

BORN TO BREATHE TOBACCO FACT SHEETS

HELLO
my name is

NORMALIZATION

Tobacco normalization refers to the efforts in which the tobacco industry takes to assure its products are part of the fabric of society.



Tobacco companies spend \$8.4 billion a year, almost \$1 Million every hour, to market their deadly & addictive products.¹ Their imagery and advertising contributes to the normalization of smoking. These images are often portrayed positively, as a normal social behavior and as glamorous, rebellious and edgy. They have influence, especially among youth and young adults, who are uniquely susceptible to social and environmental influences to use tobacco.

Almost all smokers - 99 % - start smoking by age 26.²

KIDS WHO SEE IT, TRY IT

TOBACCO COMPANIES KNOW...



- Exposure to marketing more than doubles the odds that kids will use tobacco.³
- Youth are more likely to be influenced by ads than by peer pressure.³
- Youth are 3 times more sensitive to tobacco ads than adults.³
- Point of sale advertising bans are associated with less experimental smoking among youth.³
- Research shows that kids who shop at stores with tobacco marketing two or more times a week are 64% more likely to start smoking than their peers who don't.⁴

PHARMACIES THAT SELL TOBACCO SEND A MIXED MESSAGE.

No doctor would ever prescribe tobacco... so why do pharmacies sell it?



- By selling tobacco products, pharmacies reinforce positive social perceptions of smoking, conveys implied approval of tobacco use, and send a message that it is not so dangerous to smoke.^{5,6}
- Pharmacies sell cigarettes cheaper than other stores.⁷
- Immediately after the nationwide CVS policy change to not sell tobacco products, cigarette purchase declined and smokers who had previously purchased their cigarettes exclusively at CVS were up to twice as likely to stop buying cigarettes entirely.⁸

POP CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT CONTRIBUTES TO NORMALIZATION OF SMOKING.



- Video game players reported that 93.5% of video games showing tobacco use portrayed it in a positive or neutral light and video game characters can be shown benefiting from tobacco use.²
- Overall, teens spend more time per day on average playing video, computer, or mobile games than using social media.²
- Researchers identified 14 streaming/broadcast TV shows popular among youth & analyzed them for tobacco imagery. Among the sample, there were nearly 500 depictions of tobacco.²
- Research shows that youth who are heavily exposed to tobacco imagery in movies are twice as likely to begin smoking as those with less exposure.²
- Nearly 1 in 4 movies rated G or PG contained tobacco incidents in 2019.⁹

ACCESS AND EXPOSURE LEADS TO EXPERIMENTATION



- In rural areas, there is greater density of tobacco stores with 93 stores selling tobacco per 100,000 residents in rural areas versus 79.6 stores for 100,000 residents in non rural counties.¹⁰
- Rural-county stores were found to be significantly more likely to advertise at least one discount for chewing tobacco and vaping products which appeals to price-sensitive consumers, including youth (20.9% prevalence of discounts in rural communities vs. 16.8% in non rural communities.)¹¹
- 74% of youth are obtaining JUUL e-cigarettes from a physical retail location, 52% from a social source, and 5% from the internet.¹²
- Retailer density is an important predictor of youth and young adult smoking. Youth are especially susceptible to POS marketing. As the number of tobacco retailers increase, so does exposure to tobacco advertising and promotion.¹³
- Experimental smoking among youth is correlated with the number of tobacco retailers in high school neighborhoods and in communities where youth live.¹⁴
- Adults have a harder time quitting when residential proximity to tobacco retailers is closer and density is higher.¹⁵

Call To Action

- Smart tobacco policies can help create an environment where community leaders and families feel empowered to reject the culture of tobacco use and choose healthier, tobacco-free futures.
- Local retail licensing policies can reduce youth access to tobacco by banning the sale of all flavored tobacco products, address retail density, tobacco displays and advertising proximity to youth friendly areas, and tobacco free pharmacies.
- Ask communities to pass smoke free policies to protect community spaces such as fairs, rodeos, and shared living spaces such as apartment complexes.
- Smokefree outdoor air laws can protect rural Californians from the secondhand smoke they want to avoid.



 www.NorCal4Health.org 

RESOURCES

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13. The Truth Initiative, The truth about tobacco industry retail practices, <https://truthinitiative.org/sites/default/files/media/files/2019/03/Point-of-Sale-10-2017.pdf>
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