The tobacco industry is targeting a new generation of kids with flavored tobacco products and lower prices.

Learn how this is hurting our community and what can be done to solve the problem.
UNDERAGE YOUTH ACCESS

In a 2017 survey, almost 70% of Mariposa County High School 11th graders said it was “fairly easy” or “very easy” to get cigarettes and more than 60% said it was “fairly easy” or “very easy” to get e-cigarettes or vaping devices.¹

20% of tobacco stores in Mariposa County sold tobacco illegally to teens in 2016.²

SWEET FLAVORS AND LOW PRICES

Most teens who use tobacco started with a flavored product. Flavors, including menthol, make it easier to start smoking because they taste good, and make tobacco smoke less harsh and easier to breathe in.³

3 out of 4 of Mariposa County stores surveyed in 2016 sold flavored tobacco products.⁴

Almost 90% of Mariposa County stores sold little cigars/cigarillos in a wide variety of flavors like grape, peach, mango, and chocolate and about 70% of stores sell single little cigars/cigarillos for less than a dollar.⁴

8 of 10 smokeless tobacco users ages 12-17 report using flavors.³

TEEN TOBACCO USE

Over 15% of Mariposa County High School youth currently use tobacco products, this includes cigarettes, chew, e-cigarettes, and cigarillos.⁴

RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Tobacco Industry aggressively markets cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products, like chew, in rural areas and takes advantage of weaker tobacco retail licensing laws. Because of these practices, rural counties have some of the highest smoking and lung cancer rates in California.

Rural youth are twice as likely to use smokeless tobacco.³
A TOBACCO RETAIL LICENSE

More than 140 cities and counties in California, including Mono County, have addressed the problem of tobacco retail proliferation and underage youth access by adopting a strong Tobacco Retail License (TRL) Laws. TRLs create serious consequences for retailers that are caught selling tobacco to youth.\(^5\)

GRASS VALLEY
ADOPTED A TOBACCO RETAIL LICENSE IN 2009 AND ILLEGAL TOBACCO SALES RATES DROPPED FROM 27% TO 0%.\(^6\)

They also provide resources to help local police departments enforce all tobacco-related laws. In a community with a strong TRL, repeat violators could lose their tobacco license. This encourages store owners to make sure clerks always ask for I.D.

The value of a local TRL is that the community decides what provisions to include. For example: minimum pack size, minimum price requirement, no tobacco sales in pharmacies, and restrictions on flavored tobacco products.

FLAVORING RESTRICTIONS

Many communities in California have adopted policies to end the sale of flavored tobacco products – including menthol and e-cigarette products.

MINIMUM PACK SIZE

A single cigarillo or pouch can be sold at a fraction of the price as a “pack”. A minimum pack size requirement for cigarillos or little cigars is intended to cause the price to increase, and makes the product less accessible to youth.

The tobacco industry has countered by offering packs of 2 for 99 cents. For this reason, minimum pack size requirements are most effective when combined with minimum price requirements.\(^7\)

MINIMUM PRICE REQUIREMENT

The purpose of a minimum price requirement is to make tobacco, especially cheap cigars, less affordable and accessible for youth. The Surgeon General has recommended a minimum price of at least $10 per tobacco product. A variety of communities, from New York to Chicago and Sonoma County have adopted minimum price requirements.\(^8\)
PROTECT OUR YOUTH

What can you do to help?

* Learn more at flavorshookkids.org and tobaccofreeca.com

* Tell your elected officials about the importance of strong Tobacco Retailer License (TRL) laws

Mariposa County Tobacco Education Program
www.mariposacounty.org/tobaccoeducation

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Sources


