

# THE TOLL OF TOBACCO ON VERMONT KIDS: and what can be done about **FLAVORS**

MORE THAN **1 IN 4** KIDS USE TOBACCO

VT high school students:  
7% smoke cigarettes  
26% use e-cigarettes  
**28% use tobacco.**<sup>1</sup>  
VT's youth e-cigarette rate has more than doubled since 2017.<sup>1</sup>

**54%** OF TEENS **SMOKE MENTHOL**

More than half of 12-17 year olds who smoke **use menthol cigarettes**. Yet for black youth (age 12-17) who smoke, 7 in 10 use menthol cigarettes.<sup>4</sup>

**4 IN 5** KIDS CHOOSE FLAVORS

More than 80% of teens who have ever used tobacco started with a **flavored product**, and are more likely to continue using tobacco in the future.<sup>5</sup>

## ➤ Over **22 million cigarette packs sold in Vermont** = **1,000 preventable deaths annually**

- Cigarette smoking remains the **#1 cause of preventable disease** and death in the U.S., killing more than 480,000 people each year nationwide and 1,000 people each year in Vermont.<sup>2</sup>
- If smoking continues at the current rate among youth, 10,000 VT kids (under 18) alive today will die early from a smoking-related illness.<sup>3</sup>



**YOUTH E-CIGARETTE USE** **36%** 2017-2018

## Public Health Opportunities for Vermont

- Comprehensive, well-funded state programs that prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit are proven to save lives and money. The more states spend on these programs, and the longer they do so, the greater the impact. In fiscal year 2019, Vermont allocated \$3.8 million in state funds to tobacco prevention, just 45% of the amount recommended by the CDC.
- Tobacco taxes are a proven strategy to reduce smoking, particularly among teenagers and low-income people. Vermont's cigarette tax is currently \$3.08 per pack, compared to \$4.35 per pack in New York.
- Removing youth penalties for tobacco possession will place the blame for youth tobacco use where it belongs – on the predatory marketing efforts of Big Tobacco.
- **Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and menthol cigarettes, is an important step that will protect children from the unrelenting efforts of the tobacco industry to hook them to a deadly addiction.**

## What does ADDICTION taste like?

- **Flavors** are a **marketing weapon** the tobacco industry uses to target young people to a lifetime of addiction.
- Altering tobacco product ingredients and design - like **adding flavors** - can **increase the product's appeal** by masking harsh effects - making nicotine uptake easier.<sup>6</sup>
- **Candy, fruit, mint, and menthol** flavorings are a promotional tool to **lure new, young users**. They are aggressively marketed with creative campaigns by tobacco companies.<sup>3</sup>
- **Tobacco flavors** like cherry, grape, cotton candy, and gummy bear are not aimed at established, adult tobacco users. Years of tobacco industry documents confirm the intended use of flavors is to **target children**.<sup>7</sup>
- **Youth** say flavors are a leading reason they use tobacco products and they **perceive flavored products as less harmful**.<sup>5,8</sup>

**MORE THAN 15,500 e-cigarette flavors are on the market today**  
(Up from 7,700 e-cig flavors in 2014)<sup>9</sup>

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3. Delnevo, C, et al., "Preference for flavoured cigar brands among youth, young adults and adults in the USA." Tobacco Control, epub ahead of print, April 10, 2014. King, BA, et al., "Flavored-Little-Cigar and Flavored-Cigarette Use Among U.S. Middle and High School Students." Journal of Adolescent Health 54(1):40-6, January 2014.  
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DO YOU KNOW THE TRUE TOLL OF FLAVORED TOBACCO ON VERMONT'S KIDS?  
TEST YOUR TOBACCO KNOWLEDGE



When teens start using tobacco, how many choose a flavored product?

**80%**



How many flavored tobacco products are on the market?

**15,500**



What's the percentage of youth smokers choose menthol cigarettes?

**54%**

(Yes, menthol is a flavor.)



What's the most commonly used tobacco product among youth?

**E-CIGARETTES**



How many Vermont kids now use some form of tobacco?

**28%**

(Twice as many as in 2017)



Which tobacco flavors should be removed from the market?

**ALL OF THEM**

Flavors are a marketing weapon used by Big Tobacco to target youth.

The evidence is clear. **Flavors hook kids.**

Please support legislation to end the sale of all flavored tobacco.



#FlavorsHookKidsVT

For more information:

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