



HEALTHY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

of East Central Indiana

Blackford County Workgroup and Tobacco Free Blackford County Coalition

March 12, 2021

WebEx Virtual Meeting

NOTES

Noon

Attending: Fred Hoffman, Autumn Roach, Jason Craig, Amanda Slentz, Lindsey Cox, Michele Risinger, Jan Blake, Jordan Moss, Cheri Brown, Vicki Delzieth, Cathy Wray, John Disher, Erik Hayes, *Connections IN Health team:* Karen Hinshaw, Aliya Amin, Tisha Reid, Courtney Stewart.

12:10pm

Blue Zones project update- presentation by Erik Hayes, faculty at Taylor University

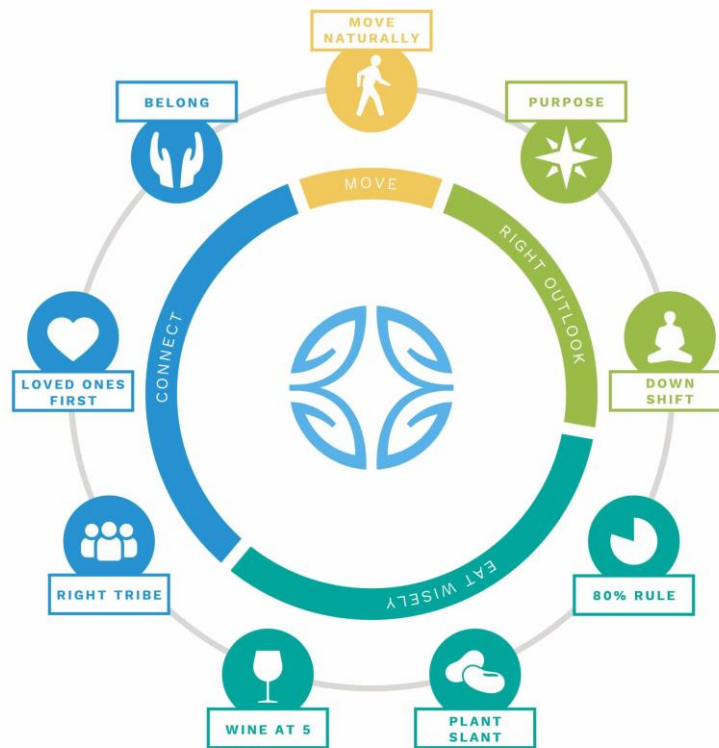
Taylor has goal to train health professionals in preventative medicine, current methods of engaging students includes chronic disease programs for the public such as a Diabetes Prevention Program; Received a \$1M non competitive Lilly Grant to plan population health initiative and apply for further \$8M in funding to support the initiative (will know if grant awarded this summer). Initiative planning includes 2 components- FQHC startups in Grant and Blackford Counties (both counties are designated as health professional shortage areas; second component is to contract with the Blue Zones company to create an educational model for health professionals as part of a pilot project in Blackford County. *“Using secrets discovered in the original Blue Zones—rare longevity hotspots around the world where people are thriving into their 100s—we help people live longer, better® through community transformation programs that lower healthcare costs, improve productivity, and boost national recognition as great places to live, work, and play.”* - [Blue Zones Project®](#) - [Blue Zones](#)

Residents of the original “Blue Zones” regions live in very different parts of the world Yet they have nine commonalities that lead to longer, healthier lives.



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Erik noted the project will be a full community “blitz” in Hartford City to put these values into the population and lead people to a good and abundant life. He anticipates project will move forward event without the \$8M potential award from Lilly, as other organizations have expressed support for the project including IU health, Indiana Rural Health Association and Indiana State Representative Ann Vermillion.

HCA Partners can play a role- attend organizing meetings, connect with others outside our network and encourage involvement.

12:25pm

Connections IN Health- Discussion led by Lindsey Cox

Blackford County Connections IN Health Interest Survey

<https://redcap.uits.iu.edu/surveys/?s=JCPWRF9347>

The Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI), the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), and the IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center (IUSCCC) have come together to strengthen their partnership to improve health in Indiana by forming Connections IN Health. This alliance unites the state’s health coalition development work, and the IUSCC’s community and engagement initiatives with that of Indiana CTSI. Connections IN Health is led by the Indiana CTSI’s Community Health Partnerships



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program, which works to improve health in Indiana through community-university partnerships and community-based health research.

Connections IN Health supports stakeholders, organizations, advocates, and residents as they come together to improve health and address chronic diseases. Connections IN Health facilitates collaboration within communities by connecting stakeholders with evidence-based practices, identifying funding sources, and addressing health equity for all.

Connections IN Health includes four statewide chronic disease initiatives:

- The Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition (InJAC)
- The Health Equity and Cancer Control Initiative
- The Hoosier Health and Wellness Alliance (HHWA)
- The Cardiovascular and Diabetes Coalition of Indiana (CADI)

Over the last decade, all four of the initiatives have made significant progress promoting local community health efforts. The Connections IN Health team's primary goal is to further these health promotion efforts across the state, one county at a time.

Connections IN Health partners with statewide organizations, including Purdue Extension, which is involved in more than 60 health coalitions across the state and has educators in all 92 Indiana counties.

Our focus now is getting to know the Blackford County community. Please take a moment to tell us about the successes and challenges that you've seen or experienced in Blackford in the last few years using the survey link. Blackford County Connections IN Health Interest Survey <https://redcap.uits.iu.edu/surveys/?s=JCPWRF9347>

Questions include: What are some successes your community has had related to chronic disease (for example: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, asthma, cancer, health equity, physical activity, food insecurity, nutrition)?

In which of these chronic disease areas has your community experienced the most challenges? (Select all that apply)

Cardiovascular Disease Diabetes Stroke Asthma Cancer Health Equity
Physical Activity Food Insecurity Nutrition

\$10,000 will be allocated to Blackford County for a project specific to chronic disease prevention. Planning in May, project in June (not set in stone). We hope to start conducting one-on-one listening sessions ASAP this spring for people who indicate in the electronic survey that they are willing to talk further. And we do want a diverse group of participants.



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12:40pm

Tobacco Point of Sale Audit Results for Blackford County- Kyle Basicker

Kyle noted that 2,000 retail sites in IN were surveyed in 2020; in Blackford County 16 assessments were performed with assistance from Ball State students.

Also- April 1 is National “Take Down Tobacco Day” focused on youth. We are still putting our initiative together. We are going to be creating a 30 second PSA on how not to get fooled by big tobacco. It might be fun if we could find a way to share the video when it’s ready. Maybe with the schools.

So what is point-of-sale tobacco marketing? Essentially, it is marketing tobacco products to consumers where they purchase tobacco, in retail stores such as convenience stores or gas stations, grocery stores, pharmacies, and other types of stores. Point-of-sale marketing includes things like price promotions or discounts on tobacco products, in-store tobacco product displays, product placement, and retail advertising.

It’s also important to keep in mind that this type of marketing is not random. Retailers often have contracts with tobacco companies that specify where tobacco products have to be placed, at what height, and what proportion of the display needs to be dedicated to particular products. It is a very intentional form of marketing, and tobacco companies know it works.

Tobacco companies also invest heavily in point-of-sale tobacco marketing. In 2018, tobacco companies nationwide spent \$9.1 billion dollars on tobacco marketing – over one million dollars per hour. About 92% of those marketing dollars, or 8.4 billion, were spent on point-of-sale marketing.

In Indiana, tobacco companies are estimated to spend about \$293 million dollars marketing their products each year. This equates to over \$45 per Hoosier annually.

So why does point-of-sale tobacco marketing matter? The reason why tobacco companies invest so much money in point-of-sale marketing is because they know it works.

First, point-of-sale marketing has been shown to increase the likelihood that youth will start using tobacco and progress to regular tobacco use [1-4]. This is very important for tobacco companies, because about 9 in 10 smokers start by the time they turn 18, and about 99% start by age 26 [5]. Tobacco companies know that if young people don’t start using tobacco early, they likely never will, and maintaining a base of youth and young adult smokers is crucial for sustaining their business. Additionally, the retail setting is a powerful way to reach young people, as about 7 in 10 youth shop at convenience stores at least once per week [6].

Second, point-of-sale marketing makes it more difficult for tobacco users to quit. Research has shown that tobacco users exposed to point-of-sale marketing may experience more tobacco cravings, are more likely to make impulse buys, and less likely to successfully quit [7-10]. Point-of-sale marketing therefore contributes to keeping current tobacco users addicted to and using tobacco.

Finally, point-of-sale marketing disproportionately targets some communities. In particular, this type of marketing often targets communities with a high proportion of low-income or minority residents [11-12]. Often, these groups are already disproportionately impacted by tobacco, so point-of-sale marketing contributes to disparities in tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases.



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When we study the tobacco retail environment, we often talk about density and proximity. Density is a measure of how many tobacco retailers there are in a particular location. In this case, we measure density as the number of retailers per 1,000 population. Proximity is a measure of how close a tobacco retailer is to another location, such as a school or another tobacco retailer.

As of May 2020, there were 20 tobacco retailers in Blackford County and 6,973 statewide [1]. This equates to 1.6 retailers per 1,000 population in Blackford County – slightly higher than tobacco retailer density statewide, which was 1.1 retailers per 1,000 population. As I'll discuss on the next slide, though, retailer density isn't uniform. Retailers tend to cluster in some neighborhoods more than others. In particular, we saw that over half of tobacco retailers in Blackford County, or 58%, were located within 500 feet of another retailer. Paying attention to this clustering of tobacco retailers is important, as smoking tends to be more prevalent among youth and adults in areas with higher retailer density [3-5].

In addition, it is important to look at the location of retailers relative to schools. Research has shown that youth smoking prevalence is higher in schools in areas with higher tobacco retailer density [2]. Additionally, when retailers are located near schools, students may be more exposed to retail tobacco advertising. In Blackford County, more than 1 in 10 tobacco retailers, or 11%, are located within 1,000 feet of a school.

When we look at tobacco retailer density by census tract in Blackford County, we can see that some areas have a higher density of tobacco retailers than others. This map shows tobacco retailer density by census tract. Tracts with the lowest retailer density are in blue. Yellow and gold shades correspond to consecutively higher retailer density.

It's important to pay attention to these differences in retailer density, as research studies have shown that smoking prevalence is higher in areas with higher retailer density and that retailer density tends to be higher in census tracts with lower median household income, which are often already disproportionately impacted by tobacco use [1-6].

In addition to understanding the density of tobacco retailers and their proximity to schools, it is also important to understand what types of point-of-sale marketing are common among tobacco retailers. To do this, we collected standardized assessments of point-of-sale marketing in tobacco retailers in Blackford County, and we were one of 35 counties statewide where tobacco retailers were randomly selected to be assessed. The assessments were completed using the Standardized Tobacco Assessment for Retail Settings or STARS. Developed by State and Community Tobacco Control researchers at Stanford and other universities, STARS has been used to assess tobacco retail marketing across several states and includes questions about tobacco product availability, price and promotions, and tobacco advertising.

Overall, 2,020 assessments were completed across the 35 Indiana counties, and 51 assessments were completed in Blackford County in 2020. [OPTIONAL NOTE: the number of counties where retailer assessments were conducted was lower this year, because COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in the middle of the data collection period. The state tobacco control program gave local counties the option to continue (after applicable state and local restrictions were lifted) or suspend data collection. Some counties opted to continue collecting data, and others did not.]

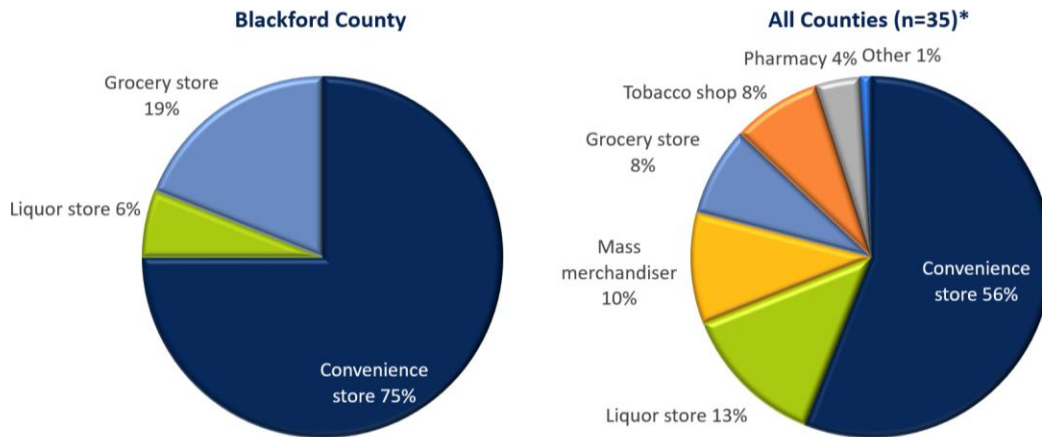


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The largest proportion of stores that were assessed both in Blackford County and across all counties surveyed were convenience stores. In addition, we surveyed liquor stores and grocery stores in Blackford County. Additionally, mass merchandisers such as discount stores, grocery stores, tobacco shops, pharmacies, and other retailers were surveyed across all counties.

Types of Stores Assessed



*Includes 35 counties with completed store assessments. Data are not representative of Indiana statewide.

All of the retailers surveyed in Blackford County sold cigarettes. Nearly all retailers surveyed across Indiana sold cigarettes. Additionally nearly all retailers in Blackford County and those surveyed across Indiana sold menthol cigarette. More than 9 in 10 retailers in Blackford County sold little cigars or cigarillos – small cigars that are often popular among youth. A majority of retailers also sold smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes. Far fewer retailers sold nicotine pouches or premium large cigars.

Exterior Tobacco Advertising



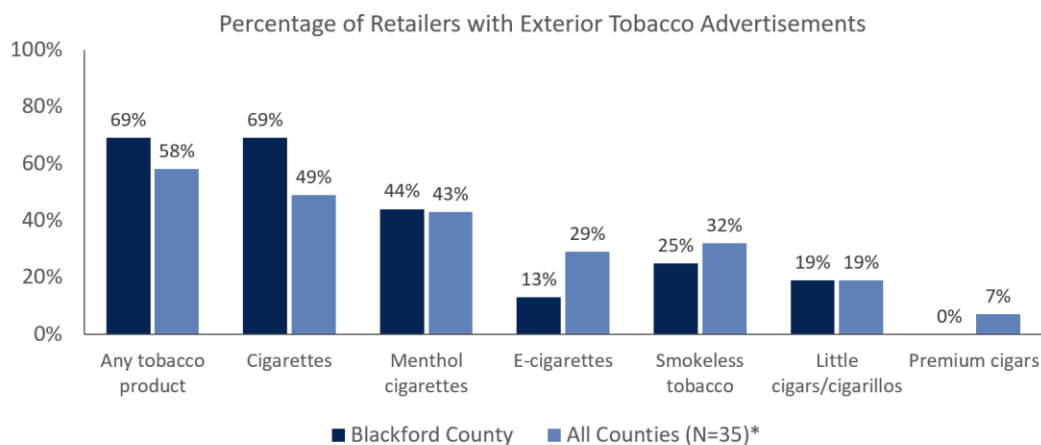


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In addition to assessing product availability, we also collected data on retail tobacco advertising placed outside of a store. This includes advertising like those in the pictures shown here, such as signs on building walls, in windows, or on gas pumps. This type of advertising is important because people don't even need to go into a tobacco retailer to be exposed to tobacco advertising. For example, kids can be exposed to these ads in a car while their parents are purchasing gas or by simply walking past tobacco retailers in their neighborhood.

Exterior Tobacco Advertising



*Includes 35 counties with completed store assessments. Data are not representative of Indiana statewide.

In Blackford County, we saw that over half of all retailers surveyed, or 69%, displayed some form of exterior tobacco ad. This was slightly higher than among all counties surveyed, where about 58% of retailers had any form of exterior tobacco advertising. In general, the most heavily advertised products were cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco, followed by little cigars/cigarillos and e-cigarette. There was no exterior advertising for premium large cigars observed at the stores surveyed. Overall, these results suggest that exterior advertising is still quite common among tobacco retailers.

In addition to exterior tobacco advertising, we assessed products and marketing tactics that specifically target youth. In particular, we assessed the availability of flavored tobacco products. Although flavored cigarettes other than menthol have been banned in the U.S., other products such as cigars and cigarillos, smokeless tobacco, and e-cigarettes are available in a wide variety of flavors. Often, these are sweet candy or fruit flavors that have been shown to appeal to youth [1]. These pictures show cigar brands that are popular with youth and available in a wide variety of flavors like grape, cherry, strawberry, and chocolate. You'll also notice that these products are often cheap (in the pictures here, they are 2 for 99 cents), and they are often available in brightly-colored packaging that may appeal to kids.

What we saw from our store audits was that flavored tobacco products were very commonly sold. A large majority of tobacco retailers in Blackford County – more than 9 in 10 or 94% - sold any flavored



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tobacco products. Similarly, across all counties surveyed, 92% or about 9 in 10 tobacco retailers sold any flavored tobacco.

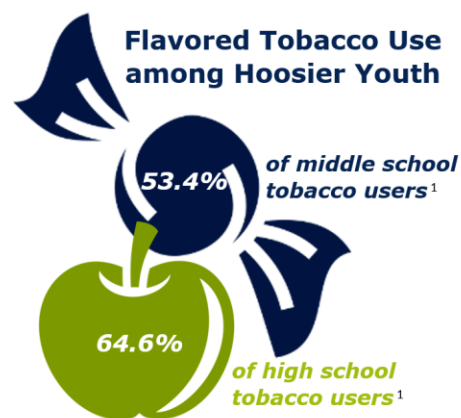
These data indicate that flavored products are widely available. We also know that flavored products appeal to youth, as over half of Hoosier youth who used tobacco in 2018 used flavored tobacco products.

Youth Targeting – Flavored Products

94% of retailers in Blackford County sold any flavored tobacco products.

92% of retailers among all counties surveyed sold any flavored tobacco products.

In 2018, over half of Hoosier youth who used tobacco used flavored tobacco products.¹



1) 2018 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey

We also saw that it was very common for retailers to sell various types of flavored tobacco products. This slide shows flavored product availability among retailers that sold various types of tobacco products that are often manufactured in flavored varieties. In Blackford County, all smokeless tobacco retailers surveyed sold flavored varieties of smokeless tobacco. Additionally, nearly all tobacco retailers that sold little cigars or cigarillos sold flavored products. Nearly all of tobacco retailers sold menthol cigarettes and 78% of e-cigarette retailers sold flavored e-cigarette products. Flavored premium cigars were slightly less common, but still 50% of cigar retailers sold flavored cigars.

Ultimately, these results demonstrate just how widely available flavored tobacco is across retailers in Blackford County and Indiana.

In addition to flavored products, some tobacco marketing tactics, such as the price and placement of tobacco products, particularly target youth. Youth are a very price-sensitive population. They often don't have a lot of money to spend on tobacco products, so cheap products tend to appeal to them. Often, tobacco products such as cigars are priced much more cheaply than cigarettes, and as we just discussed, they are also often available in a variety of flavors that appeal to youth. They may also be sold in smaller packaging, such as packs of one, two, or three, which makes them even cheaper. Here, you can see pictures of just how cheap some of these products are, as the pictures on the left show cigars priced 2 or 3 for 99 cents.

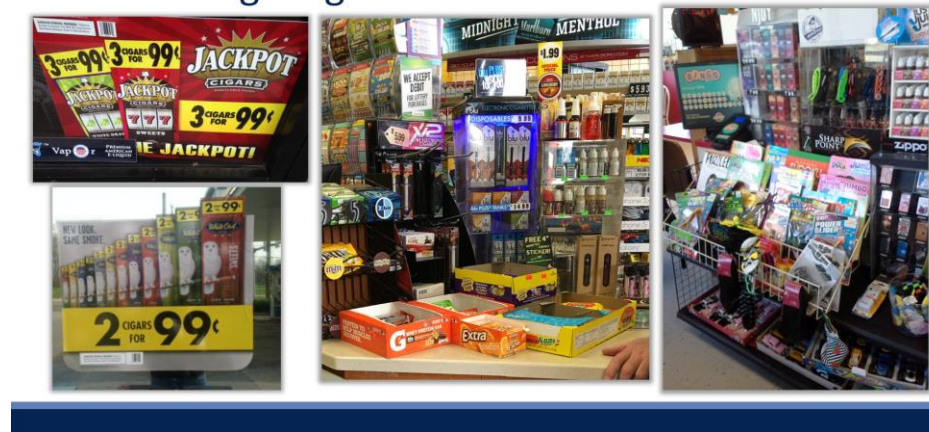


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Tobacco products and tobacco ads may also be placed where they are highly visible to kids, such as at child's eye-level or near candy, soda, or toys. In the middle picture, for example, you can see e-cigarettes placed on the counter near gum and candy. In the picture on the right, there is an e-cigarette display just behind kids' activity books and toys.

Youth Targeting – Price and Placement



These types of marketing tactics were fairly common among retailers surveyed. About 31% of tobacco retailers in Blackford County had tobacco ads placed within three feet of the floor, or at about child's eye-level. Another 31% had tobacco placed within 12 inches of kid-appealing products, such as candy, soda, gum, ice cream, or toys.

In addition, among retailers that sold cigarillos, cheap cigarillos were widely available. 87% of cigarillo retailers in Blackford County sold cigarillos for less than one dollar. Additionally, 73% of Blackford County cigarillo retailers sold single cigarillos. This indicates that these products are often sold at very cheap prices, which makes them more accessible to youth. It's also important to remember that these products are often available in flavored varieties that directly appeal to young people.

Finally, we also collected data on price promotions on tobacco products. Price promotions are important because they represent the largest category of tobacco point-of-sale marketing. Tobacco companies spend more on price promotions than any other type of advertising [1], and it's such an important part of their marketing because one of the best ways to reduce tobacco consumption is to raise the price of tobacco products [2]. Tobacco retailers therefore offer price discounts to appeal to consumers and offset tobacco price increases. These pictures show examples of tobacco price promotions, such as coupons. Retailers may also offer multi-pack discounts, such as the picture on the right that shows cigarillos advertised as "buy 10 get 1 free." Overall, it was quite common for tobacco retailers in Blackford County to offer price promotions. 63% of tobacco retailers in Blackford County offered promotions on any tobacco products. Additionally, over 3 in 5 retailers assessed across all counties surveyed, or 59%, offered any tobacco price promotions.



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TOBACCO MARKETING IN BLACKFORD COUNTY

What is point-of-sale tobacco marketing?

Point-of-sale marketing targets consumers in retail settings. It often includes:

- Tobacco advertisements
- Price discounts on tobacco products
- Tobacco product displays and placement

Why does point-of-sale matter? ¹

Point-of-sale tobacco marketing:

- Encourages youth to start using tobacco
- Makes quitting tobacco more difficult
- Disproportionately targets some communities

Tobacco Retailer Density

20 tobacco retailers in Blackford County

1.6 tobacco retailers per 1,000 residents

Products Sold

Among tobacco retailers in Blackford County:

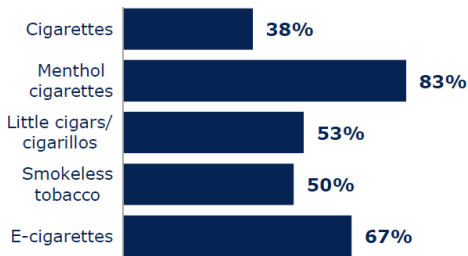
- 100% sold cigarettes
- 93% sold little cigars or cigarillos
- 12% sold premium large cigars
- 87% sold smokeless tobacco
- 56% sold e-cigarettes
- 37% sold nicotine pouches

Price Promotions

62% of retailers offered a price promotion on any type of tobacco product.

*59% in Indiana**

Price Promotions on Tobacco Products Among Retailers Selling Each Product Type



Spending on Tobacco Marketing

▪ The tobacco industry spent nearly \$9.1 billion on tobacco marketing in the United States in 2018 – over **one million dollars per hour**.²

▪ In Indiana, the tobacco industry spends about **\$293 million** on tobacco marketing each year – nearly \$45 for every Hoosier.³

▪ About 92% of the tobacco industry’s marketing budget is spent on point-of-sale marketing.²

Tobacco Advertising

68% of retailers in Blackford County displayed exterior ads for tobacco products.

58% in Indiana

Youth Targeting

Location

11% of tobacco retailers in Blackford County are within 1,000 feet of a school.

17% in Indiana

Flavored Tobacco Products

93% of retailers sold any flavored tobacco product, such as candy or fruit flavored products that may appeal to youth.**

92% in Indiana

Tobacco Product and Ad Placement

31% of retailers had a tobacco product placed within 12 inches of child-appealing products such as candy, gum, soda, ice cream, or toys.

19% in Indiana

31% of retailers displayed a tobacco ad within 3 feet of the floor (about child’s eye level).

19% in Indiana

Cheap Cigarillos (among Cigarillo Retailers)

86% of retailers sold cigarillos for less than \$1.

74% in Indiana

73% of retailers sold single-packaged cigarillos.

80% in Indiana

*County-level data in this fact sheet (excluding data on tobacco retailer density and proximity to schools) are based on 16 tobacco retail assessments in Blackford County. Indiana results (excluding proximity to schools) are based on 2,020 retail assessments conducted in 35 Indiana Counties and are not necessarily representative of Indiana statewide. Data were collected between February and August in 2020. Retailer density and location data are based on Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission tobacco retailer licensing records as of January 2019.

**Excludes menthol cigarettes.

References

1. Center for Public Health Systems Science. *Point-of-Sale Strategies: A Tobacco Control Guide*. St. Louis: Center for Public Health Systems Science, George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis and the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium; 2014.
2. Federal Trade Commission. *Cigarette and Smokeless Tobacco Reports for 2018*. Issued 2019.
3. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. *The Toll of Tobacco in Indiana*. Accessed 09/28/2020. (Per capita costs based on the 2010 Census population.)



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12:55pm **Updates, sharing and other successes- Group**

John noted the Food Council of East Central Indiana will next meet on March 18th, 4pm.

Group will shift to the Zoom platform for next meeting; please be on the lookout for new calendar invites.

Fred noted the Pedicab project will resume as weather warms up, gave a thumbnail sketch of the project's purpose, Lindsay displayed a photo of the actual Pedicab.

Michele noted that spring book components were provided to Fred for the Greenway Story Walk.

1pm **Adjourn**