Dear Sir/Madam

The Public Health Agency, Education Authority Youth Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland have collaborated to ensure that you, as a parent/guardian, are fully informed of the dangers of unregulated vaping substances. Police have received a number of reports of young people who suffered a reaction as a result of vaping cannabis infused oil. Some of these incidents occurred whilst the young people were on school premises. These incidents pose a significant risk to their health and are very concerning.
We have highlighted some important points as follows -

- It is illegal to purchase any vaping equipment including liquids and devices under the age of 18.
- Some vape oils can contain a synthetic drug often referred to by its street name, 'Spice.'
- Labels on vape oils can often be inaccurate and misleading.
- Synthetic cannabinoids (Spice) are a Class B controlled drug and it is therefore illegal to supply or possess them.
- The addition of Synthetic cannabinoids to vape oils can pose significant health concerns and also poses a high risk of poisoning.
- The consumption of such products has at times led to the person experiencing breathing difficulty, chest pains, palpitations, tremors, seizures, collapse and unconsciousness. Some reactions can take place quickly after the substance is inhaled and require immediate medical attention. In cases of extreme poisoning it can be fatal. A significant detrimental impact on the mental health of users has also been noted with the onset of mood swings, anxiety and paranoia.

We are keen to circulate our message around parents/guardians to ensure you are fully informed of the dangers young people may face. We feel it is particularly important for you to be fully aware of the associated dangers, as well as how to seek support for your child if required.

HSC Public Health Agency

ea Education Authority

Police Service Northern Ireland

Concern regarding the use of vape oils prompted the Public Health Agency to issue several warnings to highlight the difficulty in regulating the intake of synthetic cannabinoids when they are inhaled. This linked page has useful advice for parents.

https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/spice-vaping-warning-issued-0

PHA would encourage parents and guardians to talk to young people about the dangers of substance misuse. It isn't always an easy thing to do but there is a useful leaflet giving advice on how to approach this subject at www.pha.site/YouChildandDrugs

The PHA funded service Connections is available to provide information, advice, signposting and awareness raising initiatives.

BHSCT (Belfast)	connections@bdact.info	028 9084 0555
NHSCT (Northern)	connections@ndact.info	028 2568 9306
SEHSCT (South Eastern)	connections@sedact.info	0800 254 5123
SHSCT (Southern)	connections@sdact.info	028 3832 2714
WHSCT (Western)	connections@wdact.info	0800 254 5123

For further support information and services please visit the website at Drugs and Alcohol | NI