

# Flavors aren't for adults.

## Flavors hook kids.

### It's time to end the sale of flavored tobacco products.

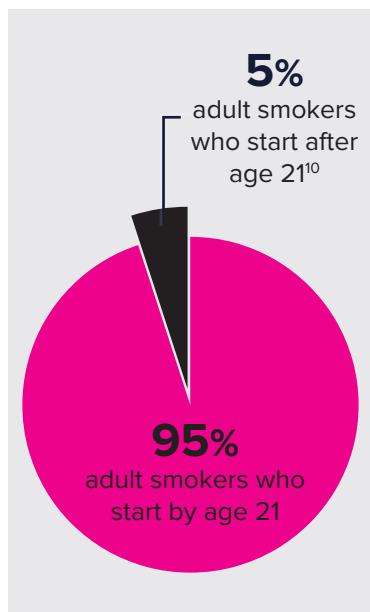
Tobacco addiction is a pediatric epidemic. If youth don't start using tobacco before the age of 21, they are unlikely to ever do so.<sup>1</sup>

The tobacco industry is laser-focused on youth and young adults, even calling them their "replacement smokers".<sup>2</sup> Tobacco companies have developed an array of candy and fruit-flavored products in colorful packaging to attract youth and mask the harsh taste of tobacco. As a result:

- More than 85% of e-cigarette users ages 12-17 use flavored e-cigarettes, and flavors are the leading reason for youth use.<sup>3</sup>
- More than 90% of young adult e-cigarette users use tobacco products flavored to taste like menthol, alcohol, fruit, chocolate, or other sweets.<sup>3</sup>
- 4 out of 5 teenagers who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product.<sup>4</sup>
- Youth who vape are two-times more likely to start smoking combustible cigarettes within 2 years than youth who have never used tobacco.<sup>5</sup>

#### Menthol is the most dangerous flavor of all.

Menthol cigarettes are easier to start smoking and harder to quit.<sup>6</sup>



- More than half of all youth smokers ages 12-17 use menthol cigarettes, compared to fewer than 1/3 of smokers ages 35 and older.<sup>6</sup>
- Menthol use is even higher among African American youth: 70% smoke menthol cigarettes.<sup>7</sup>
- The Food and Drug Administration's Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee's (TPSAC) analysis concludes that African Americans are disproportionately burdened by the health harms of menthol cigarettes. Marketing and availability of menthol cigarettes increases the overall prevalence of smoking and reduces cessation among African Americans.<sup>8</sup>

*While 99% of e-cigarettes contain nicotine, 54% of Maine youth think it's "just flavoring."<sup>9</sup>*



**Yummy Gummy**  
Wild Berry  
Grape  
Vanilla Birthday Cake  
Cherry Crush  
Banana Blast  
Sour Apple  
Tropical Twist  
Watermelon  
Chocolate  
Creme Brulee  
Vanilla Caramel  
Donut  
Pop Tart  
Cotton Candy  
Winter Mocha Mint





## Maine can prevent youth tobacco use by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products.

Flavors like chocolate, grape, “banana smash” and “cool menthol” aren’t made for adults; these flavors hook kids.

Removing ALL flavored tobacco products from store shelves will make it less likely that Maine kids will try their first tobacco product – smoked, chewed, or vaped.

We all want our children to grow up healthy and have the opportunity to live long and productive lives. Good health for Maine families means children are ready to learn, workers are more productive, seniors can stay in their homes, employers spend less on insurance coverage, and our communities can be healthy, hopeful, and thriving.

**We must act now to ensure that Maine’s next generation grows up tobacco-free.**



The Maine Public Health Association is the state’s largest and oldest association for public health professionals. As a statewide association, we advocate, act and advise on critical public health challenges, assuring that all people in Maine lead healthful lives.

To learn more visit:  
[www.mainepublichealth.org](http://www.mainepublichealth.org).

*This fact sheet was supported by the Maine Cancer Foundation.*

## Endnotes

- 1 Center for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK). 2020. Raising the tobacco age to 21. [www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/sale-age-21..](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/sale-age-21..)
- 2 CTFK. 2001. Tobacco company quotes on marketing to kids. [www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0114.pdf](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0114.pdf).
- 3 US Department of Health and Human Services. 2016. E-Cigarette use among youth and young adults: A report of the surgeon general. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
- 4 Truth Initiative. 2018. Flavored tobacco use among youth and young adults. <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/emerging-tobacco-products/flavored-tobacco-use-among-youth-and-young-adults>.
- 5 Berry KM, Fetterman JL, Benjamin EJ, et al. 2019. Association of electronic cigarette use with subsequent initiation of tobacco cigarettes in US youth. *JAMA Netw Open*;2(2):e187794.
- 6 Truth Initiative. 2018. What is menthol? <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/traditional-tobacco-products/menthol-facts-stats-and-regulations>.
- 7 CTFK. 2020. Tobacco use among African Americans. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0006.pdf>.
- 8 Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee. 2011. *Menthol cigarettes and public health: Review of the scientific evidence and recommendations*. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration.
- 9 Maine Department of Health and Human Services and the Maine Department of Education. 2017. Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey.
- 10 CTFK. Increasing the sale age for tobacco to 21 will reduce smoking and save lives. [www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/content/what\\_we\\_do/state\\_local\\_issues/sales\\_21/tobacco21\\_factsheet\\_brief.pdf](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/content/what_we_do/state_local_issues/sales_21/tobacco21_factsheet_brief.pdf).