



Implementation Guide



This program is supported by Making It Count Community Development Corporation Through the Tobacco Free Michigan Initiative

DITCH THE VAPE DAY™

Implementation Guide

A Comprehensive School & Community Toolkit for Vaping Prevention, Education, Alternatives to Suspension, and Community Engagement

Created by

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African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council

Southwestern Michigan Tobacco-Free Coalition



A Message from the Founder

Greetings Community Leaders, Educators, Prevention Professionals, Healthcare Partners, and Advocates,

Every meaningful movement begins with someone willing to ask for help.

For Ditch the Vape Day™, that journey began with a phone call from an educator in a middle school in southwestern Michigan. The message was both urgent and heartfelt: vaping among middle school students had increased dramatically, and school staff were searching for meaningful ways to address the growing crisis. Traditional disciplinary approaches alone were no longer enough. Students needed education, support, and a community willing to respond.

Knowing of my work with the American Heart Association, the district reached out with a simple request—to help educate students about the dangers of smoking and vaping. What began as a request for a single educational presentation quickly evolved into something much greater.

Throughout my career, I have believed that lasting change happens when communities are empowered to identify what they want to change, understand why that change is important, and recognize who has the authority and influence to make it happen. That philosophy became the foundation of ABD Advocacy Agency LLC, where our mission is to help communities transform concern into action through education, advocacy, coalition building, and policy development.

As a member of Cohort 5 of the African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council (AATCLC), I recognized that the call from this school represented more than an isolated challenge—it reflected a growing public health concern affecting communities across our region and throughout the nation. Rather than creating another one-time presentation, we envisioned a comprehensive initiative that would educate, engage, and empower entire communities.

From that vision, Ditch the Vape Day™ was born.

To support this work, the Southwestern Michigan Tobacco Free Coalition was established to bring together educators, healthcare professionals, community organizations, parents, youth leaders, public health practitioners, and advocates

committed to reducing youth nicotine addiction and creating healthier environments for future generations.

On June 18, 2026, the Coalition held its inaugural meeting, marking the beginning of a collaborative regional effort to address youth vaping through education, prevention, and community engagement. During that historic meeting, Shirese Shannon was selected to serve as the Coalition's inaugural Co-Chair. The Coalition also unanimously adopted Ditch the Vape Day™ as its first regional initiative, demonstrating a shared commitment to proactive, community-driven solutions.

This Implementation Guide is the result of that collaboration and shared vision. It has been developed to help schools, community organizations, prevention coalitions, health departments, and local leaders implement Ditch the Vape Day™ with confidence and consistency. More importantly, it provides a framework for building partnerships that move beyond awareness toward lasting community impact.

Together, we can equip young people with knowledge, provide healthier alternatives, strengthen community partnerships, and create environments where every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for joining us in this important work. We invite you to stand with us as we educate, advocate, and inspire healthier futures—one school, one community, and one young person at a time.

Together, we can Collect to Protect™.

With gratitude,

A'Lynne Boles Dukes, PhD
Founder and CEO
ABD Advocacy Agency LLC
Founder, Ditch the Vape Day™
Co-Chair Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance
Co-Lead, Keep DTW Smoke Free
Co-Chair Southwestern Michigan Tobacco Free Coalition
Member, African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council – Cohort 5



Ditch The Vape Day™

Comprehensive Implementation Guide

Schools • Parents • Community

Prepared by ABD Advocacy Agency LLC
Founder & CEO: A'Lynne Boles Dukes, PhD

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Mission

To empower schools, families, and communities to prevent youth nicotine addiction through education, advocacy, leadership, and sustainable community partnerships.

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Vision

Communities where every young person is equipped to choose a healthy, vape-free future.

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Core Goals

- Increase awareness
- Reduce youth vaping
- Connect youth to cessation resources
- Engage parents
- Build sustainable coalitions
- Develop youth leaders

Program Overview

Ditch The Vape Day™ is a coordinated community event that may include assemblies, classroom education, interactive exhibits, youth leadership activities, parent engagement, resource fairs, and cessation support.

Implementation Timeline

90–120 Days: Form planning committee; assess need; secure school approval.

60 Days: Recruit partners, volunteers, speakers.

30 Days: Finalize logistics; launch communications.

2 Weeks: Confirm materials and volunteers.

Event Day: Conduct activities, surveys, and referrals.

Post Event: Evaluate outcomes and recognize partners.

Planning Committee

Include administrators, teachers, counselors, nurses, students, parents, health departments, faith leaders, law enforcement, youth organizations, healthcare providers, and community advocates.

School Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Obtain district approval
- ☐ Schedule event
- ☐ Identify student leaders
- ☐ Recruit partners
- ☐ Order educational materials
- ☐ Train volunteers
- ☐ Prepare evaluation surveys
- ☐ Promote event

- ☐ Conduct event
- ☐ Review outcomes

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Parent Engagement

Host a parent information session, distribute a parent letter, provide a conversation guide, share quit resources, and encourage ongoing family discussions.

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Community Engagement

Invite coalition members, local businesses, healthcare providers, public health agencies, law enforcement, faith communities, and youth organizations to participate.

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Resource Stations

Suggested stations:

- What's Inside a Vape
- Lung Health
- Cost of Vaping Calculator
- Marketing to Youth
- Quitting Resources
- Healthy Alternatives

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Youth Leadership

Establish a Ditch Delegation™ student club to assist with planning, peer education, service projects, advocacy, and sustainability.

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Alternatives to Suspension

Use restorative conversations, education modules, cessation referrals, reflection journals, and family engagement instead of punitive discipline whenever appropriate.

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Communication Toolkit

Include:

- Superintendent invitation
- Principal invitation
- Parent letter
- Volunteer invitation
- Press release
- Media alert
- Social media posts
- Morning announcements
- Thank-you letters

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Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our school is participating in Ditch The Vape Day™ to educate students about the health risks of vaping and connect families with prevention and cessation resources. Thank you for partnering with us to promote healthy choices.

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Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ABD Advocacy Agency LLC announces Ditch The Vape Day™, bringing schools and communities together to reduce youth vaping through education, advocacy, and support.

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Evaluation

Administer student, parent, and staff pre/post surveys. Measure knowledge, attitudes, resource awareness, and intent to quit or seek help. Review results with the planning committee.

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Recognition

Recognize volunteers, schools, student leaders, and community partners with certificates and appreciation letters.

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Sustainability

Continue quarterly awareness activities, maintain the student leadership club, provide annual training, and integrate vaping prevention into wellness initiatives.

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Appendix A: Starter Forms

Planning Committee Roster
Meeting Agenda
Volunteer Sign-In
Event Checklist
Pre and Post Survey
Resource Inventory
Budget Worksheet
Student Referral Form
Parent Contact Log
Post-Event Debrief Template

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Appendix B: Communications Checklist

- ☐ CEO Welcome Letter
- ☐ Superintendent Letter
- ☐ School Board Letter

- Principal Letter
- Parent Letter
- Volunteer Invitation
- Sponsor Request
- Media Alert
- Press Release
- Thank-you Letter

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Best Practice Guide 1

Use evidence-based education, engage youth voices, involve families, partner with community organizations, collect meaningful evaluation data, and review implementation after each event. Document successes, lessons learned, and recommendations for continuous improvement. Ensure culturally responsive messaging and equitable access to cessation resources.