

## Vaping - An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland

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**Submitter Comments:**

# Social Marketing @ Griffith Submission in Response to the Inquiry into Reducing Rates of E-cigarette Use in Queensland

**4 May 2023**

Social Marketing @ Griffith, Griffith Business School is pleased to offer a response to the inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland. Our submission addresses points 1c, 2a and 2b pertaining to education approaches for discouraging the use of e-cigarettes and the success of our approach having been rolled out in a number of schools in Australia. Social Marketing @ Griffith at Griffith University has extensive experience in developing effective alcohol and drug education, including vaping, for over a decade.

Social Marketing @ Griffith has established a Social Enterprise named Blurred Minds. Blurred Minds was developed in close consultation with numerous schools and through its ongoing use we have gained invaluable insights into the critical health and environmental risks associated with vapes (e-cigarettes) for our most vulnerable population, adolescents. Our research indicates that almost 27% of adolescents have experimented with vaping at an average age of 14. In addition, we have collected evidence that school suspensions and expulsions due to vaping are responsible for millions of missed school hours across the country.

In collaboration with many schools, teachers, thousands of students, experts and researchers, the Blurred Minds Academy has been co-created to provide teachers with relevant, engaging, and time-saving educational resources to empower them to deliver alcohol and drug education that is workable in their classrooms. The Blurred Minds initiative, backed by 13 years of research, has been proven to be effective with students and teachers alike.

Our evaluation process involves gathering feedback from teachers and students who have used our modules and resources. This feedback helps us to identify areas for improvement and make adjustments to our materials to ensure that they are effective and engaging for our users. Our analysis demonstrates positive changes across key outcome measures, including enhanced substance use refusal skills in peer pressure scenarios and more accurate normative perceptions of peer substance use (including vaping). Reduced positive outcome expectations for alcohol, vaping and cannabis consumption were also observed as well as reduction in drinking following program participation. Teachers who use our Academy modules report a positive impact on their teaching experience. They feel better equipped to educate their students about vaping and its risks, and they appreciate the engaging and interactive nature of the materials. Additionally, teachers report that our resources help them to save time, connect better with their students, and achieve more meaningful conversations and discussions around vaping in the classroom.

We strongly recommend integrating vaping education resources into a broader alcohol and drug education framework to ensure that information on vaping remains current in light of emerging scientific evidence. It is essential to ensure that these educational resources are frequently revised, as there have been reports that prior educational materials produced by the Department of Education were not updated quickly enough to align with current trends and at present, do not have any resources on vaping.

The tobacco industry is a powerful force that needs to recruit new customers to replace those who quit or die from tobacco use. To achieve this, they are constantly seeking new markets and developing new products, often targeting young people (vapes are the latest example). It is crucial to regularly update educational resources around vaping education and Griffith University would welcome further engagement with the government to help supply sustainable and effective educational resources around vaping and other alcohol and drugs to combat industry innovation and marketing efforts.

Please refer to the attachment for further details surrounding the initiative and its impact to date.

Contact:

Dr Timo Dietrich (on behalf of the Blurred Minds team)

Associate Professor Department of Marketing, Griffith Business School

Co-Founder and Director – Blurred Minds

Engagement Director – Social Marketing @ Griffith

Adjunct Senior Fellow – National Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research (NCYSAR), The University of Queensland

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# BLURRED MINDS

## ENDING VAPING IN SCHOOLS

AN INNOVATIVE WAY TO EDUCATE STUDENTS  
ABOUT ALCOHOL, VAPING AND DRUGS



# THE VAPING PANDEMIC



Vaping has seen a remarkable surge in its popularity over the last decade, largely due to advancements in slick vape pen designs and creative flavour profiles that hook young users quickly and often permanently.

Schools are asking for help in engaging students and upskilling teachers in providing vaping education as more students face negative consequences of this new habit. In fact, principals have shared with us the soaring numbers of expulsions due to students being caught vaping.



\*Based on a sample of 3000 high school students

## Millions

Hours of missed school days

## 80%

Increase in school expulsions due to vaping

## \$\$\$

Schools pay top dollar for disposal of vaping products taking away scarce monetary resources.



Wasted public resources as fire services are unnecessarily called out to schools due to students vaping in bathrooms.

## Why do young people vape?

Many say it stress, a coping mechanism. But most often it is just conforming to peer pressure or curiosity.



**COPING**



**STRESS**



**PEER PRESSURE**



**CURIOSITY**

# EFFECTIVE VAPING EDUCATION WITH BLURRED MINDS ACADEMY



The Blurred Minds team has engaged with schools across Australia and understands firsthand that vapes (e-cigarettes) are a serious health and environmental hazard for our young generation. It poses real issues for schools' safety and teacher and student wellbeing. Blurred Minds is one of its kind and a game changer in the education space.



Mapped to the **Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (AC:HPE)**.



Underpinned by **gamification principles** to ensure student engagement.



**Co-create, Build, Engage** framework ensure continual improvement.

## 12 GAMIFIED MODULES

 Australian Law	 Myths and Norms	 Standard Drinks	 Blood Alcohol Concentration	 Strategies and Tactics
 The Brain	 Drink Driving	 Advertising	 Classification of Drugs	 Marijuana Truths
 Vaping and Health	 Vaping Deception	 Vaping and the Environment	<b>COMING SOON!</b>	

The advantage of Blurred Minds Academy is that its resources are regularly updated to reflect changes in legislation, curriculum requirements, industry trends, emerging technologies and advancements in research and knowledge.



With regards to the **Blurred Minds Academy**, it is noteworthy to mention that the modules are not restricted to standard classroom hours. Many schools have utilised these modules as an alternative measure to suspending or expelling students following a vaping incident. As such, it is feasible for students to independently complete these modules without direct teacher supervision if deemed necessary.

# THE BLURRED MINDS ACADEMY IMPACT



The Blurred Minds Academy was co-created in partnership with **dozens of schools**, teachers and **thousands of students** as well as **experts** and **researchers** to create a cutting-edge online learning platform. Blurred Minds Academy's purpose is to empower teachers and equip them with time-saving and engaging resources that are relevant to students' lives.



Evidence-based and curriculum aligned\*.

\* Listed on p 5



12 Gamified modules.



Teaching materials and parents resources.



Covering Years 7-10.

## Blurred Minds Academy impact on students:



Students will think that vaping is less safe.



Students will increase their knowledge about vaping.



Students will have more accurate perceptions around vaping behaviour.



Students will feel more capable to say no to a vape.

## Blurred Minds Academy impact on teachers:



Improves their teaching experience.



Increases their knowledge about vaping.



Makes their teaching more effective.



Helps them connect with their students.



**85% of teachers** recommend using the Blurred Minds Academy to help them get more out of alcohol, vaping, marijuana and other drugs education.

# PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



Across Australia, we have more than 600 schools using our resources and we are growing fast. We are also listed on the **Victorian Health Menu** as an approved provider of AOD resources and the **Queensland Catholic Education Commission** have been one of our longest partners and supporters.

Blurred Minds is a Social Enterprise that is housed within Griffith University and partners with **The University of Queensland (National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research)** and **Hypertheory**. This has enabled us to build the most innovative, engaging and up to date vaping education resources in the market.

## \* AS FEATURED ON \*



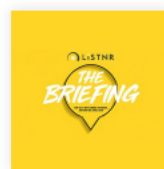
ABC



Channel 9



Channel 7



The Briefing



The Guardian



The Project

## HUNDREDS OF SCHOOLS HAVE ENGAGED WITH BLURRED MINDS RESOURCES.

**THE REPORTING FUNCTION IS FANTASTIC! HELPS TRACK STUDENT PROGRESS.**

*Curriculum Leader HPE*

**VAPING IS SUCH AN ISSUE FOR US. BLURRED MINDS HAS HELPED US HAVE A MORE ENGAGING AND EFFECTIVE CONVERSATION WITH OUR STUDENTS.**

*Principal, Independent School in QLD*

**I FEEL THAT I HAVE BEEN EDUCATED ABOUT VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION.**

*William (student)*

**I LIKE THAT THE MODULES ARE VERY USER FRIENDLY AND VERY ENGAGING!.**

*Year 8 HPE Teacher*

**AN INTRIGUING PROGRAM WITH LOTS OF ENGAGING ACTIVITIES.**

*Chloe (student)*

**THE GAMES ARE REALLY REALLY GREAT! CREATES A COMPETITION IN THE CLASSROOM.**

*Curriculum Leader HPE*



# AN EVIDENCE BASED INITIATIVE

Blurred Minds is based on 13 years of research and has shown effectiveness with students and with teachers. Selected examples documenting different stages of program development and evaluations are listed below





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13. Durl, J., Trischler, J., Dietrich, T. (2017), **Co-designing with young consumers – Reflections, requirements, challenges and benefits**, Young Consumers, 18(4), 439-455



## ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TIMO DIETRICH

Co-founder and Director of Blurred Minds



-  **Over 10 years of experience** in the alcohol, tobacco and drug education space
-  **Award-winning** behaviour change expert & Co-inventor of the Co-create – Build – Engage (CBE™) framework
-  **Senior Fellow** at National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research, University of Queensland
-  **Engagement Director** at Social Marketing @ Griffith, Griffith University