

FIGHTING FLAVORED TOBACCO



October 2018

A best practice guide for developing local policy campaigns to
restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products in California

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Acknowledgments & Disclaimers

Fighting Flavored Tobacco benefited from the generosity and support of the following:

- Olivia Alvarez, Lori Bremner, Serena Chen, Mariaelena Gonzalez, Liz Hendrix, Mel Hovell, Angelica Souza
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN)
- Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing of the American Lung Association
- ChangeLab Solutions
- The LOOP at the University of California, San Francisco
- The Flavored Tobacco Workgroup of the California Tobacco Control Program
- School of Engineering at the University of California, Merced
- Tobacco Education Clearinghouse of California (TECC)
- The many local advocates, community members, policy makers, city and county staff, researchers, and other allies throughout California who supported this work through their energy and ideas

Suggested Citation

Roussos S, Olivares K, Hernandez E, Sipan C, Seijas K, Chavez L, Alnahari S, Coldivar P, Lopez D, Lopes J, Nicole M, and Carmichael S. *Fighting Flavored Tobacco: A Best Practice Guide for Developing Local Policy Campaigns to Restrict the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products in California*. Sacramento, CA: California Tobacco Control Program, California Department of Public Health. October, 2018.

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Funding for this guide was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under Grant # NU58DP005969-03-01 to the California Department of Public Health with a subcontract to the University of California, Merced. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government, the State of California, and the University of California.

Introduction

Fighting Flavored Tobacco is a best practice guide for developing and implementing a flavored tobacco policy campaign. It was created for local health departments and community-based organizations.

These campaigns are part of the California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program's (CTCP) mission to prevent and reduce tobacco use. *Fighting Flavored Tobacco* shares lessons from the research literature and the experience of existing flavored tobacco prevention campaigns. The Guide's goal is to help local California jurisdictions and tribal communities plan and implement policy campaigns to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products. These lessons represent wisdom that has evolved over more than half a century of local people organizing against tobacco to improve the health and prosperity of their communities.

Fighting Flavored Tobacco builds on three prior reports published by the CTCP, California Department of Public Health and released since 2015 (See *Must-Know Knowledge*, next page). Each of these reports provides a wealth of must-know information for a successful flavored tobacco policy campaign.

Best Practice Tip

During your campaign, share facts from state reports (see *next page*). Be sure to include the source. Each comes from a well-respected authority.

Flavored Tobacco

“Flavored tobacco products” or “flavored tobacco” is a term to describe all tobacco products that have an added flavoring. Flavored products include cigarettes (menthol only, as other cigarette flavorings are prohibited), smokeless tobacco, little cigars and cigarillos, large cigars, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), hookah and dissolvables. There are well over [15,000 unique flavors](#)¹, ranging from fruit flavors to candy or confectionery flavors, to alcoholic beverage, herb and spice flavors. Unless noted otherwise, the term “flavored” in the guide includes products with menthol flavorings or additives.





Must-Know Knowledge: Three Prior State Reports

1. [Flavored and Mentholated Tobacco Products: Enticing a New Generation of Users](#). *California Medical Association*.² This report provides a comprehensive review on what these tobacco products are and their harm to human health.
2. [Focus on Flavors: The Authority of a State or Local Government to Restrict or Prohibit the Sale or Distribution of Flavored Tobacco Products](#). *California Attorney General*.³ This report provides extensive details on why and how local flavored tobacco policy is valid under the law. Its facts can help your campaign respond to opposition claims that these products should not be regulated.
3. [State Health Officer's Report on E-Cigarettes: A Community Health Threat](#). *California Department of Public Health*.⁴ This report demonstrates how closely flavored tobacco is tied to e-cigarettes. Your campaign will benefit from understanding the implications of this connection.

The conclusion drawn from these reports is a *call to action* for communities to proceed with local and tribal policy campaigns to prevent the sale and use of these products.

The lessons from these reports and other resources include information about organizing and mobilizing your community for the campaign, working with elected officials and tribal leaders responsible for policy adoption, and addressing challenges and opposition throughout your campaign.

Make This Guide Work for You

We designed *Fighting Flavored Tobacco* to be useful to people with varying levels of experience working in diverse settings from rural to urban. It contains information that will be helpful to those rich with connections and support as well as those facing major opposition.

In addition to providing resources, success stories and background information, this Guide walks you through essential steps that will help you create and sustain your campaign. Be sure to understand these steps well. Proven experience shows that they are key to your success.

The steps include gaining background understanding of the issues, establishing general principles for most effective outcomes, and mastering practices within each of those principles.

The three general principles you will focus on are:

- 1. Make your campaign matter locally.**
- 2. Build relationships to fuel your campaign.**
- 3. Follow your local policy “rule book.”**

A principle is a fundamental truth, a foundation for our behaviors, a way of organizing how we think and the choices we make. Carrying these general principles forward in every aspect of your campaign is a good way to reflect on the ideas and recommendations from the people and resources in our project.



Across our sources, we found that successful campaigns learn to apply the best practices identified in *Fighting Flavored Tobacco* through repetition. Using best practices repeatedly creates a rich culture of support and an understanding of tobacco control policy change within communities. Each campaign builds on prior efforts, strengthening the best practices.

“Best practices” in *Fighting Flavored Tobacco* are “best” because they have been repeated, refined and tested in battle. Even leaders with over 20 years of experience in tobacco control campaigns emphasized that they are still improving their ability to implement the practices described in *Fighting Flavored Tobacco*. Our goal was to identify practices documented through multiple sources rather than unique actions.

For each General Principle, specific practices are described with examples and guidance. The principles and practices are organized numerically. These numbers do not represent any order of preference, nor priority of implementation. Our findings showed that most practices occurred throughout the policy campaign process, although some may be more appropriate earlier or later in the life of a campaign.

Tobacco vs. Nicotine: Be Clear on the Distinctions

Tobacco is a plant that contains the addictive substance nicotine. As a delivery mechanism for nicotine, tobacco-related products cause substantial risks to health. This is especially true of cigarettes, but it is also true of other products, including cigars, pipes, chew and snuff. There is less research on hookah use, though it is also linked with serious health consequences.

Nicotine is highly addictive. Adolescents and young adults, whose brains are still developing, are especially susceptible to addiction:

- Nicotine is toxic. It can harm adolescent brains, developing fetuses, and it is a health danger for pregnant women and their developing babies.
- Adolescents and young adults who use e-cigarettes are likely to start using other nicotine-based products as well, including cigarettes. Many youths who would not use combustible cigarettes to begin with start out on e-cigarettes and then move into combustible cigarettes.
- Nicotine liquid used in e-cigarettes can be dangerous. Both children and adults have been poisoned from exposure through swallowing, breathing or absorbing liquid nicotine through their skin or eyes.
- Aerosols in e-cigarettes pose other health risks, including tiny particles that reach into the lungs and may cause cancer.⁴
- Non-combustible forms of tobacco products that deliver nicotine, such as e-cigarettes or low nitrosamine smokeless tobacco (snus), are new enough that the research is not entirely definitive on their long-term health effects. However, there are [many reasons to be concerned about flavored nicotine](#)⁵ products and their use in little cigars, smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes. Sweet flavors like watermelon, chocolate, mint and gummy bear appeal to kids and teens. [Flavorings mask the harsh taste of tobacco](#) thereby making it easier for youth to initiate tobacco use.⁶



Methods: What Makes These Best Practices?

In 2009, the federal [Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act](#) (Tobacco Control Act) was signed into law. It banned cigarettes with flavoring, other than tobacco or menthol flavoring.⁷ Since then, a handful of state and local initiatives throughout the country have worked toward enacting policies to restrict the sale of all types of flavored tobacco products, including menthol products.

We are at an early stage in these campaigns to restrict the sale of all flavored tobacco. The term “best practices” reflects what we know at this time — the best information we have about how to create campaigns that work. We expect these practices to be refined and improved as local communities develop more experience with these types of policy campaigns.



Three methods were used to develop the best practices in *Fighting Flavored Tobacco*:

- 1. Key informant interviews.** One to two hour telephone interviews were conducted with leaders involved in flavored tobacco policy campaigns in California. Twenty-six people were interviewed across eight local campaigns. (Note that at the time of the interviews only eight campaigns had led to a formally adopted flavored tobacco policy. One campaign in Oakland was very close to this goal and also included in the interviews.) These individuals included representatives from local health departments, elected officials, and staff and volunteers from the tobacco policy campaigns conducted in California.
- 2. Literature review.** A review of both peer-reviewed publications and other resources was conducted to identify practices, strategies, tools and recommendations for successful local tobacco policy campaigns. The review assessed local campaigns on a range of tobacco control policies, not only flavored tobacco policy campaigns (e.g., smoke-free parks, smoke-free workplaces). It also included an assessment of workbooks, tip sheets, fact sheets, how-to guides, websites, videos, movies, and social and traditional media.
- 3. Survey.** A best practices survey training was conducted by the [California Tobacco Control Program](#) (CTCP) among attendees of two flavored tobacco product policy trainings. The 57 survey respondents (57% estimated response rate) rated 36 best practices generated from the already-completed key informant interviews and literature review. For each best practice, respondents (1) reported whether they had done or were doing the practice, (2) ranked the importance of the practice, and (3) offered additional ideas and recommendations regarding the practice.

Eight individuals analyzed the responses. The team included three researchers with experience in community campaigns and tobacco control policy, two community-based tobacco control program staff with over ten years of experience in local campaigns, and three research staff with expertise in policy development and program design.

Best practices were identified and categorized through each of the three formative research methods (e.g., key informant interviews, literature review and survey). The master list of best practices was refined by three of the researchers through four cycles of review and discussion to ensure that each practice had a specific purpose and value. Our analysis identified three general campaign principles and 21 best practices.

General Principles and Best Practices

General Principle 1: Make Your Campaign Matter Locally

- Practice 1.** Discover the priorities of key influencers.
- Practice 2.** Use local data to make your campaign a local priority.
- Practice 3.** Bring your campaign to local events. Be creative.
- Practice 4.** Focus social media on local issues.

General Principle 2: Build Relationships to Fuel Your Campaign

- Practice 5.** Build a local coalition.
- Practice 6.** Find and train Champions and Connectors.
- Practice 7.** Leverage your relationships.
- Practice 8.** Get meaningful endorsements.
- Practice 9.** Recruit and train youth to be leaders.
- Practice 10.** Recruit and train people from “targeted” groups.
- Practice 11.** Build healthy relationships with local tobacco retailers.
- Practice 12.** Engage positively with local elected officials.

General Principle 3: Follow Your Local Policy “Rule Book”

- Practice 13.** Build on what already exists.
- Practice 14.** Co-develop policy language with key people.
- Practice 15.** Start with a strong policy. Negotiate down if you must.
- Practice 16.** Bring outside professionals to your local table.
- Practice 17.** Attend meetings, pay attention and connect with issues.
- Practice 18.** Learn the local policy process.
- Practice 19.** Provide proof that stakeholders care.
- Practice 20.** Address policy maker opposition to your campaign privately.
- Practice 21.** After policy adoption, support implementation.



General Principle 1: Make Your Campaign Matter Locally

What are the priorities of your local community? Local policy campaigns must find ways to ensure that the issue of flavored tobacco products is aligned with other priorities in a community.

You will have greater success when you implement this principle through constant attention rather than a planned series of presentations or a single big media event.

How can your campaign do this? By making sure people know and believe that your campaign can improve public health and prevent harm for the whole community. You are promoting a public health campaign of vital importance—one that fights a threat targeting your community's well-being.

Restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products does not lessen or replace the importance of other community priorities, such as good-paying jobs, stable families and well-educated children. Instead, your campaign helps people to see how other community priorities align with flavored tobacco policy efforts.

The more frequently your campaign aligns with top local priorities, the more your campaign will matter locally—and succeed!



Best Practice Tip

Frame your message to include what matters most to your local community, and continuously adapt as local priorities change over time.

PRACTICE 1: Discover the Priorities of Key Influencers

There are four essential stakeholder groups who can either advance or hinder your campaign's progress. They are:

1. Local elected officials, tribal leaders and other policy makers
2. Tobacco retailers
3. Law enforcement
4. Youth-serving organizations



Find out what matters most to these groups. If you are not familiar with who they are and what they do, study their role, responsibilities and current priorities. Get to know them *before* you ask for their help.

Here are some common priorities for each group, along with ideas on how your campaign may align with them.

Local elected officials, policy makers and tribal leaders

These are public servants such as City Council Members, County Supervisors, School Board Members, Tribal Council Members and other officials elected by a public vote. Often, they volunteer their time to run for office with the goal of improving the community.

Get to know them by doing research online (councils and boards often have websites) and attending meetings (see *Practice 17*). Meet with them individually in an informal setting (e.g., coffee, lunch) or check to see if they have office hours.

Elected officials will weigh the importance of a flavored tobacco policy campaign relative to other community priorities. Your goal is to understand their greatest concerns and the ways they are held accountable by the community.

Therefore, your initial focus is to listen and understand their priorities. You need this information before assessing how best to align your goals with theirs. Avoid discussing your campaign in depth in your first conversations.

Common concern: Economic prosperity

Policy makers generally care about creating jobs, especially for youth and young adults; ensuring people have enough income to support a family; and expanding and strengthening local businesses.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

These products harm our future workforce:

- Flavored tobacco products are marketed in ways that appeal strongly to children and youth. Experimentation can lead to long-term addiction to tobacco products. Tobacco-related illness can increase work absenteeism and reduce productivity.
- The tobacco industry aggressively markets flavored tobacco products to youth and young people.^{8,9,10}



- These flavors are [particularly enticing to young people](#), and experimentation can lead to long-term addiction to tobacco products.¹¹

These products harm low-income communities:

- The tobacco industry aggressively markets flavored tobacco products in low income communities.^{12, 13, 14} This results in a greater burden on these communities and neighborhoods. It also results in a greater income gap and a less prosperous community.
- The tobacco industry emphasizes [more youth-focused advertising](#)¹⁵ in low income neighborhoods and communities of color.
- Tobacco marketing and use raises a number of issues related to social justice. (See “Local flavored tobacco policy change is a social justice issue,” p. 53 of this guide, for more background.)

These products reduce productivity:

- Tobacco-related illness can increase work absenteeism and reduce productivity. This is [expensive for employers](#).¹⁶ This disrupts our community’s ability to sustain a competitive and productive workforce.
- Smokers [earn less money](#)¹⁷ than non-smokers or those who have quit.

According to a 2014 report, the cost of smoking in California was \$18.1 billion. That worked out to \$487 per resident, and \$4,603 for each smoker.

These products create a financial burden on our community:

- The tobacco industry sells a product that is associated with addiction, alcohol abuse, illicit drugs, and crime.^{18, 19, 20} This is not the type of economic prosperity our community wants to be known for.
- Preventing tobacco use reduces tobacco-related health care costs and increases resources for other needs in the community.^{21, 22, 23} Everyone benefits when we do not have to pay for the health burden resulting from tobacco-related illness.

Are Tobacco Companies Racketeers Who Defraud the Public?

According to a federal court, the answer is yes.

In 2011, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals [upheld an earlier conviction](#)²⁴ of 11 major American tobacco companies on the Racketeer Influence Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. The case charged that these companies had engaged in “a pattern of racketeering activity” intended to deceive Americans about the health impacts and addictiveness of cigarettes.

The court found that these companies defrauded actual and potential smokers for over 50 years. Companies falsely denied the health effects of smoking. They manipulated the design of cigarettes to make them more addictive. They denied the risks of secondhand smoke. They delivered an “invidious” marketing campaign to youth. They suppressed and destroyed documents, information and research to mislead the public.

Common concern: Public safety

Elected officials want to protect the safety and security of their community. They are especially committed to keeping children safe where they live, attend school and play. They will take steps to ensure community members are not victims of crime, violence or other harm.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

The tobacco industry behaves in predatory and harmful ways.

- The tobacco industry's profits depend on addicting young and vulnerable populations. Most smokers begin their lifetime addiction before age 18,^{25, 26, 27} and the majority begin with flavored tobacco.^{28, 29} It's in our community's best interest to protect youth from the predatory practices of the tobacco industry.
- In some communities, there are higher numbers of retailers [near schools](#),³⁰ [in low-income areas](#), and in neighborhoods with populations that have been targeted by the industry (e.g., communities of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities.)³¹ The number of retailers in a given area is called "retail density."
- The cultivation of tobacco (a necessary ingredient for all nicotine products) is [harmful to the environment](#). It is causing deforestation and exacerbating levels of greenhouse gasses. Pesticides and chemicals used result in toxic waste that pollutes and degrades the environment.³²



Local tobacco retailers

Local tobacco retailers range from small, family-owned corner stores to large chains. They sell a legal product to make a profit. Many are [supportive of point-of-sale measures](#)³³—that is, policies that regulate or prohibit the sale of tobacco products at the place where these goods are purchased. Common point-of-sale measures concerning tobacco might prohibit sales of tobacco products to minors and seek to limit tobacco use. However, efforts to restrict the sale of a popular product can create tensions between retailers and campaign stakeholders.

It is important to identify other issues that are important to retailers. For example, they may be concerned about the health and safety of their customers. They may value positive relationships with the community. They might appreciate positive mentions in traditional or social media, or positive online reviews that praise their actions to support a healthy community. They may be concerned about tobacco use and the threat it poses to their own children or families.

Common concern: Sales

Retailers worry that if they don't sell flavored tobacco products, they may lose income. Their income may further be reduced if they lose customers who typically stop in to buy flavored tobacco products and pick up gas, groceries or other products at the same time.

Large retailers such as Target and CVS can afford to stop selling tobacco because they make more money from other products. However, smaller stores, such as convenience stores and gas stations, are concerned that they will have to make up for lost sales through the sale of other products if they lose the ability to sell certain tobacco products.

A community needs businesses that are profitable from selling products that are good for the health of its residents. Your campaign might collaborate with your local public health nutrition program to provide an in-store consultation. This could help a store add healthy food products that reduce the burden of losing flavored tobacco product sales. Additionally, there may be ways that your campaign can help local retailers gain recognition (and be more profitable) for being a responsible business that does not sell flavored tobacco products.



Making flavored tobacco matter:

Many retailers have already discovered that tobacco is not an essential product.³⁴

- Most customers shop at convenience stores to purchase a drink (49%) or food (35%).
- Convenience stores profit twice as much from food services than from tobacco sales.
- Restricting the sale of menthol cigarettes to adult-only stores would have little financial impact on convenience stores.

Joining a flavored tobacco campaign in some manner is a good way for a retailer to demonstrate concern for community health and wellbeing.³⁵

- Tobacco causes disease and death. Taking a stand to make a difference on this issue enhances a retailer's positive image.
- Employees are often pleased to no longer sell these deadly products.
- Focus groups of smokers and non-smokers alike saw these steps as positive and health-promoting. Many said policies that restrict tobacco product sales made them more likely to shop at a store.

Common concern: Following the law

Most tobacco retailers make a strong effort to comply with California's tobacco laws. They do not knowingly sell tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21 (effective June 2016). Some retailers believe that raising the minimum age of sale from 18 to 21 should be sufficient to reduce tobacco use by teens and young adults. They wonder why we need to restrict flavored tobacco product sales altogether when this law exists.



Making flavored tobacco matter:

California's age-of-sale law is not enough to end use of tobacco by young people.

- California's increased age-of-sale law is an important tool for preventing flavored tobacco sales to minors, but it is not enough. [In California, 68% of smokers start smoking by age 18](#).³⁶ This means another 32%—almost a third of adult smokers—begin after turning 18.
- Teens report that their tobacco use typically started with a flavored tobacco product. [One study reported](#) that almost 90% of ever hookah users, 81% of ever e-cigarette users, 65% of ever users of any cigar type, and 50% of ever cigarette smokers said the first tobacco product they used was flavored.³⁷
- In 2016, over 31% of tobacco stores in California [sold tobacco products to youth](#).³⁶
- Youth will find a way to get flavored tobacco products if they are sold.^{38,39} If a retailer mistakenly (or willingly) sells products to a single youth, it's likely that other young people in the neighborhood will share those products with other minors, potentially leading to tobacco addiction for many youths.



Local law enforcement

Typically, police, the district attorney and other law enforcement staff are not involved in local tobacco control policy campaigns [until after a policy is passed](#).⁴⁰ After a policy is adopted, they are asked to help with enforcement. They may feel less engaged in the issue, or overburdened by new expectations placed upon their limited resources.

Take steps to align your campaign with areas of common concern among law enforcement agencies.

Common concern: Feeling overburdened by having another policy or law to enforce

Once a policy is adopted, the task of enforcement falls to the local enforcement agency listed in the ordinance language. Often times, these individuals are already extremely busy and having to enforce one more law sometimes makes them feel overburdened. If there are already other tobacco-related laws in a jurisdiction, law enforcement

may feel frustrated at the demands of enforcing one more tobacco-related policy, especially if law enforcement officials do not see this type of enforcement as a priority.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

Enforcement is a shared responsibility that can make a significant difference in the community's health. The main effort is in public education and persuasion.

- The support of law enforcement is a critical component in these vital policies, but it is not the only component. Campaign staff recognize that law enforcement alone cannot make these policies effective.
- Most of the work implementing a flavored tobacco policy must be done by individuals and programs that are *not* part of law enforcement. This includes campaign staff and volunteers, schools, local elected officials, local health departments and retailers.
- As more flavored tobacco laws are adopted, not having or selling these products becomes the norm throughout the community.

Common concern: Public safety

The primary focus of people working in law enforcement is public safety. Preventing the risks presented by the tobacco industry's predatory marketing activities is strongly aligned with this value.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

People in our community, especially our children, should feel safe where they live, work, and play. They should not be subjected to crime, violence and harm.

- The health risks of flavored tobacco sales are real and substantial. Flavored tobacco policies can make a difference in reducing tobacco initiation by youth and young adults.
- The sale of flavored tobacco products is a burden on the health and safety of our community.

Organizations and groups that serve young people

The tobacco industry cannot exist if people do not begin to use tobacco products at an early age. Children, adolescents and young adults are much more susceptible to the addictive effects of nicotine in or derived from tobacco. The tobacco industry's profits depend on youth and young adults starting to use tobacco, to replace customers who have quit or died as a result of using tobacco.

An abundance of organizations and groups serve young people. These include parents, schools, churches and organizations such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and Boys & Girls Clubs. There are often youth components to advocacy projects, anti-poverty programs, civil rights agencies, organizations working on human rights and other social justice groups.



Tobacco Companies Still Target Young Customers

"Younger adult smokers are the only source of replacement smokers...If younger adults turn away from smoking, the industry must decline."

— R.J. Reynolds report, February 29, 1984 ⁴¹

"The industry has found that marketing an addictive product to youth translates into customers who are addicted for life."

— Hillel Alpert, researcher at Harvard School of Public Health, 2013 ⁴²

Youth-serving organizations care about the well-being of youth and the future generation. These values are strongly aligned with the values of a flavored tobacco campaign. They are likely to be advocates for your campaign.

Youth and children are the common bond between these groups and your campaign. You can connect your flavored tobacco campaign with their interests.

Common concern: Vulnerable children, youth and communities

Many youth-serving organizations focus specifically on vulnerable children and youth. This might include children from low-income neighborhoods, low-income children of color, LGBTQ youth, youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who are struggling in school or have dropped out, or children and youth with disabilities.

In addition to the general marketing focus on youth, many of these groups have been specifically targeted by the tobacco industry.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

The tobacco industry spends billions of dollars every year to market their products⁴³ and develop new product lines that appeal to children and youth. Much of their marketing emphasis is on vulnerable communities.

- Research shows that tobacco industry marketing and promotion influences youth to start tobacco use.
- Marketing has targeted brands and campaigns to Hispanics, American Indians/Alaska Natives, African Americans and Asian Americans.
- Marketing and promotion [has also targeted the LGBTQ communities](#).⁴⁴ LGBTQ adults smoke at rates 2.5 times higher than other adults.
- There are [more tobacco retailers in low-income neighborhoods](#), including near schools in these communities.⁴⁵
- [High school dropouts](#) are 2.5 times more likely to use cigarettes than their in-school peers.⁴⁶
- [Adults with physical disabilities](#) are more likely to smoke than those without disabilities.⁴⁹ This is also true for those with [intellectual and developmental disabilities](#).⁵⁰ Limited data on youth with disabilities suggest these trends are [also true among young people](#).⁴⁹



Common concern: Health and safety of children and youth

The negative health effects of tobacco use are well-established. While there is less data on newer forms of nicotine use, such as e-cigarettes and new flavored products, initial studies suggest these formats also pose significant danger.

Most nicotine users who use e-cigarettes and flavored products use other products as well. In fact, [use of multiple products](#) is quite common among youth who use tobacco.⁵⁰

Making flavored tobacco matter:

Flavored tobacco products are harmful to children, youth and the adults they will eventually become.

- These products have a [gateway effect with youth](#). Young people who would likely never smoke a cigarette sometimes decide to try flavored products, such as e-cigarettes. Non-smoking youth who try e-cigarettes are more likely than other non-smoking youth to start using conventional cigarettes within a year.⁵¹
- Flavored cigars, smokeless tobacco, hookah and e-cigarettes appeal to youth, who often report that they use them specifically because they enjoy the flavors.
- Young children sometimes come across these products and ingest them, believing they are candy. Poison center calls related to nicotine poisoning have increased astronomically as e-cigarettes have become more popular. Between 2012 and 2015, [incidents increased](#) by almost 1,500%.⁵² Outcomes can be severe, including death.

Non-smoking youth who try e-cigarettes are more likely than other non-smoking youth to start using conventional cigarettes within a year.

Common concern: Youth empowerment

Many youth-serving organizations place considerable emphasis on youth empowerment. They seek to empower young people as agents of change in their own communities and lives. This means offering support to youth as they step into roles as leaders.

A flavored tobacco campaign is an ideal outlet for youth empowerment projects and activities. The [Truth Campaign](#)⁵³ is an outstanding model of a youth-empowered effort that has had an impact on efforts to confront the tobacco industry's lies and stop people from using tobacco products.

Making flavored tobacco matter:

A flavored tobacco campaign provides an excellent opportunity for youth involvement, empowerment and leadership on an issue that young people care about.

- Most youth and young adults do not want to use tobacco and believe it is bad for their health. Nearly two-thirds of [adolescents support the Tobacco 21 movement](#),⁵⁴ which aims to raise the minimum sales age to 21.
- Youth are persuasive actors in a tobacco prevention campaign. Many have personal stories involving friends and family using tobacco. Their efforts to create a safer, healthier community can be very compelling.

Practice 2: Use local data to make your campaign a local priority

Over 70 years of studies have shown that the tobacco industry targets youth through marketing, and that this marketing [directly contributes to tobacco use](#).⁵⁵ Research has consistently shown that people begin to use and become addicted to tobacco products as youth, usually through flavored tobacco products.

But, local people want to know: Do youth in *my* community really use flavored tobacco products? Do *my* local stores really sell flavored tobacco products to under-aged persons? Is this problem so important that we need to put a lot of effort into a policy to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products? These are entirely reasonable questions for people to have. Data to inform these questions can help your campaign matter locally.

Getting local data is not always easy, especially for smaller and/or more rural communities. At least three sources of information that provide local data are available to most communities in California.

1. [The Communities of Excellence \(CX\) Needs Assessment for Tobacco Control](#)⁵⁶ is an evaluation of tobacco-related health priorities conducted by local health departments. This assessment engages representatives from local health departments, schools, voluntary health organizations, law enforcement, people representing diverse cultural and ethnic groups, regional community linkage projects, community-based organizations and voluntary health organizations to provide the most comprehensive picture of tobacco control in local communities.

Indicator 3.2.9 *Menthol and Other Flavored Tobacco Products* provides information on the prevalence of flavored tobacco sales; the degree to which the broader community, media, and policy makers understand and prioritize this as a problem; and other related information.

What's an "Indicator"

In public health research and practice, an indicator is a quantifiable measure that provides information about a health risk or practice within a community, such as the portion of youth who use flavored tobacco products, the portion of stores that sell inexpensive little cigars, support for restricting the sale of flavored tobacco products, etc. Monitoring an indicator over time is one way to show either progress or setbacks in a community.

2. **Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community (HSHC)** is part of the [Let's Get Healthy California](#)⁵⁷ campaign led by the California Department of Public Health. The overall goal of HSHC is to improve the health of Californians by changing the environment in community stores and educating people how instore product marketing influences consumption of unhealthy products.

This statewide collaboration between tobacco use prevention, nutrition, sexually transmitted disease and alcohol prevention partners seeks changes in the marketing, placement and pricing of products to reduce consumption of unhealthy products and promote accessibility of healthy products.

In 2013 and again in 2016, more than 7,000 tobacco stores were surveyed statewide by local health departments and their partners to assess marketing, placement and pricing of tobacco, alcohol, and food products. The 2016 survey added questions about the availability and price of condoms.

The HSHC survey collects information on the availability and price of flavored tobacco products and menthol cigarettes. These data can help show how the availability and use of flavored tobacco products compare to community priorities for access to healthy food and prevention of alcohol sales to minors, as well as how one community compares to others throughout the state.

Local Data Collection Surveys: Many local health departments conduct surveys to assess the rate of illegal tobacco sales to underage teens or young adults. The California Tobacco Control Program also collects state, regional and local data which is available to local health departments. The Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community campaign is a statewide collaboration between tobacco use prevention, nutrition and alcohol prevention partners. Local county and regional data on flavored tobacco is available at <http://healthystoreshealthycommunity.com/>.

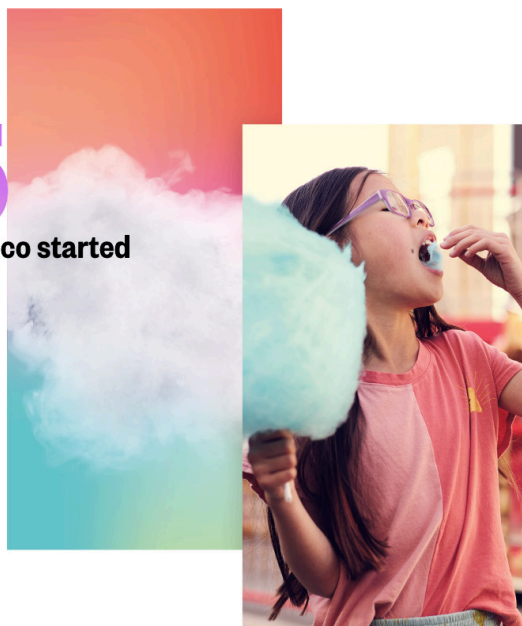
The California Student Tobacco Survey, a large-scale, in-school survey of tobacco use among California middle and high school students, and the California Health Interview Survey, an annual random-dial telephone survey, has regional California data and local data for some counties. Contact CTCP to find out about the data that is available for your county. Local organizations may have information from interviews and focus groups with retailers, policy makers and trusted decision makers about their recommendations and support for policies restricting the sale of flavored

tobacco products. Often, local evaluations include results from public opinion polls on awareness and support for a flavored tobacco policy.

The data from these sources exists in two formats: quantitative (such as numbers and statistics) and qualitative (such as comments and stories). Both are important to use as evidence in your campaign.

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kids who have used tobacco started with a flavored product.



Quantitative data or statistics

Quantitative data presents numbers. When you offer quantitative data, provide it in a graphically strong format—graphs, tables, maps, short bullet lists and so on. Here are examples of quantitative data that might be useful in your campaign.

- **Graphs showing the number of stores that sell flavored tobacco products.** This data can be shown in graphs and charts. This information helps convey the scope of the flavored tobacco sales problem.
- **Maps.** Maps showing the location of stores that sell flavored tobacco products relative to targeted populations can illustrate the intensity or potential reach of flavored tobacco sales. Mapping flavored tobacco retailers along with schools and other youth-serving organizations (e.g., sports fields and stadiums) indicates the likelihood of tobacco products reaching youth. Mapping retailers along with the distribution of income and ethnicities visually demonstrates how the different communities are disproportionately targeted. (See *sample map of state-wide data* next page.)

Best Practice Tip

When you share quantitative data with stakeholders, policy makers or the public, provide it in a graphically strong format. Use graphs, tables, maps, short bullet lists and so on, to make it easy to understand.

- **Survey data on retailers.** Data from Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Surveys demonstrates the percentage of retailers that sell tobacco products to minors. You can find [Survey Instruments, Training Manuals, and Protocols](#) from the California Department of Public Health.⁵⁸
- **Survey data from schools and state programs.** Surveys of youth from schools and state-funded programs show self-reported tobacco use, exposure to tobacco industry marketing and purchasing practices for tobacco products. Describing purchases and use of different types of tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes) across demographics (e.g., gender, age, race, ethnicity) clarifies who might be most affected by the sale of flavored tobacco products.

Qualitative data

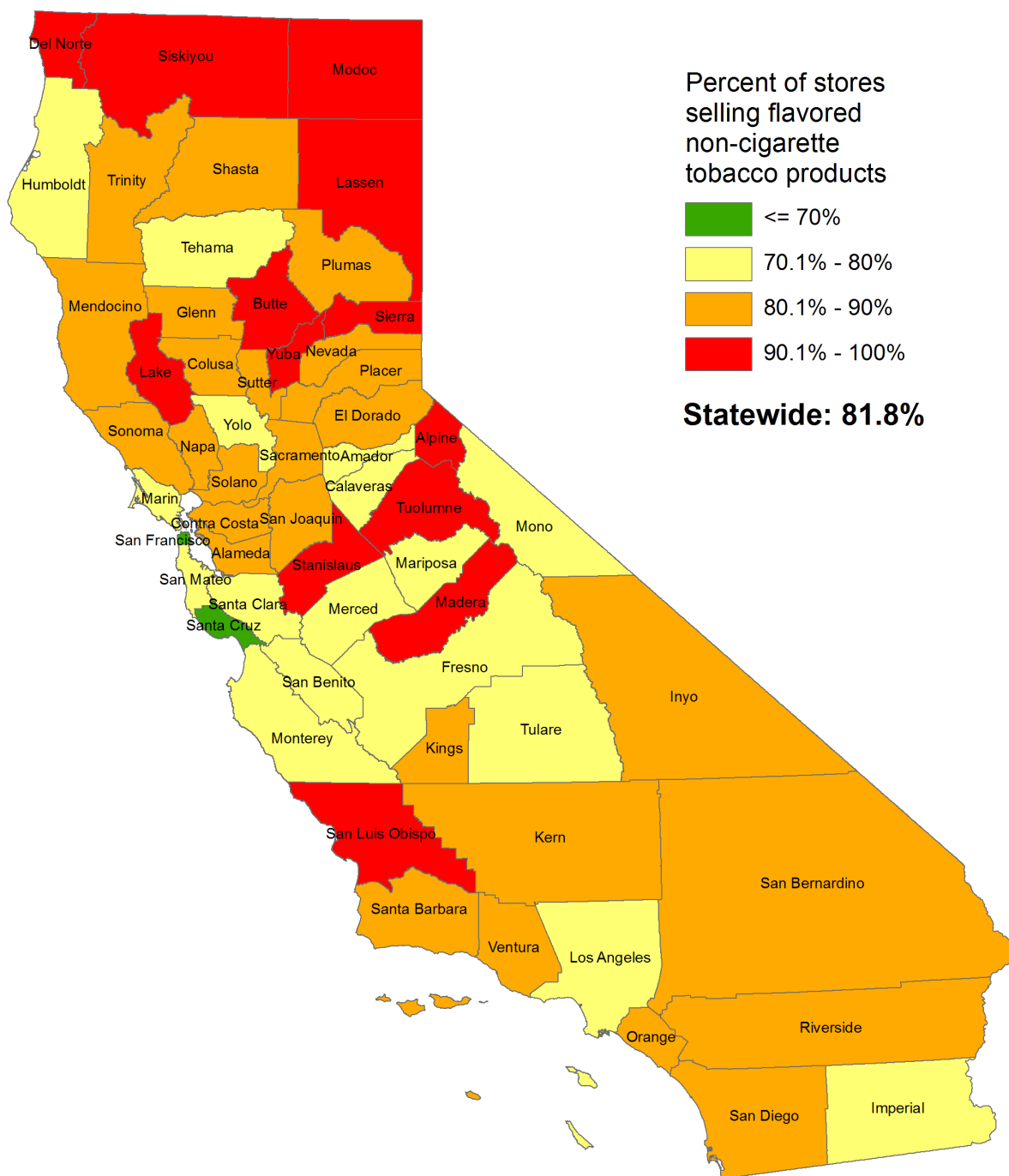
Qualitative data can include comments, narratives, stories, pictures and other formats. While quantitative data *measures* something (e.g., how much, how often), qualitative data *describes* something—how it occurred, what it looks like, how people feel about it and similar characteristics. While quantitative data is important, most people are more likely to remember qualitative data—a powerful story, a moving photo.

Examples: how qualitative data might be useful in your campaign

Personal accounts. You might present essays, stories, videos or audio recordings along with photos. You may have an opportunity to invite campaign staff or volunteers to speak at a public hearing about their experiences. Have people focus on the ways the use of flavored tobacco products has harmed them, their friends, their family and their community. This provides powerful evidence of why your campaign matters locally.

Sample: State-wide data illustrated using a heat map

Percent of tobacco retailers selling flavored tobacco in California, 2016



Here are some examples of people who may share their story:

- **Local individuals harmed by flavored tobacco.** There are people in virtually every community who have been harmed by tobacco use. This could include someone with a son, daughter or grandchild who is addicted to flavored tobacco products; under-aged individuals who are using or know someone who uses flavored tobacco products; someone who lost or is losing a loved one prematurely to tobacco-related disease (possibly noting how they became addicted as a youth); or someone who is experiencing serious illness related to tobacco use.
- **Parents.** Parents represent a major part of the local economy and social fabric of your local community. What they say matters. Even parents who do not use tobacco or have children who use tobacco are affected—no parent wants their children to be preyed upon for someone else's profit.
- **Youth.** Flavored tobacco is designed to get youth started on tobacco. Ask local youth to discuss how flavored tobacco has affected their own lives, or those of peers. Ask them to talk about how youth obtain flavored tobacco products locally. Study the work of the [California Youth Advocacy Network](#).⁵⁹ Borrow their ideas. Ask for their help.
- **Business representatives.** People who work or own a business that serves families and children can talk about the reasons they do not support tobacco sales and tobacco use, especially by under-aged individuals. Outdoor youth entertainers, such as clowns and face painters, might share stories about how the odor of flavored tobacco products interferes with business from their young clients. Family-friendly restaurants, fast food stores and amusement arcades can describe how loiterers smoking nearby detract from their business.

Best Practice Tip

Most people are more likely to remember qualitative data—a powerful story, a moving photo, a dynamic video. Bring considerable effort to finding people with compelling stories to tell.

These testimonials from businesses can help show how your campaign matters to the local economy. If possible, enlist the support of retailers that could sell tobacco but have chosen not to because of concerns about the health and well-being of their community. Such testimonials may help to counter retailer opposition to restrictions of flavored tobacco products.



Pictures

Pictures can help people see and understand things in more emotional ways. This can have a powerful impact. Pictures can also help people grasp difficult concepts more easily. Campaign members can share such pictures during educational events and presentations, especially those with local elected officials and policy makers.

Flavored tobacco products look great in pictures. They are colorful. They use words and images designed to appeal to youth. When you show the graphic, youth-oriented marketing produced by the tobacco industry for these products, you will raise awareness of the industry's aggressiveness in attempting to hook a new generation of tobacco users.

To increase the impact of pictures in your campaign, consider using images that show the following:

- Where flavored tobacco products and ads are placed in local stores. These might show how they are placed low to reach the sight line of a child's eyes.
- Photos of flavored tobacco products next to ice cream and candy displays, as well as point-of-sale displays. These locations raise interest among children and youth.
- Pictures that show how accessible flavored tobacco products are for youth. Are they placed in front of, rather than behind, a counter? Are they in displays that do not require a key for access?

Best Practice Tip

Use pictures to reach people at an emotional level. They can help people grasp difficult concepts, and pictures (and stories) stay with people more than talking points or data will.

Samples of actual flavored tobacco products

Many people have never touched or smelled these products. The packaging, odors and feel of these products can make a big impression. Their smell is strong and stays on your fingers. People familiar with some popular candies will notice that the packaging of some flavored tobacco products is nearly identical to that of candy products.

For example, a popular candy among children is called "Ring Pop." The hard candy looks like a large jewel and is attached to a plastic ring. A manufacturer of e-cigarette juices has created a "Ring Dropz" brand that is designed to taste like these candies. The packaging has a picture of a Ring Pop ring on it.



Such similarities led one local campaigner to create the *Candy vs Flavored Tobacco Game* for use during educational events and in meetings with policy makers (see directions next page). Playing the game helps people see how easily someone, possibly a child, could mistake flavored tobacco products for candy.



The Candy vs. Flavored Tobacco Game

Purpose:

To show people how children might confuse flavored tobacco products for candy.

Steps:

1. Purchase candy from local stores, along with their flavored tobacco look-alikes. Google the words “flavored tobacco look-alikes candy” and then look at the “images” for examples.
2. Mix up the items and arrange them in a line in front of a player.
3. Ask your player to pick which ones are flavored tobacco products.
4. Review how many tobacco products were identified correctly.
5. Discuss with the player what they learned from playing the game.

Adaptation:

For a more dramatic effect, you can bring the items in a youth school backpack. Store the flavored tobacco products in a sealed plastic bag, and put on rubber gloves to handle the tobacco products. The gloves suggest a safety concern about touching the flavored tobacco products. Help others to “See, Smell and Touch” the harm your flavored tobacco campaign is working against.

Practice 3: Bring your campaign to local events. Be creative



Make your campaign part of local events, especially events that go beyond traditional health causes. Show up at unexpected places.

Help avoid stereotyping your campaign as a one-topic issue by publicly showing support for other local causes. Do this often, and for as many causes as possible. Your flavored tobacco product campaign will matter more when it becomes a regular part of community events, services and other activities that matter to locals.

Community health fairs, farmers markets, conferences and other events are all opportunities for

participation. For example, your campaign is an appropriate fit for American Cancer Society events such as Relay for Life, the Great American Smoke-out, Cancer Walks and fundraisers. Look to other popular health campaigns throughout the year, such as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, as a good way to make your campaign visible. These events matter locally and can bring allies, advisors and others to your campaign.

Other community members will care about your campaign if they know about it. Think about who is targeted by the tobacco industry. What events are they attracted to? Find a way for your campaign to be present there. Here are some ideas:

- School-based events such as special assemblies, Open Houses and Friday Night Live may reach youth, educators, parents and others who care about youth concerns.
- Church and other faith-based events can help raise awareness among allies who care about children and families.
- Participate in the National Week of the Young Child.
- Have a presence at holiday parades.
- Sponsor or participate in K-12 sports club tournaments (e.g., baseball, basketball, football and soccer tournaments), 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA), and other youth-engaging community events.
- Check into private events, such as local concerts and entertainment targeting youth and parents. These events often allow advertising in their brochures and schedules of events.
- Have a presence at events that focus on audiences targeted by tobacco advertising. Events such as Cinco de Mayo festivals, Juneteenth celebrations, and Chinese New Year's or LGBTQ Pride festivals offer opportunities to raise awareness of the tobacco industry's focused marketing through flavored tobacco products.
- Professional conferences and meetings (e.g., employment fairs and job training conferences) may be important places to raise awareness and connect with potential allies among employers seeking a tobacco-free workplace. Make your flavored tobacco campaign matter locally by showing up to more local events more often.

Best Practice Tip

Avoid stereotyping your campaign. Offer public support for a broad range of local causes that care about the welfare of youth and community. Show up at both expected and unexpected places.

Plan Your Outreach

When you show up to these events, plan outreach that will resonate with those attending.

Here are some ideas:

- Hand out educational materials (especially those featuring people who look like the people who will be at the event)
- Display posters (see note above)
- Collect signatures for a petition
- Invite people to sign up for a mailing list or newsletter
- Hand out cards with your website address
- Recruit new members to your campaign
- Play the *Candy vs. Flavored Tobacco Game*
- Use colorful charts and graphs to share some of the local data you've collected
- Engage in face-to-face education with people



Practice 4: Focus social media on local issues

In addition to being physically present at local events, you can be virtually present on social media for your local community. Your presence on social media platforms that appeal to local people increases the likelihood that they will recognize your flavored tobacco campaign as a local priority.

Social media outlets are interactive ways of communicating and sharing information on the Internet. Their aim is to help people connect with others who have similar interests. Paying thousands of dollars for a public billboard advertisement will reach some people, but a free personal announcement on Facebook might reach even more.

Important decision makers, including many local elected officials and policy makers, use Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, YouTube and Instagram to connect with their constituents.



The Santa Cruz County Tobacco Education Coalition Facebook page.

LinkedIn is a popular network among professionals and working people. Many local organizations use these and other social media platforms to publicize their events and ask for support. Your flavored tobacco campaign may create social media accounts for similar goals.

Post videos, photos and audio interviews of stories and testimonials you've gathered (with permission of the individuals represented). These are persuasive ways to gain supporters.

Learn more about using social media

Here are four resources that can help you learn more about using social media in your flavored tobacco campaign:

- [Using Social Media as a Tool to Complement Advocacy Efforts](#),⁶⁰ from Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice.
- [Using Social Media in Your Campaign](#),⁶¹ from Local Victory (a resource about winning elections).
- [Using Social Media in the Fight Against Tobacco](#),⁶² from Global Bridges: Healthcare Alliance for Tobacco Dependence Treatment.
- Social Media Toolkit for Local Funded Agencies, from California Tobacco Control Program (a resource for CTCF funded agencies).



The California Youth Advocacy Network Twitter page.

Reflections on General Principle 1: Make Your Campaign Matter Locally

Take a moment to think through these practices and assess your readiness to put them into action.	Doing Already	Ready to Move Ahead	Need to do More Footwork
Practice 1: Discover the priorities of key influencers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 2: Use local data to make your campaign a local priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 3: Bring your campaign to local events. Be creative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 4: Focus social media on local issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

General Principle 2: Build Relationships to Fuel Your Campaign

Have you ever heard either of these common phrases?

"Politics is all about relationships."

"All politics is local."

These are wise words to bring to local flavored tobacco campaigns. Across all sources we studied, the most consistent principle noted as critical to the progress of a local campaign was *building relationships*. General principle 1 was about understanding and aligning with what matters to people in order to build relationships. General Principle 2 is about inviting people to apply their strengths to your campaign to build a stronger and healthier community together.

The number, type and quality of relationships you build and sustain matter. This includes relationships among members of your campaign, between people in your campaign and the local community, with people outside of your community, and with allies from other campaigns and technical assistance teams.

If you do not already have *personal* relationships with key decision makers in your community, you must develop them. Engage others who already have those relationships to help your campaign.

Your campaign's progress depends on its ability to establish and maintain these relationships. General Principle 2 is about connecting with the people you know and reaching out to new allies in ways that support your campaign goals. It is also the principle of *paying attention to what matters* in those relationships.

This includes attending to relationships with opponents to minimize their harm to your campaign.

Across all sources we studied, the most consistent principle noted as critical to the progress of a local campaign was *building relationships*.

Who Are the Key Decision Makers?

Key decision makers are those people in your community who directly influence the adoption and implementation of your local flavored tobacco policy. They may include elected and appointed policy makers, city and county staff (including law enforcement), tribal leaders, and people who influence policy makers related to your flavored tobacco policy (e.g., business leaders, community leaders concerned about the health and well-being of children).



Practice 5: Build a local coalition

Every local health department funded by CTCP is required to create and sustain a community coalition for tobacco use prevention and reduction. This coalition frequently includes representatives from organizations across different sectors (e.g., education, business, health, faith), as well as people who care about ending tobacco-related health disparities in their community (e.g., youth, LGBTQ individuals, and members of varied ethnic, racial and socio-economic groups).

The presence of a youth coalition is especially important for campaigns addressing flavored tobacco products. Colorful packaging and flavoring names such as Toothfairy Puff, Cotton Candy, and Sour Gummy Worms appeal to young people and make these products more enticing. Because flavoring in tobacco products has such a large impact on youth, they are the most powerful spokespersons to testify to the harm these products cause. You can engage youth in a process where they are empowered to take charge, address an issue that matters and transform their community for the better. In addition to strengthening your campaign in the near-term, you are helping to prepare young leaders who will carry these efforts into the long-term future.

The presence of a youth coalition is especially important for campaigns addressing flavored tobacco products.



In some communities, the campaign's coalition (of either or both youth and adults) may be the primary vehicle for action. This coalition is the foundation of and launching pad for most of the relationships your campaign is likely to need. Who in your local coalition has a personal reason to care about your flavored tobacco campaign? Who in your coalition can reach out to others in your local community to be a Champion or Connector for your flavored tobacco campaign (see Practice 6, below)?

Practice 6: Find and train Champions and Connectors

Relationships with some people in your community might be especially beneficial to your campaign. “Champions” and “Connectors” describe two such roles, important in every community. A single individual can be both Champion and Connector.

Champions

A “Champion” describes someone who goes beyond the call of their job or public duty to stand up for your campaign. Often, they are elected officials—someone on the city council, county board of supervisors, or tribal council, for example. They may be frequent speakers at campaign events who help raise awareness and support. They may write letters to elected officials and the press, or proactively take on other campaign activities.

Often, Champions for flavored tobacco campaigns have a personal story that drives their passion and commitment.

While it is vital to find at least one local elected official who will stand up for your campaign, not every Champion is necessarily someone in a position of authority or influence. Quite often, Champions for flavored tobacco campaigns have a personal story that drives their passion and commitment. They are driven by their own connection to the cause. It is their outspoken and tangible fight against flavored tobacco that defines them as a Champion.

Connectors

A “Connector” knows people. This is someone who can move your campaign forward through their relationships. People look to Connectors for advice. Connectors may be people who have lived in your community for so long, they have gained a reputation as a trusted advisor for local decision makers. They get out and are seen and known around town. Connectors can help you build relationships with others in their network, and to other Connectors.



Look to your networks

Champions and Connectors are all around us, but you won’t find a badge that identifies them. You’ll need to look among your own and others’ networks. Can you find people who show visible enthusiasm and concern for the well-being of your community? They may be perfect Champions for your flavored tobacco campaign. Look for Connectors among those sorts of people who are always introducing and matching people at business meetings, public events, private parties and other social gatherings.

Champions and Connectors may need some training and support to help your campaign. They may care about health and the image of your community but lack knowledge about why flavored tobacco sales must be eliminated. They may need tips and coaching on handling objections and opposition to the topic. Offer training through your campaign meetings. Provide informal mentoring over coffee or lunch. Fact sheets and brief readings can be useful as well.

Practice 7: Leverage your relationships

Your flavored tobacco product policy campaign will benefit more from its relationships when you find and value people's unique strengths, assets, and personal and professional roles. Leveraging relationships means building on what already exists to get more.

One way to leverage relationships is to reach out to those who are already interested in your cause. Use your time and resources wisely by first engaging people who love the ideas of your campaign. That group's enthusiasm will snowball into more energy that then reaches people who might feel neutral about the issue—or even campaign opponents.

Find and value people's unique strengths, assets, and personal and professional roles.

Best Practice Tip

Start by reaching out to those already interested in your cause. This is a wise way to focus your time and resources early on.

Consider starting with your friends first. They care about you and are more likely to want to work with you to make your community a better place to live. Think about all the people you know locally. Then, think of all the people they know. This additive power will strengthen the message of your flavored tobacco campaign.

Another way to leverage relationships is to tap into special roles or access certain audiences through existing relationships. Here is an example from a local campaigner:

If you have a friend who is a teacher, bring the friend with you to speak to the School Board about the campaign's goals. School Board members may be more sensitive to this person's ideas as a teacher who works directly with youth. Leverage that relationship to get an endorsement from the School Board for your flavored tobacco policy.

Now, when you go to your meeting with policy makers, you can leverage the School Board endorsement to amplify your voice. Your policy makers will be impressed to see the School Board endorsement of your flavored tobacco campaign, and more likely to support it.

You may also want to connect with Local Lead Agencies (LLA's) in other regions to share experiences, resources and connections. In one instance, campaign members in one community contacted other nearby LLA's to provide support for the campaign. These representatives mobilized coalition members who showed up at the local city council and board of supervisor meetings and provided testimony.



Soon, coalition members from neighboring counties were providing testimony for one another at all of their respective meetings, bringing status to the arguments and strengthening the message by emphasizing its regional importance.

Two groups of people that are especially effective at leveraging relationships for your flavored tobacco campaign are:



1. **Parents and other adults who are connected with youth.** Parents and others who serve youth are generally quite willing to step up to protect them. They can be your campaign's most passionate advocates. These include grandparents, teachers, school administrators, coaches, tutors and more. These individuals may work or volunteer with organizations or within industries that your policy makers care about. Their relationships can help leverage action from elected officials or others who have influence on the adoption of a policy about flavored tobacco products.

Parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches and others who serve youth can be your campaign's most passionate advocates.

2. **Health and healthcare professionals.** Professionals working to prevent and treat diseases and promote health will be powerful and respected advocates for your campaign. A physician, nurse or behavioral health counselor can speak with authority about the goals of the campaign. They can also leverage support from your Public Health Department and Public Health Officer, your hospitals and community health centers, your local or regional Medical Society, and other institutions whose voice matters to your policy makers. Dentists and other oral health professionals can leverage relationships with major dental groups, dental societies and others who see the direct consequences of flavored tobacco use on teens and other age groups. The California Medical Association and other statewide professional associations can help you find local health professionals willing to advocate for your campaign.

Practice 8: Get meaningful endorsements.

An endorsement is simply a letter or statement of support from an individual or group on behalf of your flavored tobacco campaign. It is an excellent way to demonstrate broad and diverse support for your campaign.

Your campaign might prepare some models or samples of endorsements. This can help people prepare something in their own words that stays focused on helping your campaign. These written statements can be brought with you to meetings (especially when the authors cannot be there), posted on social media and shared through other forms of media (such as in letters-to-the-editor). Some campaigns gather written endorsements and signatures of support at community events where they have set up an educational booth.

Best Practice Tip

Prepare some sample endorsements that people or organizations can adapt if they wish. If an individual or group needs assistance preparing their endorsement, be ready to offer support.

Another type of formal endorsement may be a resolution from an organization. A resolution goes one step beyond stating agreement and support for your campaign. A resolution indicates that an organization is taking steps to implement some or all components of your campaign (for example, by implementing a program or policy). The University of California Hastings College of the Law has developed two model resolutions, one for rural jurisdictions and one for urban jurisdictions which are great resources for your campaign.

The language of the resolution might even model the terms of your flavored tobacco policy.

Here are some examples that may generate ideas for your own flavored tobacco campaign:

- A children's baseball league might write a resolution to educate their youth players about flavored tobacco products and how to advocate against their sale to and use by youth.
- In 2013, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, a historically African-American organization, adopted a national resolution urging the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ban menthol cigarettes. In 2016, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) followed suit.⁶³
- University of California, San Francisco's [Smoke Free Movies campaign](#) has received [some powerful endorsements](#).⁶⁴ These may suggest ideas for your flavored tobacco campaign.

Practice 9: Recruit and train youth to be leaders.

It is essential to have youth engaged in your campaign right from the start. Integrate them fully into the planning and process of your campaign. Avoid treating youth as a separate group, and do not allow them to be brought forward as tokens or only tools when needed.

Many young people are looking for ways to make a difference and to be part of movements to improve their tribal nations or communities. Youth have first-hand experience with the marketing tactics of the tobacco industry. They may experience pressure from peers to try flavored tobacco products. They have seen the negative consequences of tobacco use among family and friends. Their lived experiences bring awareness and power to a flavored tobacco product policy campaign in ways no one else's voice can.



Best Practice Tip

Work to create a youth coalition that is representative of the diversity in your community. Diverse youth will bring different perspectives to the coalition's work and offer different strengths in reaching local decision-makers.

If youth in your campaign do not use flavored tobacco, they can tell stories about why they do not. They can discuss their anger at being the tobacco industry's prey. They can tell stories about the ways flavored tobacco has affected peers, or describe the consequences of tobacco addiction in a family member or other loved one.

Youth who *do* use flavored tobacco (or have used it in the past) can explain how that came to be. They could discuss what it's been like to try to quit and whether or not they've been successful.

Schools and youth-serving organizations may be able to help you identify and train students to advocate for your campaign on their campus, with their clubs and organizations, and with local elected

officials and policy makers. Consider identifying youth in your local colleges and universities. Youth can help your campaign identify and engage "social leaders" who youth look up to as role models.

Many youth have joined effective advocacy against the tobacco industry through initiatives such the Truth Campaign and thebiggerpicture.org (See box below).

Find and train campaign staff who can work well with youth. Not all adults, even younger adults, are good at working with teens and younger people. Adult campaigners may need training on how to best work with youth as partners. Less experienced individuals may unintentionally patronize youth, or take steps that treat them as subordinates rather than as peers and co-leaders in the effort.

Several local campaigns we surveyed noted how youth in their group grew up to take positions in civic organizations. Now, in these professional capacities, they are helping their flavored tobacco product policy campaigns.

The [California Youth Advocacy Network \(CYAN\)](#) is a statewide group that engages young people in high schools, colleges and universities, military installations and other young adult communities.⁷² They provide resources and training to help youth advocate for a tobacco-free California. They also have resources to help your campaign work effectively with young people.

Powerful, Successful Youth Campaigns

[*The Truth Campaign*](#) was launched in 1999, when the teen smoking rate in the U.S. was 23%. The campaign was based on collaborations between youth advocates and an advertising/public relations firm. They created TV ads, billboards, print ads and posters that called out the lies of the tobacco industry. The campaign continues to be active today, when only 13.6% of teens smoke.

[*The Bigger Picture*](#) is a collaboration between the [Center for Vulnerable Populations](#) at University of California, San Francisco, and [Youth Speaks](#), an organization that promotes youth civic engagement and artistic expression. Youth advocates have joined the effort to change social and environmental factors that can lead to Type 2 diabetes.

Practice 10: Recruit and train people from targeted groups.

The tobacco industry markets flavored tobacco products to youth, but also to many ethnic and minority groups. For example, the evidence of the tobacco industry targeting the African American community with menthol tobacco products is overwhelming. As early as the 1950's, there are records indicating racial targeting of African Americans with menthol tobacco products through advertisements and price promotions in mostly African American neighborhoods.⁶⁵

Today, African Americans, Latinos, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and several Asian groups are all more likely than whites to be the focus of flavored tobacco advertising and marketing.^{66,67} Other market segments for flavored tobacco include women, low-income communities, those with mental illness and people within the LGBTQ communities.

Best Practice Tip

Enlist the aid of coalition members—especially youth—in crafting messaging that can be understood and embraced by groups that have already experienced considerable discrimination.

A campaign by the Truth Initiative highlights research from a 2016 study that found that low-income and Latino students are more likely to have tobacco outlets near their schools. Another study found substantially higher density advertising in Black neighborhoods.⁶⁸ Your flavored tobacco campaign can gain momentum by working with people from these populations. These may be social and civic leaders from human rights organizations, churches and the faith community, and ethnic and cultural groups. They may also be informal leaders from your neighborhoods, such as parents, coaches, and Neighborhood Watch members.

With training and support, these advocates can help your flavored tobacco campaign become more meaningful to your community as Champions and Connectors. They can educate other campaign members and prepare them to build effective relationships with the communities that they represent.

Within some ethnic and cultural groups, your campaign may need to pay attention to customs and traditions. You may need to communicate in languages other than English. In some California communities, over 30% of the population does not communicate comfortably in English. Spanish is very common, followed by Chinese, Tagalog (Philippines), Vietnamese and Korean.⁶⁹ When possible, work with youth from these cultures who are bilingual and can reach community members in the language they find easiest to use.

Some cultural practices and customs may not be as familiar to youth, so it is also important to identify and work with community organizations with strong representation from other ethnic groups in your community to help with language and cultural brokering.



Practice 11: Build healthy relationships with local tobacco retailers.

The tobacco industry pits tobacco retailers and tobacco control advocates against each other. Individuals in one of these groups sometimes consider those in the other group as “the enemy.” An effective flavored tobacco control campaign will challenge these notions and introduce new ways for these groups to work together towards some shared goals.

The California tobacco law changes of 2016 place new demands on local tobacco retailers. For example, they place the responsibility for preventing youth tobacco sales on store clerks. Under-aged individuals themselves are not criminalized for attempting to purchase or for possession of tobacco products or paraphernalia (though they may be charged if they break other laws, such as smoking in a school or other restricted area). [State law](#) holds the individual who sells or furnishes tobacco products or paraphernalia to under-aged individuals responsible.⁷⁰

An effective flavored tobacco campaign will challenge the notion that tobacco retailers and tobacco control advocates are enemies. Instead, the campaign will introduce new ways for these groups to work together on shared goals.

CDPH’s Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community (HSHC) campaign aims to reduce the density of stores selling tobacco, limit their proximity to schools, limit the types of tobacco and alcohol products being sold, and restrict the advertising and placement of such products in stores. It also works to replace less healthy food with more nutritious options.

The work of HSHC can show retailers that restricting the sale of flavored products will not have a catastrophic effect on their revenue for two main reasons. First, they may still sell non-flavored tobacco. Second, most of these retailers make larger profits from food sales.

Additionally, when they join in a campaign to prevent the sale of flavored tobacco products, they are taking an important and effective step to help prevent youth from initiating tobacco use. This is

both ethically and morally fitting. It will be seen positively by many members of their communities and will promote the good reputation of the retailer.

In your role, you can offer a helpful hand to tobacco retailers to educate them and help make it easier for them to comply with California laws and HSHC campaign goals. It is important to build a relationship of equity and respect with retailers. If retailers are approached as the lesser or inferior partner in your relationship, they may continue to be resistant to your flavored tobacco campaign.



Here are some helpful tips from other local campaigns:

- **Engage retailers early on.** Invite and train local retailers to be active in your campaign as early as you can. Learn about their priorities, concerns and recommendations for your campaign. Encourage their voice and participation in policy decisions so they can shape, not fear, potential changes.
- **Join retailers in promoting health.** Help local retailers set up their advertisements and products to promote healthier products to youth. Use your local HSHC campaign assessment results and resources for promoting healthier products. Then spread the word about these “health-promoting” stores on social media or events, and let retailers know that you’re doing so.
- **Communicate regularly.** Visit retailers often and be a constant source of communication about your campaign. Help them feel safe and supported. For example, warn them about groups funded by the tobacco industry that try to intimidate local businesses into supporting them. Prepare them to deal with groups like the National Association of Tobacco Outlets. (see “[how-to](#)” on NATO on ALA’s The Center).⁷¹
- Often, local “mom-and-pop” or “corner store” retailers are operated by immigrants who are not comfortable communicating in English. They may not fully understand what the tobacco industry asks them to do. Help them by communicating in their language and providing translated materials. Remember that many immigrant store owners and staff are proud of their families and children. Show them how you can work together to protect their children from the harms of flavored tobacco products.



The overall aim is to improve how each retailer can be a more responsible community partner, which in turn may increase customer visits and sales.

Practice 12: Engage positively with local elected officials.

If you only engage with your local elected officials when you need them, you will not help your flavored tobacco campaign. As a local campaign organizer, your relationships with policy makers must go beyond your own campaign issues.

You are likely to bump into local policy makers at the store, an event, or in town. If you approach them about your issue in such situations, you will be among the dozens (or hundreds) of other people seeking them out because of personal concerns. They will not be able to distinguish your campaign from everyone else who wants their time and attention.

If you only engage with your local elected officials when you need them, you will not help your flavored tobacco campaign.

Local elected officials care about your community just as you do. Most of them get little to no compensation for their public service. They might regularly stay at public meetings late into the night, perhaps after working a full-time job. They rarely receive appreciation for their public service.

Take time to get to know your local policy makers as people and as your community peers. When you see them around town, take time to thank them for their service to the community and for support they may offer your campaign. During public meetings, address them with respect and compassion for their effort to balance the needs of all in your community.

Local Elected Officials

"[Local elected officials] work really hard, and they rarely hear from people when they are doing a good job. They hear only when we are upset at them. Find out what they have done for the good of your community—even if it has nothing to do with your campaign—and thank them."

— Tobacco control campaigner from a successful flavored tobacco campaign

Reflections on General Principle 2: Build Relationships to Fuel Your Campaign

Take a moment to think through these practices and assess your readiness to put them into action.	Doing Already	Ready to Move Ahead	Need to do More Footwork
Practice 5: Build a local coalition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 6: Find and train Champions and Connectors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 7: Leverage your relationships.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 8: Get meaningful endorsement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 9: Recruit and train youth to be leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 10: Recruit and train people from targeted groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 11: Build healthy relationships with local tobacco retailers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 12: Engage positively with local elected officials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

General Principle 3:

Follow Your Local Policy “Rule Book”

Successful local campaigns adhere to the principle of learning and following the local rules, both formal and informal. Your community, whether city, county or tribe, has a formal, legal way of making new laws and modifying current ones. These rules for local policy making can be found in local workbooks, manuals of procedures and protocols, and sometimes even in video and audio files.



Through them you can learn about the formal process of interacting in legislative meetings (e.g., parliamentary procedure). You can locate meeting schedules and agendas, office hours and other ways of reaching your elected officials. Many of these rules are well documented but require patient study. Knowing and showing respect for these rules will show that you care about good decision making.

Some local rules of policy making are not documented well or at all. These harder-to-find protocols are not hidden on purpose. They tend to be the practices that evolved locally, and people learn them through experience and practice.

Practice 13: Build on what already exists.

Make it a regular practice to build on what already exists in local policies related to your campaign. Avoid re-inventing the wheel. Your local campaign must study and explore the history and evolution of policy regarding flavored tobacco (including its connection to menthol) at the federal, state and local levels. You can greatly enhance your credibility and effectiveness when you speak in an informed way about this knowledge base and use it to educate your local policy makers. Following are some examples of how to do this.

Study and become fluent with flavored tobacco policy language and options

Many documents exist to help you learn and make the case for a local flavored tobacco campaign based on federal, state and local campaigns. The information included in *Policy Background and Examples* (next page) will be helpful.

You greatly enhance your credibility and effectiveness when you speak in an informed way about this knowledge base and use it to educate your local policy makers.

Policies Background and Examples

- ChangeLab Solutions:** [Policy Options for Restricting the Sale of Menthol Cigarettes and Other Flavored Tobacco Products](#).⁷² Fact sheet outlining local options. Includes a model ordinance and pros and cons for various ordinance options.
- Public Health Law Center:** [Leading from Up North: How Canada is Solving the Menthol Tobacco Problem](#).⁷³ Report outlining Canada's experience banning the sale of menthol.
- The Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing:** [Countering Arguments in Opposition to Flavored Tobacco Restrictions](#).⁷⁴ Suggested responses to common opposition arguments.
- Office of the Attorney General of California:** [Focus on Flavors: The Authority of a State or Local Government to Restrict or Prohibit the Sale or Distribution of Flavored Tobacco Products](#).⁷⁵ Authoritative guide to help your local policy makers understand the opportunities and limits for flavored tobacco policy.
- Public Health Law Center:** [Flavored Products](#).⁷⁶ Brief that provides background on the threats of flavored tobacco products, legal issues, key research, select litigation, select policies and further resources.
- ChangeLab Solutions:** [Tobacco Laws Affecting California](#).⁷⁷ This 2016 resource includes information on all laws related to tobacco control in California. It is comprehensive (at over 100 pages), but organized in a way to help you read about dozens of federal, state and local legal issues important to your local flavored tobacco campaign.
- Public Health Law Center:** [Preemption: The Biggest Challenge to Tobacco Control](#).⁷⁸ This resource is not specific to flavored tobacco but includes key related issues. It provides examples of how federal laws regarding flavored tobacco do not prevent local policy makers from further restricting flavored tobacco. It also offers evidence about how lawsuits against local policy makers failed. Preemption, or the ability of federal and state law to override local law, is on the mind of local policy makers. It may come up formally in your policy campaign, or it may be on the back on your policy makers' minds. They will appreciate your campaign bringing it to their attention.
- J Law Med Ethics:** [Regulating Tobacco Product Advertising and Promotions in the Retail Environment: A Roadmap for States and Localities](#).⁷⁹ This 2015 publication appears in an academic journal yet is written with attention to local needs. It offers a concise review of key issues, along with possible provisions to consider in your local flavored tobacco policy concerning advertising, point-of-sale marketing, coupons, size of displays, proximity to schools and more. Each option includes pros and cons to consider.



Study and build on local policies related to your flavored tobacco campaign

Your flavored tobacco campaign is building on your community's history of similar policies. Local policy makers look at what policies exist, and what came before them as precedent for their current decisions. Your campaign will gain credibility and respect by demonstrating its ability to study this history and show how your flavored tobacco policy fits with and builds on past policies.

If your community has adopted prior tobacco control policies, such as smoke-free parks or multi-unit housing, then your campaign can offer ideas of how those policies share components related to the restriction of sales of flavored tobacco products. If your community has adopted a policy for a local tobacco retail license, then your campaign may help to amend it to include components regarding flavored tobacco products.

Your campaign will gain credibility and respect by demonstrating how your flavored tobacco policy fits with and builds on past policies.



There may be local resolutions on flavored or other tobacco products that you can borrow from to establish your flavored tobacco policy (see descriptions of some local resolutions on page 34). Your study of local policies might highlight lessons from prior failed campaigns on flavored tobacco, other tobacco concerns, or related health concerns.

Studying previous local policy work related to tobacco may point out lessons for how to identify and deal with local opposition, as well as how your local policy makers understand and practice policy making related to preventive health.

Study and share lessons from other flavored tobacco policies

As you learn from the history of your local community's policies, you may come across examples of policies from other communities that have been used to shape local or tribal laws. Some policy makers look forward to building on lessons from peers. Others may prefer to disregard those examples as less applicable locally.

In either instance, looking at the language of existing local flavored tobacco policies in California can provide a list of things to consider or to avoid. For example, in some communities, a buffer zone policy may be more difficult to enforce than a more comprehensive policy. In others, having an existing tobacco retailer licensing law in place may make it easier to pass and enforce a flavored tobacco policy if the policy is introduced as a "plug-in" to the tobacco retail license. The fee for the tobacco retail license can be leveraged as a built in mechanism for enforcement of the flavored tobacco policy.

Practice 14: Co-develop policy language with key people.

This practice draws its strength from practices described earlier focused on understanding what matters to people when you're building relationships with them. It is critical to gather ideas, feedback and recommendations from those who can make or break your success. It is better to do this as early as possible in your campaign.

Your local campaign should identify at least one local policy maker to work with you to codevelop the flavored tobacco policy language. Gaining additional input from other policy makers will help you strengthen this practice. Policy makers can help you learn how other local concerns may facilitate or impede the success of your flavored tobacco policy.

It is critical to gather ideas, feedback and recommendations from those who can make or break your success.



Key informant interviews with policy makers, their aides and their close colleagues can offer guidance on how to align your message and campaign with their goals and aspirations. These interviews will often demonstrate their worries and concerns.

For example, the tobacco industry uses special groups to intimidate policy makers and their staff with threats of a law suit.⁸⁰ Prepare elected officials and policy makers to deal with groups like the National Association of Tobacco Outlets (NATO). Find resources to share that provide [counter arguments to opposition](#) that is likely to arise.⁸¹

Other key people to consider including in developing your policy language include your District Attorney and their staff, city and county staff who are important for policy development, and law enforcement. Although law enforcement staff are not always responsible for policy implementation, their expertise with local laws will be helpful to your campaign. They may also be helpful in estimating costs for enforcement.

Practice 15: Start with a strong policy. Negotiate down if you must.

Your local policy language will depend on your current tobacco control policies as well as the needs and resources of your community. While these things will vary across communities, here are some recommendations from local flavored tobacco campaigns.

- **Start with the strongest policy you can. Negotiate down if you must.** Use ChangeLab Solutions' [Model California Ordinance Restricting Sales of Flavored Tobacco Products](#)⁸² as a guide. Create your policy wish list. Know at what point you will not negotiate further.

One advocate cautioned us to “know the line in the sand” and make it clear to those with whom you are negotiating.

- **Avoid negotiating into a “bad” or weak policy that you will regret later.** The points of negotiation may vary by community. For example, in a community where there is considerable resistance to adoption of the policy, the group might choose to implement a “grandfathering” provision. Certain conditions would be allowed for retailers who had been selling tobacco products before the policy was adopted, but not for retailers entering after the policy was adopted. The policy might allow retailers selling flavored tobacco products before the adoption of the policy an extension period that allows them to sell off their current stock of products. On the other hand, if the policy grandfathers all existing retailers and allows them to continue to sell flavored tobacco products indefinitely, your community is likely to suffer the continuing consequences from those ongoing sales.

Buffer zones might be another area where negotiations on a policy create new problems. These zones designate a certain distance from specific locations, such as schools and parks, in which a retailer cannot sell flavored tobacco products. It’s important to think about where sales are likely to cluster if a buffer zone is created. Clusters of retailers or larger storefront advertising might be concentrated in the space immediately beyond the buffer zone.

- **A strong policy on flavored tobacco should include menthol flavored tobacco products.** In the earlier days of flavored tobacco product policy campaigns, local municipalities avoided including menthol flavored products within their scope for policy change. The reason for this was not obvious during our research.



Some communities noted concerns about avoiding racial tensions because of higher use of menthol cigarettes among African Americans and other groups. Research documents from the tobacco industry illustrate how menthol cigarettes and other products target youth and make it more likely for young and new smokers to sustain use, facilitating nicotine addiction.

The latest research evidence on the effects of the 2009 federal ban on flavored cigarettes (which did not include menthol cigarettes) found a [disturbing increase in the use of menthol cigarettes](#) while flavored cigarette use decreased.⁸³ Ignoring this harmful effect of policies that do not include menthol would be unethical.

- **Avoid doing it all at once.** This was a lesson shared by several communities. What, how much, and the timing of campaign activities should be based on your community’s prior experience with tobacco control and health policies.

For example, working toward two different tobacco control policies within the same period (e.g., smoke-free multi-unit housing and a policy on minimum packaging size for cigarillos) may confuse and overwhelm policy makers. Start with policies likely to have greater public support, even if this means delaying a start on a flavored tobacco product policy. This will help you establish connections, build relationships and refine practices that you can use over the longer term when you bring your focus to another policy.

One policy maker cautioned against worrying about having every little detail perfected before proposing a policy draft. This can prevent a campaign from ever getting started.

Practice 16: Bring outside professionals to your local table.

Many communities we spoke with emphasized the importance of bringing external professional expertise to their local campaign. Such specialized knowledge may not be present among program staff, or even within the local community. This is especially true with the new California laws that increased the minimum tobacco sales age to 21, increased the tax on tobacco products, and new marijuana legislation.

Your campaign can be a broker for such expertise to your local policy makers. Two key sources were noted, both referred to previously in this guide:

- [ChangeLab Solutions](#) is a statewide technical assistance provider for CTCF. Their expertise has shaped the success of many local campaigns.
- [Public Health Law Center: Tobacco Control Legal Consortium](#) is a nationally recognized network of trusted legal experts. The Consortium can help your campaign engage attorneys with experience on flavored tobacco policy.

Bringing this external expertise to your local policy makers will strengthen your local relationships and your likelihood of effective policy change.

Bringing external expertise to your local policy makers will strengthen your local relationships and your likelihood of effective policy change.

Practice 17. Attend meetings, pay attention and connect with issues.

The “local policy rulebook” can usually be observed in action several times each month. Most communities have one or more monthly City Council and County Board of Supervisors meetings where local policies are presented, debated and decided.

Make it a principle to attend these meetings in full, not only when there is a discussion on your flavored tobacco policy. Watch and learn the protocols of the meeting, what happens when, how to behave appropriately, and what the formal and informal rules are. Take notes on what seems to get attention (positive and negative) from the audience and from policy makers.



Among the most important skills you can learn through your attendance is to connect your issue to other issues from the meeting in a positive way—to connect the dots. For example, at the start of a meeting, a City Council member might offer a public resolution to honor a local teacher for her public service to children. Later, in your update about your campaign to the Council, thank that Council member for recognizing the teacher and demonstrating the community’s concern for children.

You can then point out that your campaign also aligns with what matters to children, and also reflects the community’s interests. In this comment, you’ve emphasized the relevance of your policy campaign while also praising policy makers themselves. This is an excellent example of positive diplomacy and an effective way to “work” a meeting.

Practice 18: Learn the local policy process.

City and county public meetings are usually video or audio recorded so that you can view them online later. Viewing these recordings allows you to learn about local policy-making protocols and identify opportunities to make connections across issues. Watching videos from communities that have adopted flavored tobacco policy restrictions can help prepare you for questions that might arise and opposition that might be expressed. It may also reveal unexpected allies who willingly joined this effort in other communities and suggest local alliances that could be of use.

Practice 19: Provide proof that stakeholders care.

You want to provide policy makers proof that stakeholders from all parts of the community care about your flavored tobacco campaign. This is an essential practice of successful policy campaigners. It builds on other practices, such as finding what matters to others and building relationships with broad and diverse stakeholders.

Your campaign needs to show local policy makers how it is relevant to people, groups and organizations that are integral parts of the community. Offer this proof both during your campaign's public testimony and in private meetings with policy makers. In General Principle 1, you learned about some key stakeholders who can make your campaign matter. In General Principle 2, you learned about ways to gain and demonstrate this broad support. In General Principle 3, these people (or their testimony via other means) must be presented in a convincing way to your policy makers.

Your campaign needs to show local policy makers how it is relevant to people, groups and organizations that are integral parts of the community.



Your goal is to illustrate this support through your best advocates, those who would feel honored to speak on behalf of your flavored tobacco product policy campaign (your campaign Champions).

Prepare yourself and your advocates to use their speaking time wisely. Produce fact sheets and speaking points. Practice until your points come across easily, clearly and sincerely. Open and close by thanking the policy makers for their time and all they do for the community. (Examples of what to present can be found in General Principle 1 and other places in this Guide.)

Even the best ideas and most powerful stories will not achieve their effect without skillful communication. Practice by presenting to city and county commissions, committees, and work groups (e.g., Planning Committee, Parks and Recreation Committee, Youth Council, Economic Advisory Group) before facing the City Council and County Board of Supervisors. Ask these groups for feedback to help you improve your delivery.

Skillful communication includes both the way the message is delivered and who delivers the message. Your message must be communicated clearly and logically but with some emotion too. The harm from flavored tobacco sales to youth, adults and the broader community is not a neutral issue. Still, your delivery must be respectful and appreciative of the policy makers. A disrespectful tone will make your message difficult to hear. It may create resistance instead of building agreement.

In General Principle 2, you learned about leveraging relationships. This is why you choose people whose message is most likely to resonate with the group you want to reach—these speakers can amplify your campaign's voice. This approach is critical for testimony and interactions during meetings with policy makers. Remember, parents, those harmed by tobacco-related illnesses, leaders of organizations serving youth, healthcare providers, local lawyers, and business people are among the messengers who can best draw the attention of your policy makers. Youth of all ages, but especially those most likely to be targeted by and experimenting with flavored tobacco products, are essential messengers for your campaign.

Whether the elected officials are City Council members in a small town or federal representatives, they are public servants who were voted in by constituents. They care about what we think—because we can vote them out of office. If we express our concerns respectfully, they will hear us.



Practice 20: Address policy maker opposition to your campaign privately.

If local policymakers oppose your flavored tobacco campaign, find a time to speak with them privately where they can feel safe to share their concerns. Disagreements during public meetings can create conditions for public shaming and disrespect, both for policy makers and for your campaign.

Once in private, listen carefully and ask questions. Make the effort to genuinely understand their concerns. Be honest about whether you agree or disagree with their position, and continue to show respect for them as a person. If you and your policy maker are not in agreement, make sure they understand that your stance is in favor of protecting youth and the public good. This type of private relationship building may not move the policy maker to your favor, but it can temper their negativity during any public policy debate.

Practice 21: After policy adoption, support implementation.

After all the hard work to adopt a policy, the implementation of that policy in the community is even more important to ensure long-term success.

[The Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing](#) is a CTCP technical assistance provider that offers training, tools and support for post-campaign implementation. In their [guidance](#),⁸⁴ they emphasize four key elements for implementation:

1. Research how the policy should be implemented in order to be effective.
2. Renew relationships with elected officials and staff developed during the campaign to pass the policy, and develop new relationships with staff involved in implementing the policy.
3. Enlist the public as an ally in the implementation and enforcement effort by increasing public awareness of the policy.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation and enforcement effort.

Funded projects can collaborate with enforcement agencies and facilitate compliance through ongoing monitoring, outreach and education, and continued advocacy. Local campaigns can request updates on the enforcement of the policy from the parties required to enforce it (e.g., the number of monthly citations related to the policy). Campaigns can assess and share results of policy implementation through their Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey and HSHC campaign.

Your campaign might work with local policy makers to implement public recognition for retailers supporting your campaign. This recognition might come in the form of public press through local media or as a certificate of appreciation from city and county officials. A dominant lesson learned from prior flavored tobacco campaigns is that they do not see themselves as a one-time project or initiative.

When it comes to countering the tobacco industry, local campaigns see themselves as responsible for shaping and nurturing a culture within their community for ongoing policy adoption and implementation.



Reflections on General Principle 3: Follow Your Local Policy “Rule Book”

Take a moment to think through these practices and assess your readiness to put them into action.	Doing Already	Ready to Move Ahead	Need to do More Footwork
Practice 13: Build on what already exists.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 14: Co-develop policy language with key people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 15: Start with a strong policy. Negotiate down if you must.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 16: Bring outside professionals to your local table.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 17: Attend meetings, pay attention and connect with issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 18: Learn the local policy process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 19: Provide proof that stakeholders care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 20: Address policy maker opposition to your campaign privately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice 21: After policy adoption, support implementation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Two Things to Remember Throughout Your Campaign

Number 1: The threat is real, serious and current

Many people, including local policy makers, struggle to understand why it is so critical that we aggressively address the threats posed by flavored tobacco products. There are many other priorities in communities—creating more jobs, improving public education, fighting violence and crime. California already has some of the strongest laws in the nation addressing tobacco sales and use, and as a result we also have some of the lowest tobacco use rates as well.

Your local campaign must help others understand how serious and immediate the harms caused by flavored tobacco products and the tobacco industry are. Our work to end tobacco use is far from over. Flavored tobacco poses a particular threat to young people, new users, and groups targeted disproportionately by the tobacco industry.

Flavored tobacco products are now playing a major role in introducing youth to other tobacco products.

Master some of the most compelling talking points when discussing the scope and seriousness of the threat with people.





Compelling Talking Points: The threat is real and serious

- **The tobacco industry recruits.** The tobacco industry can only sustain itself by recruiting replacement customers for adult users who quit or die. Children, youth and young adults are their targets because these are the individuals most likely to succumb to nicotine addiction. Among adult smokers in the U.S., 88.2% reported trying their first cigarette by the time they were 18 years of age.⁹
- **Flavored tobacco products are a major part of the problem.** Flavored tobacco products are now playing a major role in introducing youth to other tobacco products. They taste better to first-time users. They make it easier to become addicted.⁶ Menthol flavoring makes cigarettes more addictive.⁸⁵
- **Tobacco kills.** Tobacco is the only industry allowed to legally sell a product that will kill half of all consumers when used as intended. Once addicted, it is extremely difficult to quit. Flavored products, such as menthol cigarettes, make it more difficult to quit.⁸⁶
- **Tobacco use leads to chronic, disabling illness.** Smoking damages almost every organ in the body and impairs health in general.^{87, 88} Illnesses associated with tobacco use include heart disease, stroke, a range of cancers, lung diseases and diabetes.⁸⁷ Sixteen million Americans live with a serious illness caused by smoking.⁸⁷
- **Smoking harms non-smokers, including children.** Secondhand smoke causes serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke and lung cancer.^{87, 89} One in four Americans who don't smoke are exposed to secondhand smoke, including 15 million children (ages 3–11).⁹⁰ Secondhand smoke can cause sudden infant death syndrome, ear and respiratory infections, and in children with asthma, more frequent and severe attacks.^{87, 89}
- **The tobacco industry damages community prosperity.** Tobacco products are expensive. In low-income families, money used for tobacco may divert resources from food, shelter, health care and education. Treating illnesses caused by tobacco use is costly, and much of the cost is borne by states and communities. The U.S. spends \$170 billion on medical care for tobacco-associated illness each year. Smokers are absent from work more often than non-smokers and are less productive when they are on the job.^{87, 21}

Number 2: Local flavored tobacco policy change is a social justice issue

Tobacco control advocate Valerie Yerger led a [model campaign](#)⁹¹ to ban sales of flavored tobacco products in San Francisco. One of the perspectives that was helpful to her efforts was framing flavored tobacco products as a social justice issue.

She points out that the tobacco industry has targeted specific communities with marketing for menthol cigarettes, especially African Americans, women, LGBTQ communities, as well as marginalized and low-income communities. Additionally, the tobacco industry [manipulated menthol levels](#)⁹² specifically to appeal to smokers attracted to menthol, including adolescents and young adults. Among African American's who smoke cigarettes, nearly 90% use menthol products.

The tobacco industry does not make communities richer, healthier or stronger. It divides and impoverishes our communities. For your campaign, master some of the most compelling talking points when discussing the ways flavored tobacco campaigns are a [social justice issue](#).⁹³

Compelling Talking Points: Flavored tobacco is a social justice issue

- **Flavored tobacco products exacerbate social inequities that are already likely to exist.** Focused campaigns to market to and addict individuals in communities of color, LGBTQ and low-income communities, those in the military and those with mental illness, create greater burdens for a range of existing social inequities.
- **Health disparities are worsened.** Existing health disparities are worsened by higher levels of tobacco use and the severe chronic illnesses that can result.
- **Fair political representation may be impeded.** In one study, half of elected state representatives in the U.S. accepted donations from the tobacco industry. This may sway their opinions away from what is best for their constituents when considering anti-tobacco legislation and policies.
- **Freedom of speech and information have been attacked.** Tobacco companies have used intimidation and lawsuits to silence anti-tobacco social marketing campaigns. These steps have limited the opportunity for Americans to educate themselves fully about tobacco's risks, including the risks of flavored products.
- **Economic inequities are exacerbated.** Low income individuals are more likely to smoke and less likely to quit. As a consequence, they are likely to have more severe health problems and less available income (because they spend on tobacco products and are likely to earn less in the first place).
- **The tobacco industry has a long history of deceit and disregard**⁹⁴ for the communities it targets. They are not concerned about the health and wellbeing of a community. They want to exploit people's vulnerabilities to create new (addicted) customers. Their primary focus is expanding their market and staying viable in the marketplace.

Closing Thoughts: Continue Learning and Practicing Principles

Your local flavored tobacco campaign is part of a larger movement to end tobacco harm in all communities. This movement has been alive since the first Surgeon General's Report on Smoking over 50 years ago. As part of this movement, your campaign is not just a project or a program. Think of it as a dynamic, living organism that is learning and getting smarter all the time.

During our time with prior and current flavored tobacco campaigns, we were reminded that local policy change sometimes takes years, often with repeated failures along the way. The passion and commitment of the local people who embody the campaign keep the fire burning against the tobacco industry. Their resiliency is what will eventually end the tobacco epidemic.

Your campaign is not just a project or a program. It is a dynamic, living organism that is learning and getting smarter all the time!

The principles and best practices reviewed in this guide are only steps along this journey. You might have already used some of them, or you may just be starting out. Pace yourself to learn them within the context of your community. Their practice can help your campaign move forward and eventually succeed. You will likely develop new principles along the way. Take the time to teach others and help them establish their own principles for effective local tobacco control.



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Funding for this guide was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under Grant # NU58DP005969-03-01 to the California Department of Public Health with a subcontract to the University of California, Merced.