NEWS RELEASE

December 11, 2019
Contact: Enrique Mata
(915) 218-2617
emata@pdnfoundation.org

PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH FOUNDATION and EL PASO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM PARTNERS LAUNCH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WARNING AGAINST YOUTH THC VAPING
LAUNCH OCCURRING BEFORE HOLIDAY BREAK WHEN YOUTH ARE LIKELY TO EXPERIMENT

El Paso, Texas – The use of THC with vaping products is on the rise among youth and young adults in El Paso. In addition to the significant health risks associated with THC vaping, persons caught in possession of THC may face felony charges.

In 2017, the County of El Paso Juvenile Probation Department reported 16 cases of juveniles between the ages of 10 and 16 caught in possession of THC. That number increased in 2018 to an alarming forty (40) cases. As of December 3, 2019, the Juvenile Probation Department reports a frightening two hundred forty-eight (248) cases for the 2019 calendar year!

Consequences associated with possession of THC include fines, probation, and up to ten years of jail time. While youth under 17 years of age may not initially face the possibility of incarceration, the repercussions can still create a lasting impact on an adolescent’s health, and future quality of life. In some cases, parents can also be charged and punished.

As part of a unified effort to build community awareness, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation (PdNHF) and El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium partners are working together to develop and disseminate informational resources about the risks related to THC vaping.

These resources include:
- A fact sheet with educational information about THC, vaping devices and associated consequences.
- Social media assets that illustrate the potential consequences of being caught in possession of THC.

THC, a chemical derived from cannabis, can be ingested in the form of oil vapor via vaping devices unlike typical paraphernalia used to smoke cannabis.

The vape devices look similar to pens or USBs while others resemble everyday items such as watches and hooded sweatshirts, making them difficult for parents or authority figures to identify.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are tracking a nationwide outbreak of “e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury (EVALI)” cases. Most EVALI patients reported using THC-containing products in the three months before symptom onset.

PdNHF and El Paso Behavioral Health Consortium partners encourage other area organizations and media outlets to help reach youth and parents by sharing the fact sheet via their websites, newsletters, email, and social media platforms. Visit HealthyPasoDelNorte.org to download these resources today.

###