



Franklin County Public Health  
280 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4562  
(614) 525-3160  
[www.myfcph.org](http://www.myfcph.org)

## Flavored Tobacco Talking Points

### Behavioral Health and Addiction Services

#### *Regulating Flavored Tobacco Products*

- There has been a growing movement to prohibit or limit the sale of flavored tobacco products, across all levels of policymaking.
- Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products – including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars – is critical to stopping the youth e-cigarette epidemic.

#### *Targeting Children and Youth*

- Tobacco industry has a long history of targeting kids with flavored products, and the evidence is clear that flavors play a key role in youth initiation and continued use of tobacco products.
- Flavored tobacco improves the taste and experience of smoking, making it easier for kids to try these products and ultimately become addicted. Flavored tobacco has fueled the youth e-cigarette epidemic. In fact, 85% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products.<sup>1</sup>
- While we made great strides in reducing youth tobacco use in recent decades, flavored tobacco products threaten this progress.

#### *The Data*

- Ohio youth who have tried a tobacco product, most tried electronic vapor products first.
- 1 in 4 (25%) middle schoolers and 1 in 2 (47%) high schoolers reported ever having used an electronic vapor product like a JUUL.
- Among Ohio high schoolers who reported using an electronic vapor product in the last 30 days, approximately 18% reported using it all 30 days.
- Among high school students, 10% reported that they either bought the electronic vapor product in a store or gave someone else money to purchase the product for them.
- Overall, 24% of Ohio high schoolers and 12% of Ohio middle schoolers report ever having tried a flavored tobacco product. Moreover, 11% of Ohio high schoolers and 4% of Ohio middle schoolers report using a flavored tobacco product in the *past 30 days*.

#### *Harmful Effects of Nicotine on Adolescents*

- According to The Surgeon General<sup>2</sup>, nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, particularly the parts of the brain responsible for attention, memory and learning.
- The Surgeon General also found that using nicotine in adolescence can increase risk of future addiction to other drugs.<sup>2</sup>
- Juul and other e-cigarettes deliver massive doses of nicotine, putting youth users at greater risk of addiction. Each Juul pod (cartridge of nicotine) delivers as much nicotine as 20 cigarettes.

#### *Why Tobacco Policies Impact Everyone*

- Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the US.
- Smoking not only impacts the smoker, but those around them through secondhand smoke.
- Smoking and vaping are not cessation tools and should not be promoted as such. Research shows that those who struggle with addiction, if they smoke, are more likely to relapse.
- Flavored tobacco makes it more appealing for anyone of any age to take up smoking/vaping.
- Smoking costs us, not only in lives but also financially to the tune of \$600 billion per year. This cost includes healthcare spending, lost productivity from illnesses and health conditions and premature death.

<sup>1</sup> Tobacco Free Kids. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/flavored-tobacco-products>

<sup>2</sup> Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/surgeon-generals-advisory-on-e-cigarette-use-among-youth-2018.pdf> Surgeon General's Advisory on E-cigarette Use Among Youth