

Joseph Veins

Hi I'm Joey and almost 13 years old. Thank you for letting me speak today. Since this issue is so focused around kids like me, I feel as if you should hear my thoughts. The biggest concern from my understanding is flavors are attracting kids to vape. I don't think flavors are the issue here. I know kids my age could care less about the flavor. They try Juul to be cool or to fit in. They don't talk about what flavor it was, they just want people to know they have done something others haven't, just like with regular cigarettes. To be honest I see kids getting caught smoking cigarettes more than vaping in my school and when it is Juuling they definitely are not using the bigger vape like my Mom has.

My Mom quite smoking around 6 years ago, and vaping was the only thing that helped her do it. When we talk about it, my mom always tells me that adults need vaping to help them quit smoking and that kids should never use a vape. I am so glad my Mom feels better, we do a lot more stuff outside together, and her voice is less scratchy. Her car and clothes don't smell like cigarettes anymore. The smell of cigarettes is horrible, and I am so happy I do not have to smell that anymore.

My mom is now healthier, and she works out all the time. I am so proud of her. My mom is an upfront parent with me and talks to me about everything. She says she rather me be educated so I can make good decisions on my own. You may think taking flavors away will help, but you are wrong. The only thing that will do is hurt people like my Mom. My Mom was so addicted to cigarettes, if you force her to smoke a cigarette flavor, she will go back to cigarettes. How do you expect someone to stay away from cigarettes if that is the only flavor option you are giving them? I would hate to see my mom go back to smoking. So, if you plan on banning flavors just know you are taking away the one thing that has truly helped people quit smoking. You will only encourage cigarettes which is the biggest problem and not the solution.