Figure 2 (below)

Objectives of Be Epic, Escape the Vape

Parents/Guardians



Offer education events and skill-building workshops that empower caregivers to build strong relationships and increase their confidence in communicating with youth about substance use.

Community Outreach



Increase community knowledge of the harms of vaping and importance of protective factors by engaging in and supporting local prevention coalitions and community events and disseminating resources and information to local communities.

Social Media Campaign

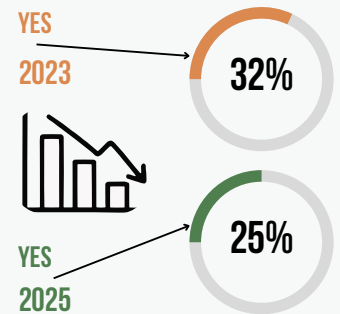


Disseminate evidence-based information via social media to reduce misinformation surrounding e-cigarettes and promote protective factors.

Improvement in Mental Health Indicators

Youth:

During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so **sad or hopeless** almost **every day** for two weeks or more in a row that you **stopped doing** some usual activities?



Youth



Implement youth programs focused on building resilience, confidence, and skills to decline nicotine products.

Educators



Provide in-service training and consultation supports for educators and youth-serving professionals using presentations and trainings grounded in evidence-based prevention science.

Accomplishments of Be Epic, Escape the Vape 2025-2026



197 Youth

Enrolled in vape prevention programming



3,087

Reached through social media campaign messaging with

152,341

Impressions



140 Educators

received youth vape prevention resources and information through Be Epic quarterly newsletters



24 Professionals

who serve youth attended vape prevention presentations



89 Parents

Attended parent education events and workshops



24 Events

attended with prevention information disseminated to community members

Be Epic, Escape the Vape Team 2025-2026



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2026 National Priestler Extension Health Award for excellent individual and family program



Community Collaboration in Carbon, Emery, & Grand Counties!



Co-Principal Investigator & Evaluator, Cris Meier, PhD



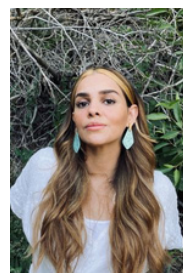
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Special thank you to our USU Extension Marketing team and past team members: Shylie Dickey, Christine Jensen, Jenna Hawks, Catherine Hansen, Shawna Carroll, Cynthia Lyman, Jordyn Oman, Aspyr Benson, Ashley Butler, and Ashley Bunton.

Educational and Outreach Materials

Additionally, during Year 6, the Be Epic team developed and disseminated the following educational and awareness prevention materials. Each of these resources can be found on our website:

extension.usu.edu/be-epic

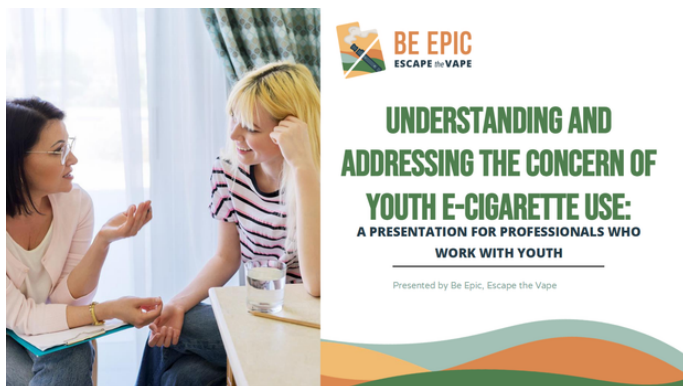
»» Be Epic E-course for Parents



Our new e-course, *Talking to Teens About Drugs and Substance Use* is a free, self-paced e-course designed to help parents confidently navigate conversations about vaping and other substances. It provides practical strategies for strengthening family relationships, setting healthy boundaries, and addressing difficult topics with openness and support.

Understanding and Addressing the Concern of Youth E-Cigarette Use is a one-hour presentation developed by the Be Epic team for adults who work with youth. Using evidence-based prevention science, it dispels outdated approaches such as scare tactics and “just say no” messaging, while promoting effective strategies like building trusting relationships and teaching healthy coping skills. The presentation helps adults understand the risks of youth e-cigarette use and teaches strategies for addressing it.

»» Presentation for Professionals



»» Educational Billboards

Two educational billboards, created by Be Epic and USU Extension Marketing Team, promote protective factors and reinforce positive norms messaging. These billboards were displayed on digital billboards in Carbon County during the month of May, reaching thousands of views.



»» Implementation Toolkit 2.0



Our updated toolkit 2.0 is a guide for others who want to implement similar multi-component programming. It contains an overview of the Be Epic program elements with examples for others to build upon.

BE EPIC

ESCAPE *the* VAPE



WHAT CAREGIVERS & YOUTH ARE SAYING

About Be Epic Sponsored Programs

➤➤ *Parenting Workshops*

"This was the most valuable thing I have done in many years in regards to improving my parenting." - EveryDay Strong Presentation

"These events have been very well done, and I feel more empowered as a parent to strengthen my relationship with my kid and husband." - EveryDay Strong Presentation

"I want to say that I really enjoy these sessions and they have helped my family." - Guiding Good Choices

"I just wanted to say thank you for this course. I seriously learned a lot and took a bunch of things away from this. For me it was the anger section which I found beneficial in my day to day and the role playing on how to talk to our kids." - Guiding Good Choices

➤➤ *Youth Program*

"I really liked the facilitators. They handled situations really well and got to know each of us." - ME Time for Teens

➤➤ *Youth-Serving Professionals Presentation*

"It helped me understand how to talk to my students about e-cigarettes and what resources are available." -Professionals Presentation



LEARN MORE

Check out our website at extension.usu.edu/be-epic to find local events, contact information, research, resources for caregivers, teachers, youth, and more!

