Today, teens are vaping and using e-cigarettes that do not have the familiar tobacco smell and may not have any odor at all. Here are some signs that may be side effects of vaping:

1. **Finding Unusual or Unfamiliar Items:**
   Disposable or refillable pods that contain the e-juice (or vape juice) may be the most commonly-found item. However, many vaping devices may look like benign objects in disguise. JUUL achieved phenomenal success in part by designing its devices to resemble USB drives that can be hidden and charged in plain sight. Other manufacturers are now designing vape devices that resemble watches, pens, markers and other common objects.

2. **Behavioral Changes, Mood Swings, Agitation:**
   Mood swings, agitation, impulsivity, secretiveness, memory loss, inability to concentrate and anxiety are some of the key changes you may see. This may be due to the effect of nicotine substantially diminishing the prefrontal cortex of a young brain, which largely governs emotional control, decision making and impulse regulation.

3. **Shortness of Breath:**
   If a child is an athlete and starts having trouble breathing during practices or games, it could be due to vaping.

4. **Poor Performance:**
   If a child’s academic or athletic performance starts to decline, it could be due to nicotine-induced changes in the brain. Students who get caught vaping at school may be suspended or kicked off the team.

5. **Increased Thirst and Nose Bleeds:**
   Some types of e-liquids contain chemicals that dry out the mouth and nasal passages. This can heighten thirst and prompt more frequent nose bleeds.

6. **Mouth Sores, Abnormal Coughing, Throat-Clearing:**
   Vaping inflames mouth cells and oral tissue, which could lead to lesions, gum disease, tooth loss and other forms of oral decay. It can also irritate the throat, causing vapers to frequently cough or clear their throat.

7. **Strange/Sweet Odors:**
   One of the appeals of vaping is the “fun” flavors like mint, bubblegum, and chocolate. While certainly less pungent than cigarette smoke, the trace odors of vaping are still noticeable. The most popular flavors are sweet so you may notice an unusually sweet smell, although it goes away quickly.

8. **Vaping Lingo:**
   Vaping has developed its own culture, with popular videos on YouTube and Twitter showing vape cloud tricks and slang. Keep an ear out for overheard conversations with coded phrases like “atty” for the device’s atomizer and “sauce” in place of e-liquid or e-juice.

By The Vape Free Kansas Schools Task Force, November 2020.