



Tobacco UPDATE

*An Update on Tobacco Control
and Prevention Activities
in Region 6/5S*

Issue 16

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Tobacco News

FDA and CBP Seize \$18M Worth of Illegal E-cigarette Products

Last month, a large shipment of e-cigarette products was seized in a joint effort by the Food and Drug Administration and Customs and Border Protection. The two agencies worked together months prior to review incoming shipments and identify possible violators leading up to the 3-day operation.

All in all, the joint operation was able to seize \$18 million worth of illegal e-cigarette products. Among those products are Elf Bars, which according to the latest NYTS is the most popular E-cigarette brand among the youth. Aside from Elf Bar, EB Create products were also seized. Last year, the manufacturer of Elf Bar began marketing their products under the names "EB Design" and "EB Create". Other brands confiscated included Lost Mary, Funky Republic, RELX Pod, and IPLAY Max. Most of the confiscated products were intentionally mis-declared as toys or

shoes and listed with incorrect values to avoid import taxes and detection.

[Full Article.](#)

WHO Issues Guidance on E-cigarette Use



World Health
Organization

Last month, the World Health Organization issued a message calling countries to take urgent

action in controlling e-cigarette use especially in children. E-cigarettes have been widely available and are aggressively marketed to the youth. Only 34 countries ban the sale of e-cigarettes, 88 countries have no minimum age to buy e-cigarettes, and 74 have no regulations whatsoever regarding these harmful products.

"Kids are being recruited and trapped at an early age to use e-cigarettes and may get hooked to nicotine," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "I urge countries to implement strict measures to prevent uptake to protect their citizens, especially their children and young people."

[Full Article.](#)

Announcements & Events

Upcoming Events

January 12

- [“Does my intervention need an intervention? Taking stock of culturally tailored approaches to preventing and reducing commercial tobacco use among sexual and gender minoritized populations”](#); **Webinar; 11am EST.**

January 17

- [Mindfulness and Empathy: Pathways to Healing](#); **Webinar; 11am CT.**

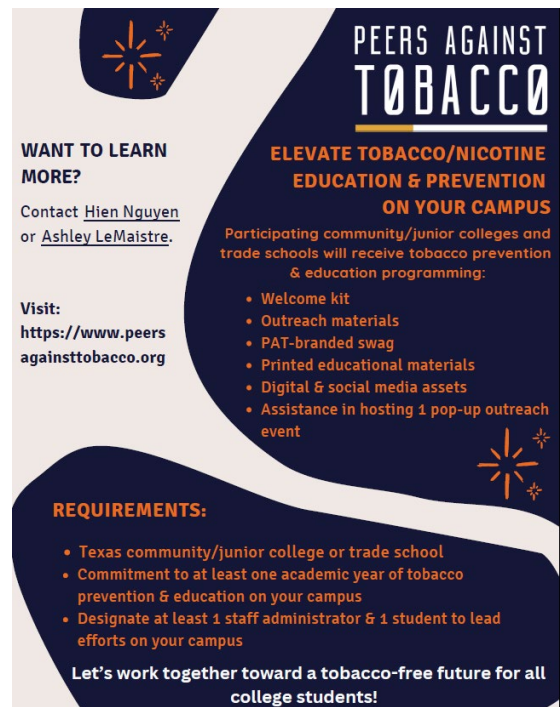
January 24

- [Evidence-Based Youth Vaping Prevention Program & Tobacco-free District Model Policy](#); **Webinar; 12pm-1pm CT.**

Get in touch!

Julian Laude III, MPH, CHES
Regional Tobacco Coordinator, PHR 6/5 South
Texas Department of State Health Services
Public Health Region 6/5 S
Cell: (832) 474-5836
julian.laude@dshs.texas.gov

Partner Announcements



PEERS AGAINST TOBACCO

WANT TO LEARN MORE?
Contact Hien Nguyen or [Ashley LeMaistre](#).

Visit: <https://www.peersagainsttobacco.org>

ELEVATE TOBACCO/NICOTINE EDUCATION & PREVENTION ON YOUR CAMPUS

Participating community/junior colleges and trade schools will receive tobacco prevention & education programming:

- Welcome kit
- Outreach materials
- PAT-branded swag
- Printed educational materials
- Digital & social media assets
- Assistance in hosting 1 pop-up outreach event

REQUIREMENTS:

- Texas community/junior college or trade school
- Commitment to at least one academic year of tobacco prevention & education on your campus
- Designate at least 1 staff administrator & 1 student to lead efforts on your campus

Let's work together toward a tobacco-free future for all college students!

December Spotlight

January is Birth Defects Awareness Month:

We all know that smoking and vaping can cause harm to our body especially our lungs and heart. But did you know that they can also lead to birth defects? In this month's spotlight, we'll talk about Cleft Lip/Palate.



Cigarette Smoking is associated with Cleft Lip/ Cleft Palate

Women who **smoke cigarettes** during early pregnancy have a high risk of delivering a baby with cleft lip or palate. This condition results from the failure of the lips to form properly during pregnancy. The result is the upper lip or palate can have a large opening. (See illustrations). These defects can affect the infant's speech development and eating after they are born.



Baby with cleft palate



Cleft palate

How does cleft lip or palate happen?

During the baby's development in the womb, body tissue and cells from either side of the head grow toward the center to form the face. If a woman smokes during pregnancy, especially in the third trimester, she exposes her baby to

several toxic chemicals. Although no specific substance has been identified yet, scientists have reason to believe that one of these chemicals affect the genes regulating the formation of the lips/palate.

What about E-cigarettes/vapes? Can they cause birth defects?

Currently, there have been limited studies done to see if e-cigarettes can increase the risk of birth defects. However, there is evidence to suggest that exposure to e-cigarettes during pregnancy can cause potential harm to the mother and child.

These adverse effects include low birth weight, preterm birth, and poor growth in babies. E-

cigarettes/vapes still contain toxic chemicals as well as nicotine. It is NOT Safe for anyone.

How can I prevent birth defects and other pregnancy complications?

The best way to prevent any pregnancy complications is to check-in with your physician regularly. Regular pre-natal check-ups will ensure that both you and your baby are safe and healthy.

In addition, if you smoke or vape, please consider quitting. Quitting will decrease the risk for birth defects like cleft lip or palate, and other pregnancy complications. It will be the best decision you could make for you and your baby.

Latest in Research

Feasibility of Smoking Cessation Outreach in Food Pantries

Adults in the US living with food insecurity



ty have a high prevalence of smoking. Since food insecurity can put a lot of stress on an individual and smoking is sometimes used to cope with these stressful situations. At the same time, smoking can also lead to food insecurity because of several factors like smoking-related expenses.

There is a clear interconnection between food insecurity and smoking. However, there is little effort in addressing the disparity. A pilot study done in Ohio, aimed to change that.

The pilot study partnered with local food pantries in Greater Cleveland, Ohio to conduct surveys and outreach to connect people to the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line. In all, there were 132 participants who have visited a food pantry. Of those, 31% were current smokers, 76% were interested in quitting in the next 6 months and 82% were not aware of the quit line.

Based on the data, the researchers conducted 22 outreach events at four pantries. Among those who were reached, 74% provided consent for quit line referral.

Because of the high rate of smokers among food insecure and the ability of food pantries to reach out to this population, it is very feasible to leverage pantries for smoking cessation. Even with high interest in quitting, however, there was limited effectiveness of the outreach events. Areas for improvement for future efforts include expanding the length of outreach and providing onsite cessation services.

[Abstract](#)

Sleep Quality and Smoking Cessation

Another study from Nicotine and Tobacco Research looked at the association of sleep and fatigue to smoking cessation. In the study, **poor sleep quality was**



associated with increased smoking urges, increased barrier to cessation, and increased perceived risk to cessation. These results suggest that including sleep health in future smoking cessation interventions maybe be beneficial. Further studies need to be done to strengthen these findings and determine the exact interplay between these two.

[Abstract](#)



References

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