

# Taco' Bout It

Combining Information on Vaping Trends and Social Justice while Building Tacos and a safe space for teens to understand the risks of vaping.

Dayna Altman, MPH

Featuring The Part of the Solution Peer Leaders from **Girls Inc. of Lynn**

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# Today's Agenda

- 1) Background Information.
- 2) Demonstration.
- 3) Implementation.

# What is Girls Inc.?

- A national, non-profit organization that inspires all girls to be strong, smart and bold.
- Focuses on the following:
  1. Academic Enrichment and Support.
  2. Healthy Living.
  3. Life Skills.

**WITH YOU IN  
HER CORNER,  
SHE WILL SUCCEED.**

# Girls Inc. of Lynn



- Part of the National Girls Inc. Organization.
- **Location:** Within the Essex County on the North Shore of MA.
- **Made up of:** Several cultures, communities, languages & races.
- **Lynn's poverty rate:** 20% of the community.

# More about Lynn

1. Teen birth rate in Lynn is 29% versus the 9% teen birth rate in the state of Massachusetts.
1. Lynn's High School dropout rate is 5% versus the state rate of about 2%.
1. Lynn has been identified by the Department of Public Health (DPH) as a hotspot for heroin use.



# Part of the Solution (POS) Peer Leaders at Girls Inc.

- A small group of high school students who work earnestly to educate younger girls on healthy coping/stress management, plan events in the community to encourage substance use prevention and work on advocacy movements.
- Examples of projects:
  - Friendly PEERsuasion.
  - Prom Parent Initiative.
  - Healthy Alternatives for Lynn Teens.(H.A.L.T)
  - Statewide Flavor Ban.



# Part of the Solution (POS) Projects



# Vaping: An Overview

- Initially created to help “adult smokers quit smoking.”
- 9 Billion Dollar Industry, owned in large part by original Big Tobacco investors.
- JUUL most popular (40% of market.)
  - More nicotine concentration.
- Teen vaping declared an epidemic in September 2018.





# Teen Vaping as an Epidemic

- Targets teens: Sweet, Cheap, Easy to Access.
- Social Media Ads and Influencers.
- Women/girls primary focus.



# Vaping Trends Among Teens

## NATIONAL TREND 2018 (MTS)

- In the last 30 days...
- 17.6% of 8th graders self report having used a vape.
- 32.3% of 10th graders.
- 37.3% of 12th graders.



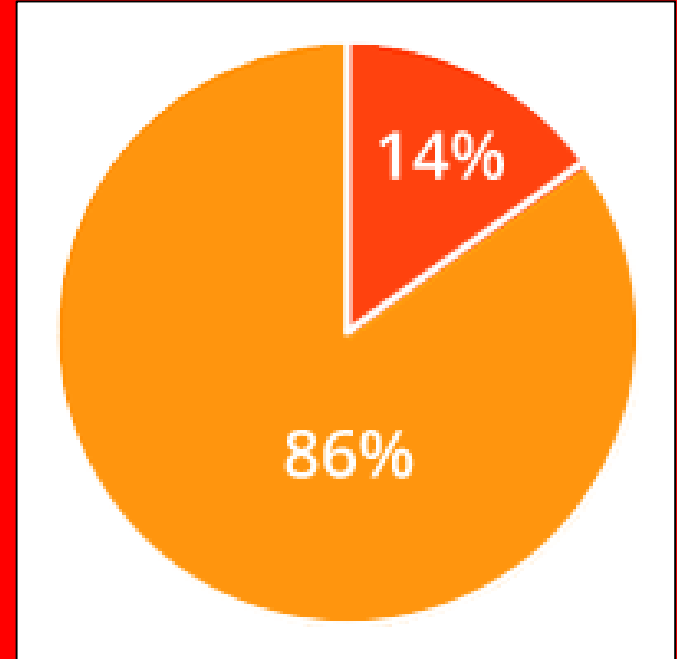
## TREND IN LYNN 2018 (YRBS LYNN)

- About 32% of Lynn teens across all of the public high schools have reported using an electronic vape product.



# Lynn Survey

- Surveyed 145 teens in Lynn.
- Most commonly reported flavors of choice: Mint and Mango (tie).
- Those who self-reported that they vape stated they vape more than 1x per day.
- 80% of those surveyed believe kids start vaping in Middle School.
- 86% want education in schools.
- Those who spend money on vaping spend about \$20 per week.



# Supplemental Focus Groups on Vaping in Lynn

## Group One

- 36 teens (25 boys, 11 girls; Ages 15-19 ).
- People vape because:
  - “It looks cool.”
  - “They are peer pressured into it.”
- Most popular flavors: mint, mango.
- Frequency of ad viewing: At least twice per day on social media .

## Group Two

- 17 girls (ages 10-15).
- People vape because:
  - “It’s just water vapor, there is no tobacco; it is easier to smoke.”
  - “Everyone else is doing it.”
  - “It’s fun.”
  - “They want to learn tricks like they see on social media.”

# Stories from Our Teens



Gabriela Alvarez



Iwinosa Foster-  
Efosa



Aida Corado



Serena Porte



Mekkillah Chourb

# Social Justice & The Tobacco Industry

- Vulnerable communities have been a target of Big Tobacco throughout history.
- Financial support.
- Life long customers in vulnerable populations: lower prices, specific flavors.



# Mint and Menthol as “Flavors”

- 9 out of 10 Black American smokers, smoke menthol cigarettes.
- Targeted marketing.
- 2009 Ban of flavored Tobacco under Obama.
- Mint=flavor?
- Vape Flavor Bans.



# The Tobacco Industry & Lynn

- The 40+ corner stores in Lynn are draped with ads for JUUL and tobacco products.
- Mint and menthol cigarette flavors, geared towards people of color.
- JUULs can be disguised as flash drives as they can be easily charged using a computer.
- It is important that kids are educated about the consequences of using these products.





# Taco 'Bout it Demo



“The goal is to educate our peers about how they are being targeted by Big Tobacco Companies in an interesting way in hopes they remember it.” - Part of the Solution Peer Leaders



# Taco 'Bout it: Taco Shell

Instruction: Find three tobacco products in this candy bowl.



# Taco 'Bout it: Meat

Question: Why do you think tobacco industries target people of color?



# Taco 'Bout it: Guacamole

Question: How many cigarettes worth of nicotine do you think are in one juul pod?



# Taco 'Bout it: Sour Cream

Question: How many times more likely are you to start smoking cigarettes after vaping?



# Taco 'Bout it: Diced Tomatoes

Question: If you wanted to stop vaping, who or what could you access for help?



# Taco 'Bout it: Lettuce

Question: Do you think prices of tobacco products are cheaper in lower income communities or are they same as prices in higher income communities?



# Taco 'Bout it: Cheese

Question: What is one thing you learned today?





# Prevention Strategies

- Inspired by a logic model and the work we do through the Department of Public Health.
- Three areas of focus:
  1. Drug Availability.
  2. Low Perceived Risk.
  3. Low Social Involvement.



# Bringing Taco 'Bout it To Your Community

- Know the trends in your community.
  - Contact your DPH.
- Consider space and refrigeration.
- Know your budget and the audience.
- Create an evaluation.
- Use *#TacoBoutIt* and don't forget to tag Girls Inc of Lynn.



# Contact Us

Have questions about setting up Taco 'Bout It in your community; email us!

Dayna Altman: [daltman@girlsinclynn.org](mailto:daltman@girlsinclynn.org)

For more updates follow us on Facebook: Girls Inc. of Lynn or on Instagram at [@girlsinclynn](https://www.instagram.com/girlsinclynn).



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