

Over the past year, a new policy area has begun to emerge as the next big issue in tobacco control. All throughout the state, we have seen more and more communities stepping up and taking action on flavored tobacco products.

The first community to adopt a flavor ban in California was Santa Clara County in 2010. Between then and the beginning of 2015, only one other community adopted a local flavor ban, Hayward in 2013. This past year, however, we saw four additional communities adopt these policies: Berkeley, El Cerrito, Manhattan Beach and the City of Sonoma.

Why this is an issue:

The tobacco industry uses flavored tobacco products to target our youth, and make their products easier to use and more palatable. Enhanced candy flavors like bubble gum and grape acts as a gateway for those who initially start using tobacco, and helps to develop their tobacco addiction.



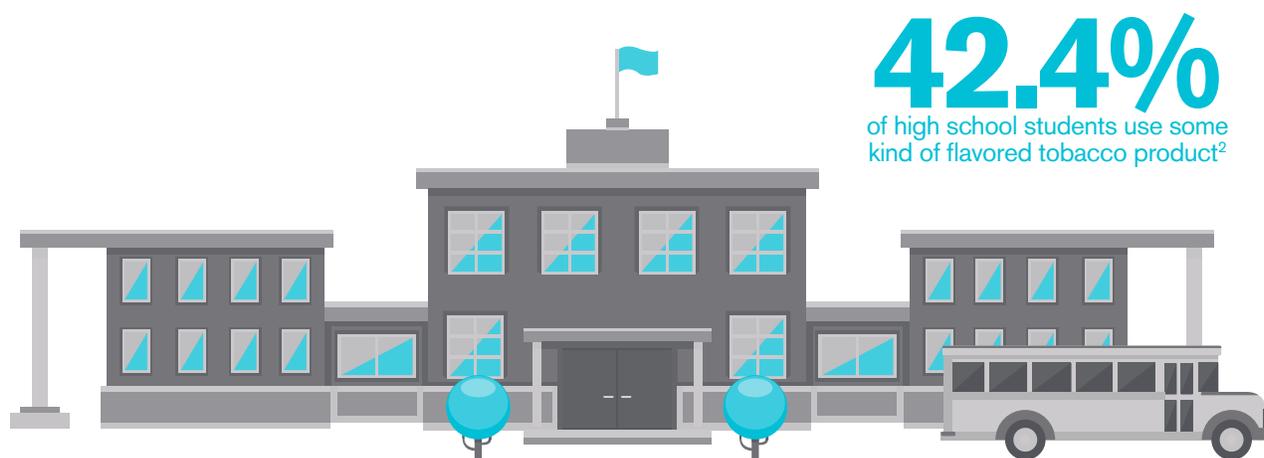
But don't adults use the products?

Sure, some adults may use flavored tobacco products, but the majority of youth that begin experimenting with tobacco, do so via flavored products. In fact, 7 out of 10 middle and high school students who currently use tobacco have used a flavored product¹. This includes flavored e-cigarettes, hookah tobacco, cigar, pipe tobacco or smokeless tobacco products, and menthol cigarettes.

What are California communities doing?

Local communities have recognized the significant public health threat that these particular products pose to our youth. As a result, several cities and counties have adopted some kind of flavor restriction, ranging from full bans on the sale of flavored products, to limitations on where flavored products can be sold: Berkeley, Hayward, El Cerrito, Manhattan Beach, Santa Clara County, and Sonoma (City).

This is a national trend - New York City, Providence, and Chicago, as well as the states of Maine and Illinois have taken steps to address the presence of flavored tobacco products in their communities.



¹Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students – United States, 2014, MMWR, CDC.

²Flavored-Little-Cigar and Flavored-Cigarette Use Among U.S. Middle and High School Students," Journal of Adolescent Health