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Over 14,000 students caught smoking, vaping in 2024

By Nor Ain Mohamed Radhi - November 5, 2024 @ 4:47pm



Deputy Education Minister Wong Kah Woh says a total of 14,617 school students were involved in smoking and vaping misconduct from January to September this year. - Bernama pic

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 14,617 school students were involved in smoking and vaping misconduct from January to September this year.

Deputy Education Minister Wong Kah Woh said that this figure represented 0.29 per cent of the total 5.1 million students enrolled in schools in 2024.

"In 2023, 0.07 per cent of the 5.06 million students, or 3,540 students, were involved in smoking, while 0.26 per cent, or 13,427 students, were engaged in vaping," he said.

"As of September this year, 0.05 per cent of students (2,365) were involved in smoking, while 0.24 per cent (12,252) were caught vaping," he said.

He was responding to Dr Richard Rapu @ Aman Anak Begri (GPS-Betong), who had asked about school enforcement measures and the number of students involved in these activities.

Wong said that the Education Ministry had implemented several guidelines to combat smoking among students, including Circular No. 4/1997, Circular No. 5/1997, and Circular No. 17/2015.

"These circulars are mandatory and must be followed by schools, district education offices, and state education departments. Enforcement of these guidelines is a continuous priority," he said.

He also stressed the importance of cooperation between parents, the community, and the government to raise awareness and prevent smoking and vaping among students.

He also urged retailers to comply with existing laws that prohibit the sale of cigarettes and vapes to minors.

Last year, the Education Ministry introduced several initiatives to address vaping and smoking among students, including the Five Minute Anti-Cigarette/Vape Programme.

This initiative is implemented through school assemblies, group guidance sessions, anti-smoking campaigns, and in collaboration with agencies such as the police and the National Anti-Drugs Agency (Nada).