



# Reducing Youth Access to and Use of Tobacco in Lakewood, Colorado

## Youth Tobacco Use

- Almost **90%** of all regular smokers begin smoking at or **before age 18**.<sup>1</sup>
- The 2015 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey indicated that among high school students in Colorado: **26% use e-cigarettes, 8.9% smoke cigars, 8.6% smoke cigarettes, and 4.9% use chew**.<sup>2</sup>
- **E-cigarettes are now the most commonly used tobacco product among youth**.<sup>3</sup>
- Current e-cigarette use among middle and high school students tripled from 2013-2014.<sup>4</sup>

## Youth Access to Tobacco in the Retail Setting

- Two out of three Colorado youth, under the age of 18, who attempted to buy cigarettes were successful.<sup>2</sup>
- Almost 60% of Colorado high school students under the age of 18 reported that it is easy or very easy to get cigarettes.<sup>2</sup>
- A study conducted by UC Denver in Colorado reported a sales to minor violation rate of 25.3%.<sup>5</sup>
- Teenage store clerks are a **major source of tobacco for high school age smokers**.<sup>6</sup>

## How the Tobacco Industry Uses the Retail Environment

- Pervasive **retail tobacco promotional practices**, including product and advertising placement and pricing tactics, known to **influence youth towards smoking**, contribute to increased initiation, experimentation and regular smoking.<sup>7</sup>
- Big Tobacco now spends more than **95 percent** of its **\$9 billion** marketing budget to advertise and promote their products in convenience stores, gas stations and other retail outlets.<sup>8</sup>
  - **Note: Two-thirds** of middle school students visit a convenience store, small grocery, or liquor store at least once a week, and weekly or more frequent exposure to retail tobacco marketing has been associated with a **50% increase in the odds of ever smoking**.<sup>9</sup>
- Cigarettes are advertised most heavily in stores **where adolescents shop**.<sup>9</sup>
- The tobacco industry continues to market and sell products that are appealing to youth in sweet flavors at cheap prices.

## Gaps in the FDA and State Laws

- Existing federal and state law, including the final deeming regulations from the FDA, **do not require**:
  - tobacco retailers to have a license to sell tobacco.
  - suspension or revocation of ability to sell tobacco by retailers that repeatedly break tobacco-related laws
  - prohibition of self-service displays of cigars and e-cigarettes.
  - prohibition of flavors for smokeless tobacco, cigars and e-cigarettes.

## More Information

[www.TobaccoFreeJeffco.com/Youth](http://www.TobaccoFreeJeffco.com/Youth) | email: [tobaccofree@jeffco.us](mailto:tobaccofree@jeffco.us) | phone: 303-275-7558



## Best Practices and Proposed Solutions

- Requiring a license to sell tobacco is essential to youth tobacco prevention:
  - Licensing is a proven approach to increasing and enforcing restrictions on illegal sales and other known youth-targeted promotional, product placement and pricing tactics.<sup>10</sup>
  - Licensing is a common-sense approach to ensure that retailers operate legally, ethically and responsibly when it comes to preventing illegal tobacco sales to kids.<sup>11</sup>
  - Local tobacco retail licensing programs that include retailer fees high enough to pay for enforcement have been shown to be the *most effective* policy at reducing illegal sales by merchants.<sup>12</sup>
  - Licensing empowers communities to better respond at a local level to the changing landscape of tobacco issues.
  - Licensing creates a level playing field for all members of the business community by ensuring they are following the law and being held to the same standards.
- Minimum recommended provisions in a tobacco retail license include:
  - Language that states that a violation of any federal, state or local tobacco law is a violation of the retail license
  - Increase clerk age to sell tobacco to 18
  - Prohibit self-service of all tobacco/nicotine products and paraphernalia
  - No admittance under 18 in tobacco business
  - Limit location and number of tobacco retailers (near schools, for example)
- Cutting edge tobacco retail policy options:
  - Raise minimum age to purchase tobacco to 21
  - Set minimum package size
  - Prohibit price discounting of tobacco products
  - Prohibit the sale of flavored tobacco products
  - Include other paraphernalia, such as pipes and rolling papers, to be covered by law
  - And more.... *contact Jefferson County Public Health for additional provisions.*

## Communities with Tobacco Retail Licensing Laws

- **Nine Colorado communities** have tobacco retail licensing laws: Aspen, Edgewater, Fountain, Golden, La Junta, Manitou Springs, Pueblo, Rocky Ford, and Steamboat Springs.
- **884 communities nationwide** have adopted local tobacco retail licensing policies.<sup>13</sup>

## Residents Support It

### Among Lakewood\* Residents...

- **95%** believe youth tobacco use in Jeffco is a health concern.
- **75%** believe that tobacco companies market their products to youth.
- **71%** believe that where tobacco is displayed/sold inside a retail store can encourage youth tobacco use.
- **74%** believe that tobacco advertising in retail stores can encourage youth tobacco use.
- **95%** believe that cheaper / lower priced tobacco products can encourage youth tobacco use.

#### Lakewood residents mistakenly think...

- 94%** think that retailers are already required to have a license to sell tobacco, **when in fact this is not the case.**
- 61%** think that it is illegal for youth under 18 to sell tobacco products when working in a retail store, **when in fact this is not the case.**

#### Lakewood residents support...

- 77%** support requiring retailers to have a license to sell tobacco products.
- 92%** support requiring that a retail clerk who is selling tobacco be 18 years of age or older.
- 60%** think that retailers / store owners should help youth avoid tobacco use.

\*Results based on 2010 and 2011 National Research Center Household Survey conducted in Lakewood, Colorado.

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