**Is Nicotine a Gateway to Other Drug Use?**

A recent study conducted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), tracked the potential connection between the use of nicotine products and the use of other substances including alcohol and cannabis for youth in grades 8-12. More than 50,000 youth took part in the 2 year study. Here are the results:

* Youth who use cigarettes are 8 times more likely to use cannabis
* Youth who vape are 20 times more likely to use cannabis
* Youth who use nicotine products are 6 more times likely to participate in binge drinking (consuming 4-5 servings of alcohol in one episode)

The correlations that the study outcomes draw are particularly striking and led researchers to indicate that nicotine is in fact a gateway to the use of other chemicals. Additionally, results of the study continues to emphasize the need for early prevention and intervention to reduce nicotine use, specifically vaping prevention education for adolescents. Please reach out to Candi Davenport at cdavenport@relatemn.org for questions or additional resources.