

INCREASING THE TOBACCO PURCHASE AGE TO 21

Minnesotans agree that kids shouldn't use tobacco products – and more can and should be done to make sure they don't. A national consensus is growing to prevent addictions and future health problems by **raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco products to 21**.
Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation supports this movement.

RAISING THE PURCHASE AGE TO 21 WILL PREVENT YOUTH TOBACCO USE AND SAVE LIVES.



According to a 2015 report from the Institute of Medicine, increasing the legal age to purchase tobacco will mean fewer teenagers starting to smoke. For example, research predicts a 25 percent reduction in smoking initiation among 15-17-year-olds alone following such an increase.¹

THE BEST WAY TO REDUCE THE HARM OF TOBACCO IS TO PREVENT KIDS FROM STARTING

- Almost 90 percent of addicted adult smokers started smoking by age 18.²
- Increasing the age gap between kids and those who can legally buy tobacco will help remove access to tobacco products from the high-school environment.



BIG TOBACCO ACTIVELY RECRUITS REPLACEMENT SMOKERS TO GUARANTEE PROFITS.



- The tobacco industry heavily **targets 18-to-21-year olds** with menthol and candy flavoring, magazine advertisements, product design and packaging, and event sponsorships and promotions.³

ADULTS SUPPORT RAISING THE TOBACCO PURCHASE AGE TO 21.

- A 2014 national survey shows that **75 percent** of adults favor increasing the minimum **purchase age for tobacco to 21**.⁴
- Even **70 percent of smokers** are in support of raising the minimum legal age.⁴



STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE TAKING ACTION TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM LEGAL AGE AND PROTECT YOUTH.

- The state of Hawaii and at least 125 localities in the United States have raised the age to purchase tobacco to 21, including New York City, Boston and Kansas City.
- One city in Massachusetts found that tobacco use among high-school students **fell by nearly half** after raising the age to 21.⁵



NICOTINE MAY HARM ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.

- Nicotine is addictive, and adolescents are especially vulnerable to the health impacts of tobacco use.⁶
- The adolescent brain is negatively impacted by nicotine, and its long-term effects are a significant public health concern.^{7,8}



Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation is a coalition of Minnesota's leading health and other interested organizations. We share a common goal of saving Minnesota youth from a lifetime of addiction to tobacco. Each year in Minnesota tobacco use is responsible for more than 5,100 deaths and almost \$3 billion in preventable health care costs and 90 percent of adult smokers started before the age of 18. Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation supports policies that reduce youth smoking and help end the death and disease associated with tobacco use.

1 Institute of Medicine. Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products. National Academy Press. 2015.

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. 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. 2012.

3 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Increasing the minimum legal sale age for tobacco products to 21. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0376.pdf>.

4 King BA et al. Attitudes toward raising the minimum age of sale for tobacco among U.S. adults. *Am J Prev Med*. 2015.

5 Kessel Schneider S et al. Community reductions in youth smoking after raising the minimum tobacco sales age to 21. *Tob Control*. 2015.

6 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. 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. 2014.

7 Abreu-Villaca Y et al. Short-term adolescent nicotine exposure has immediate and persistent effects on cholinergic systems: Critical periods, patterns of exposure, dose thresholds. *Neuropsychopharmacology*. 2003.

8 Slikker W Jr. et al. Mode of action: Disruption of brain cell replication, second messenger and neurotransmitter systems during development leading to cognitive dysfunction – development neurotoxicity of nicotine. *Crit Rev Toxicol*. 2005.