



African American/Black

The Story of African American/Black

Tobacco is immensely destructive in African American/Black communities, causing more deaths than AIDS, accidents, and homicide combined.¹ Tobacco companies' manipulative tactics have led to African American/Black communities experiencing the greatest burden of tobacco-related mortality of any racial or ethnic group in the United States.²



Big Tobacco systematically targets African American/Black communities by plastering neighborhood stores with deceptive ads, and offering discounts on their products.³ Studies have found there are up to **10x more tobacco ads** in neighborhoods where people predominantly identify as African American/Black, particularly for menthol cigarettes, which Big Tobacco has specifically pushed in the community for years.⁴

Tobacco companies are now pushing other flavored tobacco products, such as little cigars and cigarillos, and pricing them lower in African American/Black neighborhoods.⁵ R.J. Reynolds, makers of Camel and Newport recently sponsored community events and paid for the travel costs of prominent community leaders such as civil rights activist Reverend Al Sharpton, to convince African American/Black communities that banning flavored tobacco, particularly menthol

cigarettes, will continue the criminalization of people who are African American/Black. The truth is, flavor ban tobacco policies, similar to the 2016 California Tobacco 21 law, no longer penalize tobacco product purchasers, instead holding tobacco sellers responsible.

Clearly, Big Tobacco is not letting go of this community without a fight.

The Proof is in the Data

Indicator	African American/Black	General Population
Adult Tobacco Use		
1. Adult Cigarette Use: Adult cigarette smoking prevalence	17.0% 	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	-1.2%	-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)	12.6%	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	1.2%	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	-33.3%	-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)	9.9% 	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** \$4.43 \$4.58

- 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** \$0.92 \$0.97

- 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** 49.9%  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** 89.8  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** 85.3% 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** 94.6% 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** 29.4%  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** 55.2% 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	44.2%	46.8%
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• 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	27.1%	29.0%
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• 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	87.5%	86.6%
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• 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	16.4%		8.6%
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of smokers are African American/Black

• 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	66.4%	58.4%
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• California Health Interview Survey, 2016-17. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

20.	Doctor Advice to Quit: Proportion of smokers whose doctors advised them to quit	63.7%	47.6%
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• Online California Adult Tobacco Survey, 2018. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program.

References

1. [Cancer Facts & Figures for African Americans, 2013-2014, 2013, American Cancer Society](#)
2. [Tobacco Use Among US Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups—African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1998, Department of Health & Human Services.](#)
3. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Average price for the cheapest pack of cigarettes by priority population group.
4. Anderson, 2016 ; Moreland-Russel, 2013; Rising 2011; Disparities and Menthol Marketing, Additional Evidence in Support of Point of Sale Policies International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health — Open Access Journal
5. 2017 Story of Inequity, Indicator: Average price for a single of the leading brand of flavored little cigar/cigarillo by priority population group.