

BEHIND THE SCENES

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES 2022

The Behind the Scenes programme, based on Life Education's successful alcohol education programme SMASHED, uses theatre in education to explore themes of peer pressure and decision making, specifically around vaping and the wider context of how social media influences our thinking and behaviours.

Vaping rates in rangatahi have increased dramatically since vape products were introduced to New Zealand as a smoking cessation device.

In 2021, research showed 27% of young people had vaped in the last 7 days. School leaders have described vaping as an 'epidemic' amongst students and asked for help to manage it.



In response, and in association with the Asthma and Respiratory Foundation, Life Education Trust NZ launched Behind the Scenes in 2022 alongside other vaping initiatives for schools. Behind the Scenes was developed with input from students and trialled in selected schools during Term 1 before being rolled out to secondary schools nationwide. An adapted version for Year 7 and 8 was created and delivered to South Wairarapa students as part of a Kāhui Ako initiative.

REACH

12,945
students
participated



67 shows
across
56 schools

LIFE EDUCATION TRUST NZ

Inspired Learning. Inspiring Lives.

Areas covered
in 2022 tour



PILOT STUDY FINDINGS

A Research New Zealand pilot study showed Behind the Scenes was effective in improving students' knowledge of vaping and its effects.

The pilot study will be used to inform the research method used from 2023 to gather evidence on the impact of Behind the Scenes.

After participating in the programme, **77% of students surveyed said they knew more about the topics covered** (vaping and social media influence).

23% said they followed up with online searching after the programme.

FEEDBACK

SCHOOL

"The Behind the Scenes team delivered an upbeat performance to our Year 7 & 8 students that held their attention from start to finish. Their transition between information and entertainment was seamless meaning our students were informed throughout the whole performance. Even though our students have had presentation on vaping before this was by far the most engaged I have seen them. These three young people delivered a tough message in a way we can not do in a classroom and I believe their message got through to a majority of our students."

Gina Smith, Principal, Featherston School



SCHOOL

"Our students were treated to a very professional and informative performance by the actors from the Life Education Trust on the dangers of vaping. It was pitched at just the right level for our Year 7 and 8 students in a relatable and interactive format that kept them totally engaged the whole time. It was clear in the follow up workshops that they had understood the main messages and were more aware of the dangers caused by vaping."

Neil Preston Deputy Principal Greytown School

"It's wonderful to see these programmes being developed for our rangatahi. We need to ensure young people are educated on the harms of vaping so we can turn Aotearoa's youth vaping epidemic around, and prevent future generations becoming addicted to a product that will have a negative impact on their health."

Letitia Harding, Chief Executive, Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ



HEALTH LEADER

What is the most important thing you learned from the play?

- "Vaping sucks"
- "That young people don't need to vape unless they are trying to give up smoking"
- "How much nicotine is in a vape pod"
- "Don't risk your health for popularity"
- "That you can get angry really quickly if you are an addict"
- "When you vape, you are actually breathing in a lot of weird things that you wouldn't expect to find inside them"

Sample responses, students surveyed