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School board members from around New York crowd into Rochester vaping seminar

By [BRETT DAHLBERG \(/PEOPLE/BRETT-DAHLBERG\)](#) • 2 HOURS AGO

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(www.wrvo.org/sites/wrvo/files/styles/x_large/public/201910/Vape.jpg)

LINDSAY FOX / FLICKR

When school board members from around New York state gathered in Rochester for a conference last week, one of the most highly attended seminars focused on vaping.

Youth use of e-cigarettes has risen (<https://www.wxnews.org/post/youth-use-e-cigarettes-reaches-epidemic-proportions>) more than 150% in the state in the last five years, and members of the New York State School Boards Association who crowded into a ballroom in the Rochester Riverside Hotel said they were concerned about the trend.

"I think it's a growing issue in all schools," said James Hubbard, president of the Potsdam Central School District Board of Education. "We find, unfortunately, that even some of the younger students are vaping, and it seems like it's something that's going to continue to grow as a problem."

Matt Yager, a school board member in the Baldwinsville School District, said board members need to be aware of the health dangers posed by e-cigarettes. "Kids are just really struggling with how to deal with it."

In the Rochester area, the Greece Central School District is changing (<https://www.wxxinews.org/post/e-cigarette-use-rises-teens-one-school-district-tries-new-approach>) from a punitive approach to discipline for vaping at school to a restorative one, driven in large part by those health concerns.

"It seems to me that that's the way to reach kids," said Kathryn Carlson, a member of the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES board and a former school psychologist. "You work with kids to figure out what the problem is and correct it in a positive way."

"Talk about 'Why are you doing this?' and 'What are you missing that you think vaping is helping you with?' " said Carlson. "We are their support system."

Jennifer Faringer, who directs the Rochester chapter of the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence, led the seminar on vaping.

"The problem is, simply, is clear marketing toward youth," Faringer said.

"We have been set back years" in smoking prevention efforts by the rise of e-cigarettes, she said.

Juul, the leading e-cigarette manufacturer, has consistently denied (<https://www.juul.com/youth-prevention>) that it is marketing to youths. But Faringer said she reads the proliferation of flavored vape products and some of the company's advertising materials as being aimed at kids.

"It's not safe ... Go back to schools and spread the message," she urged the school board attendees. "The more people know about this, the better, the healthier, our community is."

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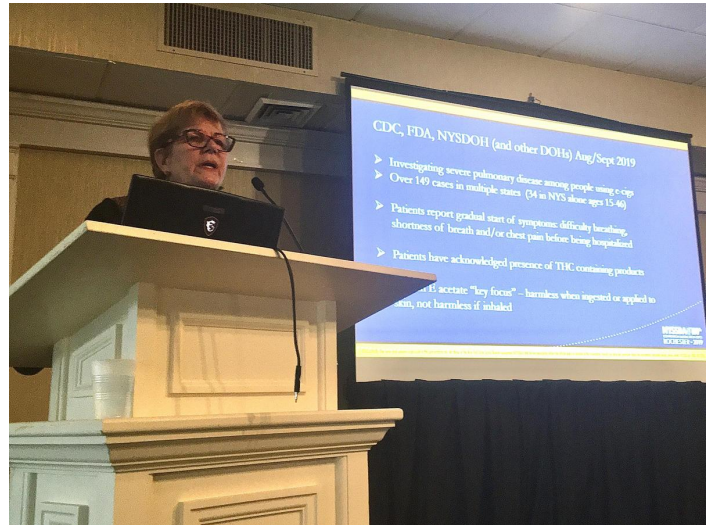
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Jennifer Faringer, Director of the Rochester area of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, speaks to school board members from around New York state at a seminar in Rochester on Friday.

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