



Asian/Pacific Islander



The Story of Asian/Pacific Islander

A tobacco executive was quoted calling Asian/Pacific Islander community “a potential gold mine” because Asian/Pacific Islanders are “predisposed” to smoking, insinuating all people who identify as Asian/Pacific Islander are clones, that they are all exactly alike.¹ While we know that’s not true, we do know that Big Tobacco is predisposed to greed. Because of this, Big Tobacco is particularly aggressive in its advertising to Asian/Pacific Islander communities, placing more advertising on billboards and inside stores in urban neighborhoods where people predominantly identify as Asian American.² And while Lunar New Years are symbolic of new beginnings, occasions to celebrate culture and ancestors – tobacco companies see them as opportunities to prey on Asian/Pacific Islander communities, feigning support to promote their harmful products.

Though the overall smoking rate for people who identify as Asian/Pacific Islander is at less than 10%, the lowest of all compared populations, gender and ethnicity also play a role. For example, for Asian/Pacific Islander men, the smoking rate is just over 16%.³ And Big Tobacco prices its products lower for Pacific Islander communities than for Asian communities.⁴ Pacific Islander youth also have higher smoking and tobacco use rates than among Asian youth.⁵

There is good news for the next generation – Asian/Pacific Islander communities have seen the largest percentage drops of youth smoking over the past 15 years.⁶ The numbers are going in the right direction, but the fight isn't over until that number is zero.

The Proof is in the Data

Indicator	Asian/Pacific Islander	General Population
Adult Tobacco Use		
1. Adult Cigarette Use: Adult cigarette smoking prevalence	9.5% 	12.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. 		
2. Adult Cigarette Use: Adult cigarette smoking prevalence <i>Asian/Pacific Islander Men</i>	16.1% 	12.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. 		
3. Change in Adult Cigarette Use: Rate of change in adult cigarette smoking, 2007 to 2014	-21.1%	-16.1%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2007. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. 		
4. Change in Adult Cigarette Use: Rate of change in adult cigarette smoking, 2007 to 2014 <i>Asian/Pacific Islander Men</i>	-19.3%	-16.1%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2007. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. http://ask.chis.ucla.edu. 		
5. Adult Tobacco Use: Adult tobacco use prevalence (including all tobacco products, e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes, other tobacco products)	17%	17.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013-2014. 		
6. Adult Tobacco Use: Adult tobacco use prevalence (including all tobacco products, e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes, other tobacco products) <i>Asian/Pacific Islander Men</i>	20.6%	17.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013-2014. 		

Youth Tobacco Use


7. **Youth Cigarette Use: Youth cigarette smoking prevalence** 5.3%  4.3%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 


8. **Youth Cigarette Use: Youth cigarette smoking prevalence** 1.6% 4.3%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 

9. **Change in Youth Tobacco Use: Rate of change in youth cigarette smoking, 2002 to 2016** -74% -73.4%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2001-2002.
• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 

10. **Change in Youth Tobacco Use: Rate of change in youth cigarette smoking, 2002 to 2016** -85.4% -73.4%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2001-2002.
• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 

11. **Youth Tobacco Use: Youth tobacco use prevalence (including all tobacco products, e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes, other tobacco products)** 13% 13.6%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)


• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 

12. **Youth Tobacco Use: Youth tobacco use prevalence (including all tobacco products, e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes, other tobacco products)** 6.2% 13.6%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. California Student Tobacco Survey, 2015-2016. 

Availability of Tobacco & Tobacco Industry Influence

13. **Cheapest Cigarettes: Average price for the cheapest pack of cigarettes** \$4.69 \$4.58
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

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

14.	Cheapest Cigarettes: Average price for the cheapest pack of cigarettes <i>Pacific Islander (without Asian)</i>	\$4.48	\$4.58
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

15.	Flavored Little Cigar Price: Average price for a single flavored little cigar/cigarillo <i>Asian (without Pacific Islander)</i>	\$1.03	\$0.97
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

16.	Flavored Little Cigar Price: Average price for a single flavored little cigar/cigarillo <i>Pacific Islander (without Asian)</i>	\$0.96	\$0.97
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

17.	Tobacco Retail Licensing: Proportion of population protected by a strong tobacco retail licensing law <i>Pacific Islander (without Asian)</i>	41.5%	36.6%
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2015.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

18.	Tobacco Retail Licensing: Proportion of population protected by a strong tobacco retail licensing law <i>Asian (without Pacific Islander)</i>	38%	36.6%
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2015.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

19.	Tobacco Stores: Density of stores selling tobacco per 100,000 residents <i>Pacific Islander (without Asian)</i>	85	86
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- California Department of Tax and Fees Administration. California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retailer Licensees, October 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

20.	Tobacco Stores: Density of stores selling tobacco per 100,000 residents <i>Asian (without Pacific Islander)</i>	70	86
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- California Department of Tax and Fees Administration. California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retailer Licensees, October 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

21.	Flavored Tobacco: Proportion of stores that sell flavored non-cigarette tobacco products <i>Asian (without Pacific Islander)</i>	79.1%	81.8%
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- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

22. **Flavored Tobacco: Proportion of stores that sell flavored non-cigarette tobacco products** 85.6%  81.8%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

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

23. **Menthol Cigarettes: Proportion of stores that sell menthol cigarettes** 93% 92.2%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

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

24. **Menthol Cigarettes: Proportion of stores that sell menthol cigarettes** 93.1%  92.2%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

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

25. **Tobacco Advertising: Percentage of stores that keep 90% of their storefronts free from any advertising** 40.1% 37%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

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

26. **Tobacco Advertising: Percentage of stores that keep 90% of their storefronts free from any advertising** 33.4% 37%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

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

Secondhand Smoke

27. **Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing: Proportion of population protected by a smoke-free multi-unit housing law** 8.9% 8.6%
Pacific Islander (without Asian)

- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

28. **Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing: Proportion of population protected by a smoke-free multi-unit housing law** 10.2% 8.6%
Asian (without Pacific Islander)

- California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Policy Evaluation Tracking System, December 2016.
- U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

29.	Smoke-free Homes: Proportion of smoke-free homes	92.6%	92.9%
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• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013-2014.

30.	Smoke-free Homes: Proportion of smoke-free homes <i>Asian/Pacific Islander Men</i>	91.2%	92.9%
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• California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013-2014.

Cessation

31.	California Smokers' Helpline Enrollees: Proportion of California Smokers' Helpline enrollees	6.5%	10.9%
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• California Smokers' Helpline. Helpline Caller Intake Reports, July to December 2016.

32.	Quitting: Proportion of smokers who tried quitting in the last 12 months	64.9%	60.6%
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• UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. <http://ask.chis.ucla.edu>.

33.	Quitting: Proportion of smokers who tried quitting in the last 12 months <i>Asian/Pacific Islander Men</i>	62.9%	60.6%
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• UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2013-2014. <http://ask.chis.ucla.edu>.

References

1. [M E Muggli, R W Pollay, R Lew, A M Joseph, Targeting of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by the tobacco industry: results from the Minnesota Tobacco Document Depository, 2002, Tobacco Control](#)
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/asian-americans/index.htm>
3. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Prevalence of adult cigarette smoking by priority population group.
4. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Average price for the cheapest pack of cigarettes by priority population and, Indicator: Average price for a single of the leading brand of flavored little cigar/cigarillo by priority population group.
5. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Prevalence of youth cigarette smoking by priority population group and, Indicator: Prevalence of youth tobacco use by priority population group, including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and other tobacco products.
6. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Rate of change in youth cigarette smoking prevalence by priority population group, 2002 to 2016.