



Nicotine Free Generation

Anthony Ishak, PharmD

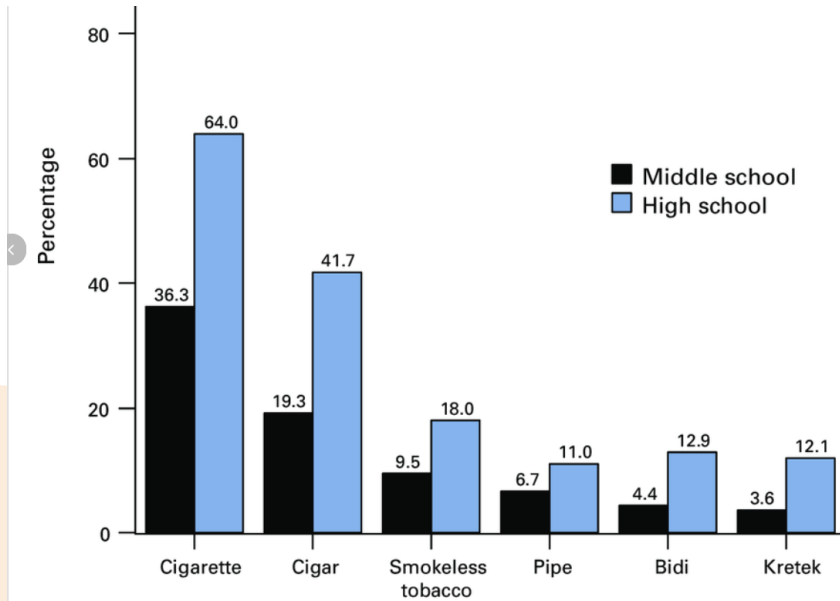
April 8, 2026

Objectives

- Summarize the data requiring additional health policies against nicotine products
- Review the concept of Nicotine Free Generation (NFG)
- Discuss possible approaches to implementation

Current day in the US

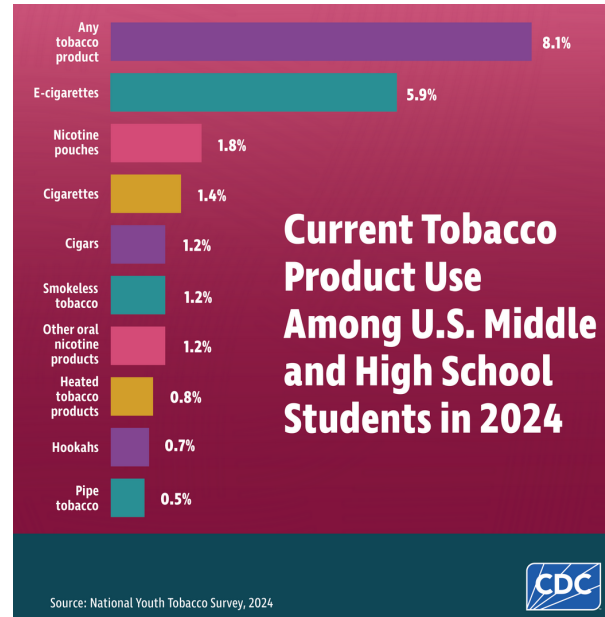
2000



Percentage of all middle school and high school students who ever used tobacco*, by type of tobacco product-

National Youth Tobacco Survey 2000
[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) accessed 5/2/25

Today



Why the change in trend?

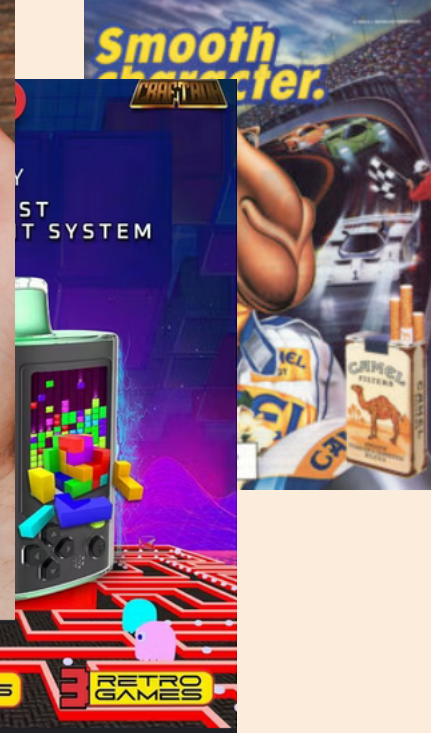
“Younger adult smokers have been the critical factor in the growth and decline of every major brand and company over the last 50 years. They will continue to be just as important to brands/companies in the future for two simple reasons: The **renewal of the market stems almost entirely from 18-year-old smokers. No more than 5 percent of smokers start after age 24.** [And] the brand loyalty of 18-year-old smokers far outweighs any tendency to switch with age... Brands/companies which fail to attract their fair share of younger adult smokers face an uphill battle. They must achieve net switching gains every year to merely hold share... Younger adult smokers are the only source of replacement smokers... **If younger adults turn away from smoking, the industry must decline, just as a population which does not give birth will eventually dwindle.**" February 29, 1984 RJR report, "Young Adult Smokers: Strategies and Opportunities". Bates No. 501928462-8550 "

Every time a policy is implemented, tobacco companies respond

- Location bans (restaurants, indoors etc)
- Health warnings
- Access (get rid of vending machines, selling in educational places etc)
- Age (setting an age for legal use, increasing it)

Every time a policy is implemented, the rate goes down until they develop something new

Youth have always been a target



Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG) as a policy

- Formosa in 1900 (effective date of 1908) prohibited new users from purchasing opium leading to an 80% reduction in smokers by 1923
- Researchers in Singapore in 2010
- Decreasing demand, decreases addiction and minimizes the “rite of passage” impact. It only applies to people who have yet to be exposed to the chosen substance, in this case nicotine products.
- As the age gap slowly expands, less underage users have access through peer networks (the most common source of access to nicotine products for underage users)

Prevent demand → prevent a “black market”

Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG) as a policy

- Policy to ban the **sale** of nicotine products to anyone born after a certain date (usually when the purchaser would turn 21)
- Does not penalize the purchaser
- Does not force someone who was legally purchasing the product to stop before they are ready

Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG) as a policy

What are the advantages?

- Does not apply to those addicted and of legal age, thus minimizing the myth of “black market sales”
- Slowly implemented year by year thus allowing local retailers to adjust their business model
- Nicotine-replacement therapy (patches, gum, lozenges) and sacred tobacco are exempt since this only applies to commercial products
- This really isn't about adult choice since 90-95% of people addicted to nicotine started under age

The road to passage

- Multiple Hearings in 2020
 - Originally had an earlier effective date, but changed to 1/1/2000 for simplicity and impact those not yet of legal age
 - Public hearings and retailers presented their case for impact on business
 - Out of town lobbyists appeared via Zoom
- Town Meeting's final vote—139-78

The road to passage and Mass impact

- Legally challenged—Six Brothers Inc. vs Town of Brookline
 - Equal Protection
 - Conflict with Massachusetts constitution regarding localities being preempted to change age of purchase
 - Unanimous decision in favor of Brookline opening the floodgates for 21 towns in Massachusetts to implement this policy
 - State bill (S.1568) filed January 16, 2025 with 1/1/2005 effective date
 - Now being studied so likely not this session
 - Relies on more diverse uptake around the commonwealth and higher municipality implementation (likely at least 50)

Why Here?

- Lee's lung cancer incidence rate is double the state average
- Lenox is 20% higher than the state average

Why Here?

- Lee's retailer and youth retail densities are both double the state average (2.07 vs 0.97 and 10.62 vs 4.94)
- Lenox has a higher than state average retailer density of 1.18 vs 0.97

Takeaways

- Big Tobacco will continuously look for lifelong customers
- Public Health can play defense or offense
- NFG is a compromise that does not hurt current users and reduces new addiction