

While federal and state laws prohibit the sales of nicotine products to youth under 21 years old, 23.6% of Kentucky kids report being sold nicotine products directly from stores.



Protect Kentucky Kids: Enforce Tobacco 21 Laws

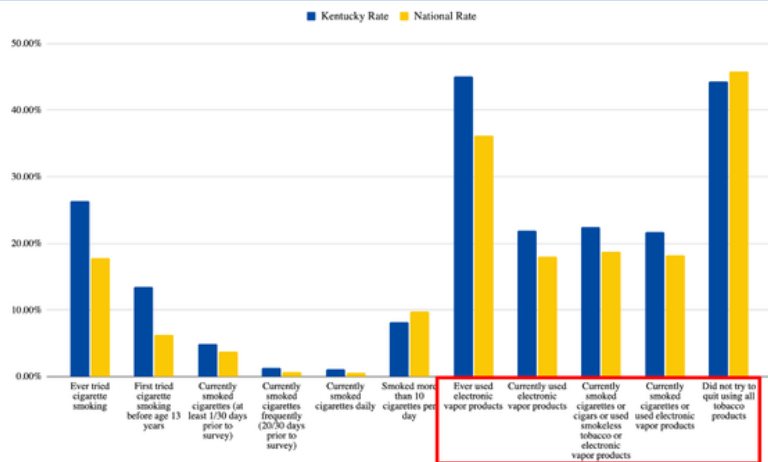


- An additional 61.49% of KY kids report they borrow these products from someone likely too young to have been legally sold these products.
- Kentucky is one of only about 10 states that does not have a comprehensive program to enforce our Tobacco 21 laws. This means enforcement agencies are unable to locate most of these establishments to ensure they are complying with the law prohibiting sales to kids.

THE CONSEQUENCES

Kentucky kids are becoming addicted to nicotine and nicotine harms developing brains.

Current Trends Among Youth



Perkins, R., Park, S., Conner, M., Corralles, M., Jarama, A., Ezzamel, C., et al. (2022). Tobacco and dual use among middle and high school students — United States, 2018. *MMWR: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 171(16), 4828–4834. <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7116a1>

Copyright 2023, #ICANendthetrend, University of Kentucky



- But keep in mind that youth nicotine addiction won't just affect the individual - employers will also be impacted, and we are already in a workforce crisis.
 - Students who use nicotine products are more likely to have lower grades. 72% of Kentucky high school students with mostly D/F grades have used e-cigarettes.
 - Employers are paying an estimated \$6,000 more annually for employees who smoke compared to those who don't smoke. This is due to absenteeism, healthcare costs, pension benefits, presenteeism and smoking breaks.
 - Studies show that non-smoking youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to try conventional cigarettes, which means the cycle of absenteeism and chronic disease burden that plagues our workforce will likely continue.



THE ANSWER: TOBACCO 21 ENFORCEMENT



DON'T BELIEVE THE MYTHS:



A "Tax"? Burdensome?

Any costs associated with enforcing Tobacco 21 are NOT a tax on retailers - merely the cost of doing business in Kentucky and selling deadly products.



"Tobacco State?"

Ag leaders support the enforcement of T21. Tobacco is no longer one of KY's top exports.



Blame the kids!

Kids have been specifically targeted by tobacco and vape companies' marketing. Also, punishing Kentucky kids one-by-one isn't effective and won't solve the issue.



Blame the clerks!

Penalizing only low wage, high turnover store employees won't solve the issue - the store owners must pay the price for breaking the law should it occur.

ELEMENT 1:

Enforcement agencies must know where the businesses that sell nicotine products are located throughout the state.

ELEMENT 2:

Annual compliance checks must be conducted to ensure that sales to underage individuals are not taking place.

ELEMENT 3:

For those entities that refuse to comply with the Tobacco 21 laws, stiff penalties must be enforced.

Ashlea.Christiansen@heart.org
Shannon.Baker@lung.org
AWhatley@kyyouth.org