



# PROTECT NH YOUTH FROM ADDICTIVE PRODUCTS & PREDATORY MARKETING



## THE PROBLEM: ILLEGAL LOOPHOLES

Companies are exploiting regulatory gaps to market and sell addictive, dangerous products directly to New Hampshire's youth through gas stations, convenience stores, and online retailers.

To get around current laws, companies have used technical terminology (like "hemp-derived" vs. "cannabis") to evade age restrictions, introduced new addictive substances (kratom, nitrous oxide) with no youth protections, and packaged addictive products as candy, school supplies, or video games.

## THE STAKES: YOUTH BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Youth who begin substance use before age 15 are four to six times more likely to develop substance use disorders compared to those who wait until age 21.<sup>1</sup>

The adolescent brain doesn't finish developing until the mid-20s, with the prefrontal cortex—responsible for judgment, decision-making, and impulse control—maturing last. During this critical window, adolescents have more dopamine receptors than adults, resulting in heightened response to substance use and increased vulnerability to addiction.<sup>2</sup>

## PRODUCTS TARGETING NH YOUTH

### Hemp-Derived THC Products



- **11% of U.S. 12<sup>th</sup> graders used delta-8 THC in 2023**—that's 1-2 students in every average classroom.<sup>3</sup>
- Often **packaged to look like candy** or popular snack brands.
- **Poison control centers handled 2,362 adverse events** involving delta-8 between January 2021-February 2022.<sup>4</sup>

### Flavored Nitrous Oxide



- Sold in **flavored containers** designed to appeal to youth.
- Health effects include cough, rapid heart rate, paranoia, anxiety, breathing problems, and seizures.<sup>7</sup>
- **Promoted by popular influencers on TikTok.**<sup>8</sup>

### Kratom



- Described as an **"opioid-like substance"** containing compounds **13-46 times more potent than morphine.**<sup>5</sup>
- Associated with liver damage, seizures, and overdose deaths.<sup>6</sup>
- **Marketed as "natural" and "safe" despite serious health risks.** Comes in flavors like cotton candy (pictured).

### Deceptively Packaged Vapes



- Products designed as school supplies (pens, highlighters, erasers).
- Branded with characters from comics, movies, and video games known to appeal to minors.
- Include interactive video game capabilities.

THE SOLUTION: FIVE BILLS, ONE GOAL

New Hampshire has an opportunity to lead by closing corporate loopholes and protecting developing brains. These bills don't create new prohibitions on adults—they close loopholes that companies are exploiting to target children.

WHO BENEFITS?

- **Parents** who want to protect their children from predatory marketing
- **Youth** who deserve the right to grow up without corporate interference
- **Health care providers** who see the consequences in ERs
- **Educators** dealing with impaired students and vaping in schools
- **Communities** bearing the costs of substance use disorders

Bill	What is Does
SB 624	Sets stricter penalties for establishments that continue to sell <b>hemp-derived products</b> despite a state law that already bans the sale of these products.
SB 557	<b>Establishes a 21+ age requirement for kratom</b> , prohibits child-targeted packaging, requires warning labels, mandates licensing, and <b>bans synthetic versions</b> .
SB 461	Requires <b>measuring total THC concentration</b> , including all forms that become psychoactive, just like we measure total alcohol content in beverages.
HB 1630	<b>Prohibits the sale of nitrous oxide</b> for recreational purposes, especially flavored products marketed to youth, while protecting legitimate uses (medical, food service, automotive).
HB 1538	<b>Prohibits marketing vapes</b> that imitate non-vape products, using child-appealing characters, or include video game features.

TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT NH YOUTH



SHARE YOUR STORY

Share your experience with youth substance use or deceptive marketing.



CONTACT LAWMAKERS

Email or call NH lawmakers and urge them to support legislation closing loopholes on addictive products.



STAY IN THE LOOP

Sign up to receive email updates from New Futures about this legislation.



Take action at [new-futures.org/addictive-products](https://new-futures.org/addictive-products) OR SCAN ME



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