



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

A project of the American Heart Association.

# Raising our Voices Against Tobacco for Our Hispanic/Latino Community

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

Hispanics/Latinos are disproportionately exposed to secondhand smoke at the workplace and in multi-unit housing.<sup>3,7,8</sup> Cancer, heart disease, and stroke—all of which can be caused by tobacco use—are among the five leading causes of death in this community.<sup>2</sup> It's time to take a stand against the unfair health burden that tobacco places on Hispanics/Latinos.

## **Tobacco disproportionately impacts our Latino community. It also impacts low-income Californians:**

- California's adult Hispanic/Latino population has a cigarette smoking rate of 10.2%.<sup>4</sup>
- Although California's Hispanic/Latino population smokes cigarettes at a slightly lower rate than the overall population, 1.1 million Hispanic/Latinos smoke, which is about one-third of the total population of California smokers.<sup>4</sup>
- Tobacco use significantly varies among Hispanic/Latino subgroups. 28.5% of Puerto Ricans report smoking cigarettes.<sup>4</sup>
- 41.9% of California's multi-unit housing residents are Hispanic/Latino.<sup>8</sup>
- A disproportionately high number of Hispanics/Latinos have jobs in small-service occupations with only a few employees (e.g., automotive shops, employment within a private home), where California's smoke-free workplace laws do not apply.<sup>3</sup>
- Hispanic/Latino communities typically have a higher density rate of tobacco retail at nearly 26% higher than that of the general population.<sup>5,6</sup>
- Tobacco companies have placed advertising in community publications and sponsored Hispanic/Latino cultural events.
- Tobacco companies have donated to many Hispanic/Latino elected officials and chambers of commerce to positively shape policy and community leadership perceptions in favor of tobacco.

## **COVID-19 and tobacco are a deadly combination**

- Research shows that smoking is most likely associated with people getting sicker from COVID-19.<sup>10,12</sup>

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- Smoking weakens one's immune system and the body's ability to fight infections such as COVID-19.<sup>11</sup>
- 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 deaths caused by tobacco.
- People who smoke or vape and contract the COVID-19 virus are at increased risk of developing more severe symptoms.<sup>11,12</sup>
- 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.<sup>12</sup>

### **While we're 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 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 and vaping industry use flavors to attract teens to vaping.
- The tobacco industry has financially supported primary and secondary schools, funded universities and colleges, and supported scholarship programs targeting Hispanic/Latino youth and young adults.

### **SOURCES**

<sup>1</sup> Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, *Tobacco Use & Hispanics*. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0134.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Hispanics/Latinos and Tobacco Use: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/groups/hispanic-latino.html>

<sup>3</sup> Baezconde-Garbanati LA et. al, *Secondhand Smoke Exposure Among Hispanics/Latinos Living in Multiunit Housing: Exploring Barriers to New Policies*, American Journal of Health Promotion, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. *California Tobacco Facts and Figures 2018*.

<sup>5</sup> California Department of Tax and Fees Administration. California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retailer Licensees, October 2016.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

<sup>7</sup> California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2016.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

<sup>9</sup> King BA, et. al, *National and State Cost Savings Associated with Prohibiting Smoking in Subsidized and Public Housing in the United States*. Preventing Chronic Disease, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> 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>

<sup>11</sup> 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

<sup>12</sup> 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/](https://www.tobaccofreeca.com/health/hookah-and-covid-19-how-hookah-puts-you-at-risk/).



## Social Media



*In CA, 10.3% of Hispanic/Latino youth use tobacco with the majority choosing a vaping device as their product of choice. Raise your voice against Big Tobacco to protect Hispanic/Latino youth from a lifetime of addiction.*

Join us: <https://organizingtoendtobacco.org/virtualdayofaction2020/>

#VoicesAgainstTobacco



Raise your Voice to Kick Big Tobacco out of our Hispanic/Latino communities, which have a higher density rate of tobacco retailers – almost 26% higher than the general population. Stand up and tell them ‘Not in my community’!

Join us: <https://organizingtoendtobacco.org/virtualdayofaction2020/>

#VoicesAgainstTobacco

