



American Indian



The Story of American Indian


Some American Indians use tobacco for ceremonial or religious reasons, which creates an important distinction between traditional and commercial use. The tobacco industry has preyed on these traditions, funding powwows and promoting brands like Natural American Spirit¹ – they appropriate American Indian culture to sell their deadly products, not to show meaningful support for American Indian communities².

Big Tobacco also sees American Indian-owned casinos as an avenue to distribute their products. The industry funds these businesses in exchange for carrying an endless supply of cigarettes, preying on concerns that allowing indoor smoking is key to their success,³ despite evidence that a smoke-free environment would actually increase patronage.⁴

This kind of culture exploitation has contributed to American Indian communities having the highest rate of smoking prevalence in California, and the only group where smoking is on the rise.⁵ Nearly one in three native adults in California smoke. However, tobacco's harm goes beyond those that use it – native populations also report more exposure to secondhand smoke at home.⁶ It's time to break Big Tobacco's grip on American Indian communities.

The Proof is in the Data

Indicator	American Indian	General Population
Adult Tobacco Use		
1. Adult Cigarette Use: Adult cigarette smoking prevalence	19.1%	11.0%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Health Interview Survey, 2016-17. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. 		
2. Change in Adult Cigarette Use: Rate of change in adult cigarette smoking, 2014 to 2017	-40.5%	-11.3%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Health Interview Survey, 2016-17. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. California Health Interview Survey, 2013-14. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. 		
3. Adult Tobacco Use: Adult tobacco use prevalence (e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes and other vaping products, other tobacco products)	20.9%	14.6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health. 		
Youth Tobacco Use		
4. Youth Cigarette Use: Youth cigarette smoking prevalence	4.7% 	2.0%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Student Tobacco Survey, 2017-18. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego. 		
5. Change in Youth Cigarette Use: Rate of change in youth cigarette smoking, 2016 to 2018	-17.5%	-53.5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Student Tobacco Survey, 2017-18. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-16. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego. 		
6. Youth Tobacco Use: Youth tobacco use prevalence (e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes and other vaping products, other tobacco products)	19.7% 	12.7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Student Tobacco Survey, 2017-18. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego. 		
Availability of Tobacco & Tobacco Industry Influence		
7. Cheapest Cigarettes: Average price for the cheapest pack of cigarettes	\$4.48	\$4.58
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau. 		
8. Flavored Little Cigar Price: Average price for a single flavored little cigar/cigarillo	\$0.98	\$0.97
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau. 		

9. **Tobacco Retail Licensing: Proportion of population protected by a strong tobacco retail licensing law** 22.9%  36.9%

- Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2018. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.
- American Community Survey, 2013-2017. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.
- Decennial Census, 2010. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

10. **Tobacco Stores: Density of stores selling tobacco per 100,000 residents** 107.1  79.6

- California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retailer Licensees, October 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Tax and Fee Administration.
- American Community Survey, 2013-2017. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.
- Decennial Census, 2010. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

11. **Flavored Tobacco: Proportion of stores that sell flavored non-cigarette tobacco products** 86.3% 81.8%

- Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.
- American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

12. **Menthol Cigarettes: Proportion of stores that sell menthol cigarettes** 92.9% 92.2%

- Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.
- American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

13. **Tobacco Advertising: Proportion of stores that keep 90% of their storefront free from any advertising** 37.3% 37.0%

- Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.
- American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

Secondhand Smoke

14. **Adult Secondhand Tobacco Exposure: Proportion of adults exposed to secondhand smoke** 51.9% 45.3%

- California Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health.

15. **Youth Secondhand Tobacco Exposure: Proportion of youth exposed to secondhand smoke or vape** 53.8%  46.8%

- California Student Tobacco Survey, 2017-18. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego.

16. **Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing: Proportion of population protected by a smoke-free multi-unit housing law** 24.7% 29.0%

- Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2018. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.
- American Community Survey, 2013-2017. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.
- Decennial Census, 2010. Suitland, MD: U.S. Census Bureau.

17. **Smoke-free Homes: Proportion of adults with smoke-free homes** 78.3% 86.6%

- California Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health.

Cessation

18. California Smokers' Helpline Enrollees: Proportion of California Smokers' Helpline enrollees

1.4%



0.8%

of smokers are
American Indian

- California Smokers' Helpline Caller Intake Reports, 2018. San Diego, CA: California Smokers' Helpline, University of California, San Diego.
- California Health Interview Survey, 2016-17. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

19. Quitting: Proportion of smokers who tried quitting in the last 12 months

62.3%

58.4%

- California Health Interview Survey, 2016-17. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

References

1. <https://truthinitiative.org/news/tobacco-social-justice-issue-racial-and-ethnic-minorities>
2. [Joanne D'Silva, Erin O'Gara, Nicole T Villaluz, Tobacco Industry Misappropriation of American Indian Culture and Traditional Tobacco](#)
3. [Manipulating a Sacred Tradition: An Investigation of Commercial Tobacco Marketing & Sales Strategies on the Navajo Nation and other Native Tribes, American Cancer Society and Americans for Nonsmokers Rights.](#)
4. [Isaiah "Shaneequa" Brokenleg, MPH, Teresa K. Barber, MEd, Nancy L. Bennett, BS, Simone Peart Boyce, PhD, and Valarie Blue Bird Jernigan, DrPH, Gambling with Our Health: Smoke-Free Policy Would Not Reduce Tribal Casino Patronage, U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, ; David S Timberlake, corresponding author, Jun Wu, and Wael K Al-Delaimy, Tribal casinos in California: the last vestige of indoor smoking, U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health,](#)
5. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Prevalence of adult cigarette smoking by priority population group and Indicator: Rate of change in prevalence of adult cigarette smoking by priority population group, 2007 to 2013-2014.
6. 2017 Story of Inequity, Proportion of each priority population group with a smoke-free home.