

ENDING THE SALE OF FLAVORED TOBACCO: STANDING UP FOR YOUTH HEALTH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The tobacco industry targets children

It may seem astonishing, but 80% of teen smokers started with a flavored tobacco product¹ -- this is something that tobacco companies would rather the public not know. The tobacco industry has sought every way possible to get youth to start smoking, refining its methods for decades.

Flavors are a key part of the targeting

Tobacco companies target youth by flavoring tobacco like candy, packaging it like candy, and pricing it similar to candy.² Flavored tobacco is sold throughout San Francisco, especially targeting low-income children and youth of color.

Social justice requires ending flavors

Flavored tobacco products have been especially targeted at youth of color. The youth smokers who most use menthol cigarettes (the largest category of flavored tobacco) are disproportionately African American, Asian American, and LGBT.³⁻⁴ Flavored tobacco is especially killing individuals in these communities.

MORE DETAILS ABOUT ENDING FLAVORED TOBACCO

What is Flavored Tobacco?

- Minty menthol cigarettes, strawberry "Swisher Sweets" little cigars, chocolate flavored hookah, and fruit and candy flavored cigars/chew: in general, any tobacco product with a key characterizing flavor.
- Flavored tobacco has the same deadly health effects as regular tobacco, but is flavored to taste like candy, mint, and fruit to attract children and teens.
- E-cigarette flavors hook youth, especially targeting youth of color, with flavors like gummy bear, cotton candy, piña colada, chicken and waffles, horchata, and boba.



Policy Impact of Ending the Sale of Flavored Tobacco in San Francisco

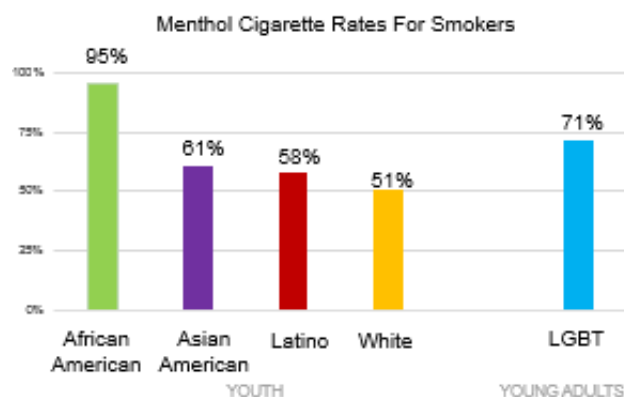
- **Fewer youth will start smoking.** Flavored tobacco is a key way that tobacco companies get youth to start smoking. 80% of teen smokers started out with some flavored tobacco product.¹
- **The tobacco industry will be less able to entice youth with its deadly products.** Tobacco leads to a lifetime of addiction and increased risk for many diseases, and 90% of adult smokers start before age 18.²
- **Fewer people will die from tobacco.** Tobacco is still the #1 preventable cause of death in the United States, killing an estimated 540,000 Americans every year.³

Youth Health: Flavors are Targeted to Children and Teens

- **Tobacco companies are flavoring tobacco to taste like candy** and other flavors that kids enjoy, such as popcorn, cotton candy, gummy bear, and cola.
- **The tobacco industry packages these products like candy** to further target youth. Chocolate cigars are packaged in long foil wrappers to look like chocolate candy bars, and mint-flavored chewing tobacco is packaged in circular green cans just like wintergreen mints.
- **Tobacco companies price flavored tobacco at the price point for teens.** Double packs of little flavored cigars are sold for just 50 cents throughout San Francisco ("2 for 99 cents").

Social Justice: Menthol Cigarettes Target Youth of Color, LGBT Communities, Girls, and Young Women

- **95% of African American teen smokers** (age 12-17) use menthol cigarettes,⁴ due in large part to aggressive targeting by the tobacco industry for decades.⁵ Ending the sale of menthol cigarettes would help save the lives of many African Americans.
- **6 in 10 Asian American teen smokers** use menthols.⁴
- **More than half of Latino (58%) and white (51%) teen smokers** use menthol cigarettes.
- **7 in 10 LGBT young adult smokers use menthol cigarettes,**⁶ and youth menthol use is usually higher than for young adults.
- **Teenage girls who smoke are more likely than teenage boys** to use menthol cigarettes,⁴ and young women are twice as likely as males to use menthol cigarettes.⁷



Negative Health Effects of Specific Flavored Tobacco Products

- Flavors mask the taste of tobacco, but cannot mask the negative health effects.
- People using menthol cigarettes have a harder time quitting, especially younger smokers and people of color.⁸
- Diacetyl is found in an estimated 75% of e-cigarette flavors on the market. Diacetyl is the “butter flavoring” in microwave butter popcorn that causes “popcorn lung” disease when inhaled over the long-term.⁹
- E-cigarettes are already known to have negative cardiovascular effects, including an over 40% increased chance of heart attack on top of the risk of smoking any regular cigarettes.¹⁰
- Teens who are nonsmokers but who use e-cigarettes are over 3 times more likely to be smoking regular cigarettes one year later, compared with teens who did not smoke or use e-cigarettes.¹¹

Cities around the country and Northern California have already acted on flavored tobacco

- There is already precedent in California: Santa Clara County and Yolo County already acted to end the sale of flavored tobacco in the fall of 2016, affecting all their unincorporated areas.
- Contra Costa County and Oakland are considering policy action.
- Chicago, New York City, Minneapolis, Providence, and Berkeley have taken bold steps to restrict flavored tobacco.
- In 2009, Congress prohibited the sale of almost all flavored cigarettes, but kept menthol cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products on the market. Ending the sale of flavored tobacco in San Francisco would close this loophole.



What has Breathe California been doing about flavored tobacco?

- Breathe California’s Project E-NUFF has been working since 2015 on a campaign to end the sale of flavored tobacco. Our team of emerging community leaders has worked to draw attention to how the tobacco industry uses flavors in tobacco to target young people.
- Our efforts have included surveying youth, conducting focus groups with adults about tobacco industry targeting of flavors to youth, key informant interviews, researching current policies, circulating petitions calling for action, and establishing partnerships with local community agencies.
- Project E-NUFF is supported through the San Francisco Department of Public Health. We also work closely with other youth organizations that focus on tobacco prevention, including Youth Leadership Institute, Bay Area Community Resources, and Vietnamese Youth Development Center.

SOURCES

1. Ambrose BK, et al., "Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among US Youth Aged 12-17 Years, 2013-2014." JAMA 2015; 314(17): 1871-1873.
2. US Department of Health and Human Services. 2012. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center For Chronic Disease Prevention And Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
3. Carter B, et al., "Smoking and Mortality – Beyond Established Causes", New England Journal of Medicine, 2015;372:631-40.
4. Giovino GA, et al., "Differential trends in cigarette smoking in the USA: is menthol slowing progress?" Tobacco Control 2015; 24: 28-37.
5. Gardiner PS. 2004. The African Americanization of menthol cigarette use in the United States. Nicotine and Tobacco Research 6(Suppl 1): S55-S65.
6. National Youth Advocacy Coalition. 2010. "Coming Out About Smoking: A Report from the National LGBTQ Young Adult Tobacco Project."
7. Rath J., et al., Correlates of current menthol cigarette and flavored other tobacco product use among U.S. young adults. Addictive Behaviors 62 (2016) 35-41.
8. Foulds J, et al. 2010. Do Smokers of Menthol Cigarettes Find It Harder to Quit Smoking? Nicotine Tob Res (2010) 12 (suppl_2): S102-S109.
9. Allen JG. 2016. Flavoring Chemicals in E-Cigarettes: Diacetyl, 2,3-Pentanedione, and Acetoin in a Sample of 51 Products, Including Fruit-, Candy-, and Cocktail-Flavored E-Cigarettes. Environmental Health Perspectives 124(6): 733-739.
10. Temesgen N, et al. 2017. A cross sectional study reveals an association between electronic cigarette use and myocardial infarction. School of Medicine and Health Sciences Poster Presentations, George Washington University.
11. Primack BA, et al. 2015. Progression to Traditional Cigarette Smoking After Electronic Cigarette Use Among US Adolescents and Young Adults. JAMA Pediatrics 169(11): 1018-1023.



Breathe California
1 Sutter Street, Suite 225 | San Francisco, CA 94104
(650) 994-5868
www.ggbreathe.org/enuff