

THE SOLUTION

EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE YOUTH CIGAR USE

Public health organizations and tobacco control experts have recommended the following evidence-based strategies to reduce youth access to and consumption of tobacco products:

Prohibit the Sale of Flavored Cigarillos and Little Cigars

- ▶ Through the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009 (The Tobacco Control Act), the FDA banned the use of flavors in cigarettes only¹—extending this prohibition to cigarillos and little cigars is a logical next step that public health groups have urged the FDA to consider.

Non-Premium Cigars Sold in a Minimum Pack Size

- ▶ The FDA Tobacco Control Act² and Maryland state law requires that cigarettes be sold in minimum packages of twenty so that the price of access is high, discouraging youth and impulse purchasing. A minimum pack stipulation for non-premium cigars would accomplish the same goals.

Raise the Taxes on Cigars — Or on all Other Tobacco Products (OTP)

- ▶ Maryland's cigarette tax is set at \$2.00 per pack to discourage cigarette smoking, particularly among youth. The low rate of tax on cigars and other non-cigarette tobacco products is only 15% of the wholesale price. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),³ the World Health Organization (WHO),⁴ and other experts recommend a significant increase in this tax, which coupled with a minimum pack size, will help create prices that place cigars out of reach for young people.

Support Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs

- ▶ According to the CDC⁵ and expert organizations such as the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids,⁶ the best method for lowering youth initiation of tobacco products is to provide comprehensive programming in order to reinforce prevention messaging. Community-based, school-based, and cessation initiatives together with regulations and counter-marketing campaigns reinforce that tobacco use can lead to a dangerous addiction, and ultimately, poor health outcomes. Additionally, establishing comprehensive enforcement programs to identify and penalize retailers who sell tobacco to minors can discourage unlawful sales and youth access to these harmful products.

1 FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, CENTER FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS. Guidance, Compliance and Regulatory Information (Tobacco): Section 907, Tobacco Product Standards. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/ucm263053.htm>.

2 FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, CENTER FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS. Draft Guidance for Industry: Compliance with Regulations Restricting the Sale and Distribution of Cigarettes and Smokeless Tobacco to Protect Children and Adolescents. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/ucm214425.htm>.

3 CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION, OFFICE ON SMOKING AND HEALTH. Tobacco Use: Targeting the Nation's Leading Killer. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/pdf/2011/Tobacco_AAG_2011_508.pdf.

4 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. MPOWER, Tobacco Free Initiatives, Raise Taxes on Tobacco. Available at: http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/publications/en_tfi_mpower_brochure_r.pdf and <http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/publications/en/index.html>.

5 CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION. Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2007. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; October 2007. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/best_practices/index.htm.

6 CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO FREE KIDS. Comprehensive Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Programs Effectively Reduce Tobacco Use. Available at: <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0045.pdf>.

