

# **SECTION IV**

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## **Overview of Strategies to Reduce Underage Tobacco Use**

## ***Strategies to Reduce Underage Tobacco Use*** **Effectiveness and Priority Level as Established** **by Tobacco Control Research**

Enforcement of minimum purchase age laws aimed at retailers

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Level of Effectiveness</b>
Vigorous use of compliance checks	High	Repeatedly demonstrated to reduce sales of tobacco to minors, though the relationship between reduced sales and reduced use is not always consistent.
Application of appropriate sanctions to violating merchants (graduated system of civil penalties)	High	Can reduce youth smoking when tied to compliance checks. It has been shown that civil – rather than criminal – penalties tend to be more successful.
Education of merchants regarding techniques and responsibilities	High	Sometimes found to have some effect alone, but most important as an adjunct to compliance checks
Development of community support for enforcement	High	Not specifically evaluated, but can be an important strategy for supporting and sustaining the use of compliance checks

### Strategies aimed at reducing social availability of alcohol

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Level of Effectiveness</b>
Enforcement of laws against buying cigarettes for minors	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access
Sales displays that discourage shoplifting	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access

### Improvement of laws related to minimum purchase age

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Level of Effectiveness</b>
Require sellers of tobacco to be at least 21 years old	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access
Make the manufacture or purchase of false identification a crime	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access
Make the provision of tobacco (by a legal purchaser) to minors an offense	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access. Also, it expresses community norms against underage smoking more clearly.

### Controls on availability

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Level of Effectiveness</b>
Increase in price through excise taxes	Very High	Increased taxes have consistently been found to reduce tobacco use, especially among youth.
Conditional-use permits for tobacco outlets	High	Not specifically evaluated, but may be a way of reducing access
Controls on outlet location and density	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but effective for reducing alcohol-related problems. May or may not be equally effective for tobacco
Controls on hours of sales	Low/Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but restricted availability generally reduces alcohol-related problems. May or may not be equally effective for tobacco

### Expressions of community norms against underage use

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Level of Effectiveness</b>
Prohibitions or controls on tobacco use at community events or in public areas (e.g., restaurants, fairs, festivals, parks, etc.)	High	Can decrease smoking prevalence when strongly enforced, but may not affect overall consumption. Can be an expression of community norms. Very effective for reducing exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
Prohibition of tobacco sponsorship of public events (e.g., sponsoring a boat race)	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but can be a strong expression of community norms

Media campaigns, media advocacy and counter-advertising	Very High	Media campaigns can be very effective when combined with other interventions. Found to be important components of enforcement efforts, greatly magnifying their effectiveness. Also, strengthen school-based efforts. Less evidence that media campaigns are effective alone. Counter-advertising has been found to be effective in reducing use of tobacco.
Controls on tobacco advertising (especially on billboards, sides of buses and in other public areas)	Medium	Exposure to tobacco advertising has been found to affect attitudes toward tobacco and intentions to use
Restrictions on in-store product placement	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but can help lessen the effects of tobacco company marketing
Community sponsorship of tobacco-free activities for youth	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but can help to establish community norms
Parent coalitions to reduce alcohol use by their children	Medium	Not specifically evaluated, but can be an expression of community norms
Bans on smoking in homes	High	More restrictive arrangements at home were associated with lower youth tobacco use

Strategies based in schools and in other youth organizations

Strategy	Priority	Level of Effectiveness
School policies regarding tobacco use on school property or at school-sponsored events.	High	This strategy has been found to reduce substance use and problems, perhaps only when strongly enforced.
Media literacy programs* to make youth more sophisticated about the manipulative techniques of advertisers	Medium	Some effects on attitudes have been found
Prevention curricula* Sometimes the content of these or similar curricula are delivered in other venues (e.g., youth clubs).	Medium	In general, research and evaluations have found that these programs have weak and inconsistent effects on tobacco use. Stronger programs with an emphasis on social influences (media and peer influences, refusal-skill development, perceptions of social norms) have shown some effects.

\* Not usually considered an environmental strategy

**Source**

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