



**CALIFORNIA TOBACCO
ENDGAME CENTER FOR
ORGANIZING AND ENGAGEMENT**

A project of the American Heart Association®



Raising our Voices Against Tobacco for Our Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Communities

California has come a long way in the fight against tobacco, yet the tobacco industry continues to thwart our efforts and to addict new users each and every day. Our most critical work lies ahead of us.

Tobacco use is still the number one cause of preventable death for Asian Americans (AAs) and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs). Factors such as cultural perceptions of smoking, language barriers to services, and targeted marketing have contributed to high rates of smoking within these communities. It's time to eliminate the unfair health burden tobacco places on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Tobacco disproportionately impacts our AANHPI communities.

Aggregated data is problematic for AANHPI communities because it lumps our diverse communities into one, with the average masking disparities among specific subpopulations. In CA, it is reported that 8.1% of Asians are current smokers, but large differences can be seen along subpopulations.¹⁵

Among Asian Americans

- In certain Asian American (AA) populations, cigarette smoking prevalence is much higher than the rest of California. For example, the smoking rate of Korean males is 26.6% and 23.7% for Vietnamese males, compared to the smoking rate of California males overall at 16.2%.¹⁰
- Tobacco-related cancer and cardiovascular disease are the top two causes of death among AA individuals. Of the total deaths, 35% are attributed to stroke and heart disease and 27% to cancer.³

Among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders

- NHPI youth have the highest use rate of any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes) than any other racial/ethnic group at 23.4%.¹⁶
- Pacific Islanders are more likely to be exposed to dangerous secondhand smoke at home every day than the general California population.⁴

The California Tobacco Endgame Center for Organizing and Engagement
A Project of the American Heart Association
2007 O Street | Sacramento | CA | 95811

OrganizingToEndTobacco.org

© 2020 California Department of Public Health. Funded under contract # 19-10090



- Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPs) use tobacco at a rate that is nearly triple that of AA.⁵
- Between 2005 and 2010, the leading cause of death for NHPs was heart disease (34%) followed by cancer (24%), which are tobacco related diseases.⁶
- Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander adults are diagnosed with cancer at a rate higher than that of any other racial groups.⁷

The tobacco industry targets Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in their communities.

- By partnering with local AA trade organizations, retailers, and community festivals (e.g., Lunar Year), tobacco companies have utilized culturally and linguistically specific targeting of the AA community.
- The tobacco industry considered the AA and NHPI community to be a “potential gold mine” due to high rates of smoking in Asia and the Pacific, highly concentrated populations in certain geographic regions, and the high proportion of retailers.⁸

COVID-19 and tobacco are a deadly combination.

- Research shows that smoking is most likely associated with people getting sicker from COVID-19.^{11,14}
- Smoking weakens the immune system and the body’s ability to fight infections such as COVID-19.¹²
- COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted African American, Latino/Hispanic, Tribal Communities, LGBTQ, Rural and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders - some of the same communities hardest hit by tobacco industry targeting and the diseases and death caused by tobacco.
- Pacific Islanders in L.A. County are dying at a rate 12 times higher than whites from COVID-19, and 9 times higher than for Asians. Across CA, Pacific Islanders are more than 3 times as likely than whites to die from COVID-19.¹⁷
- People who smoke or vape and get COVID-19 virus are at increased risk of developing more severe symptoms.^{12,14}
- Smoking, vaping or using a hookah can spread COVID-19 as users are repeatedly putting their hands to their mouths and faces, often in a social setting.¹³

While we are fighting a deadly pandemic, there is a teen vaping epidemic in this state.

- Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order to confront the growing youth epidemic and health risks linked to vaping.
- Vaping devices are the most commonly used tobacco product in California.
- More than 80% of high-school students who consume tobacco use a vaping device.
- Of the California teens who consume tobacco products, including vape products, 86.4% report using a flavored tobacco product.
- The tobacco industry targets Asian American and Pacific Islander youth through e-cigarettes and Puff Bars® flavors like lychee, milk tea, Matcha, taro, guava and passion fruit.⁹
- The tobacco and vaping industry use flavors to attract teens to vaping.

SOURCES

¹ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 1996-2011. Prepared by the California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, March 2012.



- ² Carr K, Beers M, Kassebaum T, Chen MS Jr. *California Korean American Tobacco Use Survey – 2004*. California Department of Health Services, 2005.
- ³ National Vital Statistics System, 1999-2006 public use data file. Death rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population. Created by statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov, March 2010.
- ⁴ Furuyama, K and Lew, R. *Tobacco Use Among Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Communities in California, Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy & Leadership*, 2012.
- ⁵ CDC, Asian Americans and Tobacco Use <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/asian-americans/index.htm>
- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2005-2010. Mortality Multiple Cause Files.
- ⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Summary Health Statistics for the U.S. Population: National Health Interview Survey, 2008*, Table 6.
- ⁸ Muggli ME, Pollay RW, Lew R, Joseph AM. *Targeting of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by the tobacco industry: results from the Minnesota Tobacco Document Depository*. Tobacco Control 2002.
- ⁹ PreventiveMedicineReports. *Associations with E-cigarette use among Asian American and Pacific Islander Young Adults in California*, 2016
- ¹⁰ California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. *California Tobacco Facts and Figures 2018*.
- ¹¹ *Preliminary Estimates of the Prevalence of Selected Underlying Health Conditions Among Patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 — United States, February 12–March 28, 2020*. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020; 69:382–386. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6913e2>
- ¹² Vardavas CI, Nikitara K. *COVID-19 and smoking: A systematic review of the evidence*. Tob Induc Dis. 2020;18:20. Published 2020 Mar 20. doi:10.18332/tid/119324
- ¹³ Al-Delaimy, Wael. Hookah and COVID-19: How Hookah Puts You at Risk, 2020, tobaccofreeca.com/health/hookah-and-covid-19-how-hookah-puts-you-at-risk/.
- ¹⁴ Tong, Elisa. “Protect Yourself from COVID-19: Stop Smoking and Vaping Now.” TobaccoFreeCA, 2020, tobaccofreeca.com/health/covid-19-stop-smoking-and-vaping/.
- ¹⁵ California Health Interview Survey 2015-2016
- ¹⁶ Odani S, et al. Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2014–2017. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep, 2018.
- ¹⁷ Huang, J. (2020, April 30). In LA County, Pacific Islanders Are Dying From Coronavirus At A Rate 12 Times Higher Than Whites. These Leaders Are Fighting Back. Last. Retrieved June 11, 2020, from https://laist.com/2020/04/30/pacific_islanders_coronavirus_death_rate_california.php



Social Media



Tobacco-related cancer and cardiovascular disease are the top two causes of death for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Raise your voice against the tobacco products that are damaging our community!

Join us:

organizingtoendtobacco.org/virtualdayofaction2020

#VoicesAgainstTobacco

While we're fighting a deadly pandemic, there is a teen vaping epidemic in California. Big Tobacco targets Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander youth through e-cigarette flavors like lychee, taro, and passion fruit.

Join us:

organizingtoendtobacco.org/virtualdayofaction2020

#VoicesAgainstTobacco

