



**Tobacco use among Maine youth has been skyrocketing.**  
**4 out of 5 kids who have used tobacco started with a flavored product.<sup>1</sup>**

Tobacco companies have developed an array of menthol, mint, candy, and fruit-flavored products in colorful packaging to attract new users and keep them using tobacco. Winter Menthol. Strawberry Lemonade. Blue Razz. Banana Ice. Bubble Gum. Cotton Candy. The tobacco industry knows that 95% of adults who smoke start by age 21,<sup>2</sup> so these flavored products aren't for adults. **Flavors hook kids!**

**Menthol cigarettes are the most dangerous flavored tobacco product.** Menthol flavoring makes it easier for youth to start smoking and become addicted to cigarettes.<sup>3</sup> Menthol masks the harsh taste of tobacco and numbs the throat, making the smoke easier to inhale more deeply.<sup>4</sup> People who smoke menthol cigarettes are also less likely to successfully quit smoking than other people who smoke.<sup>5</sup>

**Half of youth who have ever tried smoking started with menthol cigarettes<sup>16</sup>**



**Despite action by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), flavored e-cigarettes—especially menthol e-cigarettes and sweet-flavored disposables—remain widely available.** Flavored tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes, undermine Maine's efforts to reduce youth tobacco use. And while almost all e-cigarettes contain liquid nicotine,<sup>6</sup> which the EPA classifies as an acute hazardous waste,<sup>7</sup> too many Maine youth think it's just harmless flavoring.<sup>8</sup>

**The tobacco industry has a long and lethal history of targeting kids and other communities with flavored products.** Tobacco industry documents reveal aggressive marketing, including cheaper prices and more advertising of menthol cigarettes in African American neighborhoods.<sup>9</sup> The tobacco industry has also targeted the lesbian, gay and bisexual community with predatory advertising in LGBTQ+ magazines and sponsorships of local Pride events and celebrations.<sup>10</sup>

**Maine is seeing an explosion of e-cigarette use (also known as "vaping") among youth.** This epidemic started with Juul, a high-tech device disguised as a USB drive that comes in a variety of flavors to entice kids. One Juul pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of 20 cigarettes.<sup>11</sup> This high concentration is a serious concern for youth, who are already uniquely susceptible to nicotine addiction.<sup>12</sup> Juul is just one example of how the tobacco industry has adapted their products and their marketing tactics to attract their "replacement smokers".<sup>13</sup>

**Tobacco use puts our kids' health and futures at risk.** Smoking causes disease and disability, harming nearly every organ of the body.<sup>14</sup> There is also growing evidence that e-cigarettes can harm lung health.<sup>15</sup> And now, the U.S. Surgeon General warns that nicotine exposure during adolescence and young adulthood can cause addiction and long-term harm to brain development, stating, "No matter how it's delivered, nicotine is harmful for youth and young adults."<sup>16</sup>



**Flavors aren't for adults. Flavors hook Maine kids.**

**Help give Maine youth and young adults a fair shot at a healthy and productive future, free from tobacco addiction.**

**Tell your state and local lawmakers:**

**It's time to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Maine!**

For more information, visit [www.flavorhookkidsmaine.org](http://www.flavorhookkidsmaine.org)

**1 in 3** Maine high school students have used e-cigarettes and  
**1 in 5** are currently using a tobacco product<sup>18</sup> – rates well above the national average

**85% of middle and high school students who use e-cigarettes use flavored products.<sup>19</sup>**



## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Ambrose BK, et al., "Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among US Youth Aged 12-17 Years, 2013-2014," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, October 26, 2015.
- <sup>2</sup> Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, "Raising the Tobacco Age to 21", January 9, 2020. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/sale-age-21>.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Menthol and Cigarettes", [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/tobacco\\_industry/menthol-cigarettes/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/tobacco_industry/menthol-cigarettes/index.html), Accessed December 11, 2020.
- <sup>4</sup> Watson, C, et al., "Smoking Behavior and Exposure: Results of a Menthol Cigarette Crossover Study", *American Journal of Health Behavior*, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5585737/>, May 2017.
- <sup>5</sup> Park-Lee, E, et al., "E-Cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students—National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2021," *MMWR*, 70(39): 1387-1389, October 1, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/pdfs/mm7039a4-H.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> Romberg AR, et al., "Patterns of nicotine concentrations in electronic cigarettes sold in the United States, 2013-2018", *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, Volume 203, Pages 1-7, October 2019.
- <sup>7</sup> Management Standards for Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals and Amendment to the P075 Listing for Nicotine, 84 FR 5816, August 21, 2019.
- <sup>8</sup> Maine Department of Health & Human Services & Maine Department of Education, "Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey", 2021. <https://www.maine.gov/miyhs/2021-results>.
- <sup>9</sup> Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, "Tobacco Company Marketing to African Americans". <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0208.pdf>, March 7, 2018.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute, "Marketing Tobacco to LGBT Communities", <https://smokefree.gov/marketing-tobacco-lgbt-communities>, Accessed December 11, 2020.
- <sup>11</sup> Walley SC, et al., "A Public Health Crisis: Electronic Cigarettes, Vape, and JUUL", *Pediatrics*, June 2019, <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/6/e20182741>.
- <sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Office of the U.S Surgeon General and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 2020. <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/knowtherisks.html>, Accessed December 11, 2020.
- <sup>13</sup> R J Reynolds report, "Young Adult Smokers: Strategies and Opportunities". February 29, 1984. Bates No.501928462-8550
- <sup>14</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion "Smoking and Tobacco Use: Health Effects", [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/health\\_effects/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/index.htm), Accessed January 15, 2021
- <sup>15</sup> Xie, W., Kathuria, H., Galiatsatos, P., Blaha, M. J., Hamburg, N. M., Robertson, R. M., ... & Stokes, A. C. (2020). Association of Electronic Cigarette Use With Incident Respiratory Conditions Among US Adults From 2013 to 2018. *JAMA network open*, 3(11), e2020816-e2020816.
- <sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Office of the U.S Surgeon General and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 2020. <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/> Accessed December 11, 2020.
- <sup>16</sup> Ambrose, BK, et al., "Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among US Youth Aged 12-17 Years, 2013-2014," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, published online October 26, 2015.
- <sup>17</sup> Delnevo, CD, et al., "Banning Menthol Cigarettes: A Social Justice Issue Long Overdue," *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, 22(10): 1673-1675, 2020.
- <sup>18</sup> Maine Department of Health & Human Services & Maine Department of Education, "Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey", 2021. <https://www.maine.gov/miyhs/2021-results>.
- <sup>19</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration, "Youth Tobacco Use: Results from the National Youth Tobacco Survey", 2020. <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/youth-and-tobacco/youth-tobacco-use-results-national-youth-tobacco-survey> Accessed December 11, 2020.



### COVID and Tobacco Use

As the world continues to combat the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), it has never been more important to keep our lungs healthy. One of the best ways to do this is to quit smoking and vaping –and to prevent young people from ever starting in the first place.