



## OSF adds more STEAM to American Heart Association's anti-vaping/smoking and nutrition efforts

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(April 11, 2024/Peoria, Ill.) – OSF HealthCare and the American Heart Association (AHA) are collaborating to enhance the educational materials available in the AHA's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) toolkit. It's fitting that as the American College of Cardiology recently published [a new study](#) showing vaping nicotine could lead to an increase in heart failure, one of the new [OSF STEAM](#) activities focuses on showing how vaping and smoking cigarettes can restrict breathing.

The American Heart Association's STEAM Toolkit is available to schools that participate in the Association's in-school initiatives, [Kids Heart Challenge and American Heart Challenge](#), and now include three new activities created by the AHA and OSF STEAM:

- The effects of vaping/smoking on the lungs
- The concept of a heart attack and influences
- The importance of hydration and avoiding sugary beverages

"These engaging, interactive activities and resources are designed to support middle and high school educators who want to integrate STEAM lessons into classrooms across the country," said Noël Adams, vice president, Academic Collaborations and Operations for OSF HealthCare. "This groundbreaking collaboration will also nurture and inspire a pipeline of aspiring innovative, future health care professionals."

Through the OSF STEAM lessons, students, families and staff will learn valuable life skills, including how to make [smart food choices](#), the importance of [avoiding vaping/tobacco](#) products and the lifesaving skill of Hands-Only CPR. This toolkit is available to schools that participate in the Kids Heart Challenge/American Heart Challenge programs. Currently, more than 15,000 schools across the country participate in the challenges, engaging 14 million students.

The OSF STEAM lessons were chosen because studies have linked smoking/vaping with a high risk for respiratory diseases. E-cigarette or vaping product use is associated with injuries resulting in the hospitalization of 2,800 e-cig users in 2020 alone. Federal government studies also show that nearly half (46%) of all added sugars consumed by individuals age 2 and older in the U.S. come from sugary drinks, including soft drinks, fruit drinks, sweetened coffee and tea, and energy drinks. Added sugars raise the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes and tooth decay.

To learn more about the American Heart Association's in-school initiatives, or to take the first step in getting these resources in your school, visit [heart.org/getstarted](http://heart.org/getstarted).

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