



# THE FLAVOR TRAP

## How Tobacco Companies Trapped Youth and Young Adults into Becoming the Next Generation of Smokers

### How Did Tobacco Companies Attract Youth?

#### FLAVORS APPEAL TO KIDS

- New flavors, including menthol, would attract youth to a product they knew was both addictive and deadly.
- New users of smokeless tobacco are most likely to begin with products that are milder tasting, more flavored.
- Promote that flavored products are not harmless because they taste great.

### What The Data Tells Us?

**51.2%** of high school users prefer menthol or mint flavor

**67.8%** of high school students use flavored e-cigarettes

**76%** increase in high school e-cigarette use between 2017-2018

### What's the Use Among Black Youth in the U.S. and Colorado?

#### E-CIGARETTE USE IS HIGHER AMONG BLACK/AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH

- Nearly all Black/African American teen cigarette smokers smoke menthol. **95% for Blacks vs. 51% for Whites** (Truth Initiative)
- E-cigarette use remains high in Colorado with a quarter (25.9%) of high school students reporting that they use e-cigarettes.
- Colorado's Black high school youth are using e-cigarettes at more than twice the national average in the U.S. (16.2% vs. 7.5%) **Source: Healthy Kids Colorado and National Tobacco Survey, released 2019**

### What's Driving This Trend?

#### EXPLOSION OF E-CIGARETTE USE AMONG YOUTH

- **7 out of 10** middle and high school students who currently use tobacco have used a **FLAVORED** product, including e-cigarettes.
- Nearly a third of high school e-cigarettes users report they got their e-cigarettes from retail outlets, about one in five got them from vape shops.



## Menthol Tobacco Fact Sheet

# MARKETING, MANIPULATION & MONEY



## How Tobacco Industries Targeted and Addicted Black Youth and Adults to Tobacco Products

- **Putting Menthol In Tobacco Products:** Menthol is a peppermint flavored anesthetic that tobacco companies added to reduce the harshness of cigarettes and other tobacco products. This makes it easier for youth and new smokers (kids) to start and harder to quit.
- **Through Magazine Advertisements:** The tobacco industry is relentless in its promotion of menthol cigarettes to minorities through targeted social media sites and magazines popular with African American youth and young adults.
- **Targeting Black/African Americans At The Point of Sale:** Research shows that Big Tobacco companies contract with tobacco retailers in predominately African American or lower-income neighborhoods to highlight menthol products with premium shelf space, visibility and elaborate advertising displays.
- **Making Tobacco Appealing Through Branding:** Tobacco companies create advertising specifically targeted to Black communities. They purposely promote images of Black/African Americans smoking or holding a cigarette while looking happy, confident, successful and wealthy, in love, attractive, strong and independent.
- **Support of African American Organizations:** Tobacco companies give financial support to African American organizations like the National Urban League and the NAACP in an effort to build positive relationships and brand identity.
- **Targeting African Americans Through Event Sponsorships:** Through the years tobacco companies have sponsored various events such as music festivals, dance clubs, hip-hop music venues and concerts to distribute free cigarettes and coupons for flavored e-cigarettes to Blacks/African Americans of all ages.

## Impact of Tobacco Industry Advertising on the African American Community

- Each year approximately **45,000** African Americans die from smoking-caused illness and Black men have the highest rates of lung cancer.
- An estimated **1.6 MILLION** African Americans under the age of 18 will become regular smokers and about **500,000** of these will die prematurely from a tobacco-related disease.

(Source: HHS, *Tobacco Use Among US Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1998*)



# MENTHOL TOBACCO USE IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

*facts*



**African American men have the highest rates of lung cancer.**

**Smoking rates for Blacks in Colorado exceed national rates and rates for White smokers in Colorado.**



**Smoking causes more deaths each year than the following causes combined:**

- Human immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Illegal Drug Use
- Alcohol Use
- Motor Vehicle Injuries
- Firearm-related Incidents



**Menthol makes smoking easier to start and harder to quit.**



**Menthol cigarette use among current Black smokers (aged 12+) is eighty percent higher than other race/ethnicities in the U.S.**



**Menthol and nicotine are highly addictive and tobacco use is deadly.**

(Source: Centers for Disease Control. "Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking" <http://www.cdc.gov> n.p. 2018.



# NICOTINE:

A CHEMICAL THAT GETS YOU HOOKED

## What is Nicotine?

Nicotine (NICK-O-TEEN) is one of the most difficult substances to quit once addicted. It is considered to be at least as hard as quitting heroin. (Source: American Heart Association)

## Why is Nicotine Harmful?

Nicotine is highly addictive and you can get hooked on for many years. Smoking tobacco products that contain menthol helps people to inhale more nicotine into their body by creating a cooling, soothing sensation in the throat.

People who regularly consume nicotine and then suddenly stop experience withdrawal symptoms, which include:

- cravings
- a sense of emptiness
- anxiety
- depression
- moodiness
- irritability
- difficulty focusing or paying attention

## Getting UnHooked! What You Should Know About Quitting Nicotine

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms can be uncomfortable and may feel overwhelming at times, particularly in the first week. Some people relapse because of this or are afraid of trying to quit. **BUT DON'T GIVE UP!**

**QUITTING CAN BE DONE!** Many people successfully overcome the challenge of nicotine withdrawal. Sometimes it can take a few tries before a person kicks the habit for good but it can be done. Call the Colorado Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free coaching and quit medications.



## What Does The Data Tell Us?

By far, the most popular way of consuming nicotine is by smoking cigarettes. Worldwide, over 1 BILLION people are regular tobacco smokers, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

## Quitting Behavior Among Black/African Americans

**Most Black/African American adult cigarette smokers want to quit smoking, and many have tried.**

Among African American current daily cigarette smokers aged 18 years and older:

► **72.8%** report that they want to quit smoking compared to 67.5% of Whites, 69.6% of Asian Americans, 67.4% of Hispanics, and 55.6% of American Indians/Alaska Natives.

► **63.4%** report attempting to quit smoking compared to 56.2% of Hispanics, 53.3% of Whites, and 69.4% of Asian Americans.

(Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Quitting Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2000–2015. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 2017;65(52):1457-64 [accessed 2019 July 31].)