

## Tips for Effective Messaging

- ▶ Explain that since the FDA tobacco flavor policy falls short of what is necessary to address youth tobacco use, state and local governments need to move forward to address loopholes. Under the FDA's guidance, thousands of e-cigarette flavors will remain on the market since the policy exempts menthol e-cigarettes and allows fruit, candy, and mint flavored liquid nicotine used in refillable open tank systems or in disposable e-cigarettes (like the popular brand Puff Bar), to stay on the market. In addition, other flavored tobacco products such as menthol cigarettes and flavored smokeless tobacco and cigars are still allowed to be sold.
- ▶ Reference the evidence that shows the growing youth e-cigarette epidemic--which is being driven by flavored products--is threatening to addict a new generation of kids to nicotine. More than five million middle and high school students use e-cigarettes; 1.6 million use them frequently (20+ days a month); and nearly a million use them daily, according to the CDC's 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey.
- ▶ Mention ALL tobacco products. Though e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among middle and high school students, they are also using other flavored tobacco products such as cigars, cigarettes, hookahs and chewing tobacco. The CDC's 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey found that nearly 1 in 3 high school students have used a tobacco product in the last 30 days.
- ▶ Explain how nicotine can have adverse health effects on kids, such as causing addiction to dangerous tobacco products, harming their brain development, and increasing the risk of heart disease. Recent studies have found that e-cigarettes decrease blood flow in the heart even more than traditional cigarettes, and can worsen heart disease risk factors such as high cholesterol.
- ▶ Explain how eliminating sales of menthol flavors, which are used predominantly by and marketed intentionally to African Americans, will benefit that community in particular. In the US, African Americans suffer from the highest percentage of tobacco-related deaths.
- ▶ Focus on the predatory marketing practices of the tobacco industry, which intentionally targets youth, African Americans and Latinos, and the LGBTQ community with products specifically designed to entice them. A 2019 Stanford study found that JUUL's initial advertising campaigns were "patently youth-oriented."
- ▶ Explain that even though e-cigarettes are often marketed as a less harmful alternative to traditional cigarettes, there's no evidence on the long-term health impact of their use.

## Messages on Restricting the Sales of Flavored Tobacco (\*Use key messages consistently and repeatedly)

- Tobacco use among kids is being driven by youth-friendly e-cigarette flavors like mint, fruit, and candy. From 2017 to 2019, e-cigarette use more than doubled among high school students (from 11.7% to 27.5%) and tripled among middle school students (from 3.3% to 10.5%), according to the CDC's 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey.
- Other contributors to kids using tobacco products include the easy availability and appeal of menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars and cigarillos, and flavored hookah.
- To ensure we don't lose a new generation of kids to nicotine, we must remove all flavored tobacco products from the market. Kids will gravitate toward any flavors on the market, even if some are removed.
- Mint and menthol flavored tobacco products are heavily marketed to kids, African Americans and Latinos. Nearly two-thirds of high school students who use e-cigarettes use mint or menthol flavors. Nearly 90% of African American smokers and 45% of Latino smokers use menthol products.
- Menthol products, with their cooling and soothing effects, entice kids to use tobacco products. More than half of all youth and young adult smokers smoke menthol cigarettes.
- E-cigarettes are available in thousands of youth-appealing flavors, including fruit, candy, mint and menthol. The overwhelming majority of youth e-cigarette users report using flavored products.
- Tobacco companies target youth and adolescents with million-dollar marketing campaigns and thousands of appealing flavors that are specifically designed to attract and hook kids.
- Recently, Massachusetts became the first state to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products—including menthol. We encourage states and cities across the country to follow Massachusetts' example and protect youth and young adults from the dangers of nicotine addiction.

## Language to Emphasize/Language to Avoid

Messages that resonate best are clear and simple. They use everyday language free of jargon and communicate shared values and emotion. Below you'll find a list of words/phrases the American Heart Association encourages you to use (left-hand column) when talking about flavored tobacco. Language in the right-hand column includes terms and phrases not as easily understood or impactful when looking to engage your audience.

Use This Language	Instead of This Language	Because...
✓ Tobacco use, e-cigarette use	✗ Smoking, vaping	The terms smoking and vaping place the focus on personal behavior (individuals just need to quit smoking or vaping) rather than supporting public policy change to address tobacco use.
✓ Traditional cigarettes/cigars	✗ Combustible cigarettes/cigars	Combustible is not a well-known word and people may not know that this refers to traditional cigarettes.
✓ E-cigarettes or electronic cigarettes	✗ Vapes	The term vapes, as in water vapor, plays into the industry frame that these products are safe. These products are in fact aerosolized nicotine, but we prefer the term electronic cigarette.
✓ Juul, Puff Bar and other electronic cigarettes	✗ Juul or Puff Bar	Even though Juul has been the industry leader, there are other popular e-cigarette brands and products emerging (such as Puff Bar) that do not fall under the FDA flavor restriction. It is important to always explain that these products are, in fact, e-cigarettes which many people do not understand.
✓ Restricting or eliminating sale	✗ Banning purchase	Research shows that prohibiting the sale of tobacco products is more effective at reducing access, while not contributing to inequitable criminalization of youth and persons of color.
✓ Legal sales ages	✗ Legal purchasing age	We want to focus on restricting access, not criminalizing young people.
✓ Switching to electronic cigarettes	✗ Quitting smoking	Switching to electronic cigarettes isn't the same as quitting smoking. Electronic cigarettes are frequently promoted as less harmful alternatives for smokers, but they haven't been evaluated as quitting aids. In fact, many people continue as "dual users," which means they use both traditional and e-cigarettes. The relative and long-term harms of e-cigarettes haven't been fully studied.
✓ Clean indoor air or smoke-free public places/environments	✗ Smoking ban	We want to focus on the positive outcomes associated with fewer tobacco products being sold (such as cleaner air to breathe) rather than restrictions on individual behavior and the negative connotations around the word "ban."
✓ Increasing the price of tobacco products, excise tax, tobacco tax	✗ Sin tax	Sin tax sounds like we're placing a negative value judgment on an individual's behavior.
✓ FDA-authorized or reviewed	✗ FDA-approved	The FDA does not "approve" e-cigarettes, but may "authorize" them for marketing.
✓ Preferred style: smoke-free, secondhand	✗ Rather than: smoke free, smokefree, second-hand, second hand	