



86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TEXAS PTA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

T21, RAISE THE AGE TO 21 FOR TOBACCO PURCHASES

Support legislation to limit youth access to tobacco products — including e-cigarettes and vaping/juuling devices — through social sources such as older high school students.

BACKGROUND

- Nationwide, more than 3,800 young people under the age of 18 smoke their first cigarette each day.
- 31.4% of high school students use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
- E-cigarettes are the most popular tobacco product used by youth, especially those in high school.
 - Tobacco companies market smokeless tobacco, little cigars, and e-cigarettes in youth-friendly flavors like cotton candy, gummy bear, cherry, and watermelon.
 - 81% of youth who tried e-cigarettes started with a flavored e-cigarette.
- Three in four smokers (ages 15 - 17) obtain cigarettes from social sources.¹
- Older teen smokers (ages 18 - 19) are a major supplier of cigarettes for younger smokers.
 - 63% of high school students have given money to someone of legal age (18 years old) to purchase cigarettes for them.

¹ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Increasing the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco Products to 21," <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0376.pdf>.

HOW RAISING THE AGE WILL PREVENT TOBACCO USE IN YOUNGER TEENS

- Delays the age when people first use tobacco.
- Reduces the risk of becoming a regular smoker by creating a wedge in the social circles of those who can legally purchase tobacco and those who cannot.
- Makes it harder for younger teens to pass themselves off as 21 years old to purchase tobacco products.
- Reduces the likelihood that legal purchasers would be in the same social networks as high school students and therefore less able to sell or give cigarettes to them.
- Helps keep tobacco out of high schools where younger teens often obtain tobacco products from older students.

#TobaccoFreeKids

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