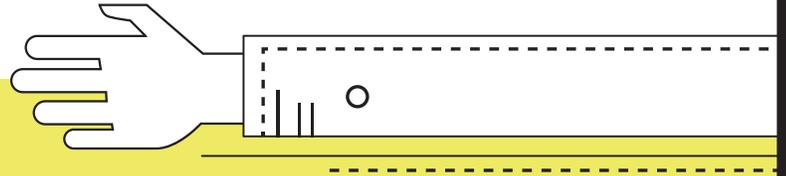
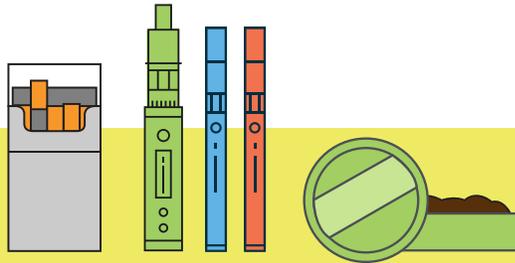


# RAISE THE AGE OF TOBACCO SALES TO 21

One in three Colorado high school students use tobacco.<sup>1</sup> Vaping's rising popularity among youth threatens to completely erase decades of progress to reduce nicotine and tobacco addiction.



Nearly 90% of adult cigarette smokers first tried tobacco before the age of 18<sup>2</sup> and nearly 95% by the age of 21.<sup>3</sup>

Current laws aren't enough. The legal age to purchase tobacco in most Colorado communities is 18 years old, but 56% of high school students think it's easy to get cigarettes and 58% think it's easy to get e-cigarettes.<sup>4</sup>



WHEN PAIRED WITH A STRONG RETAILER LICENSING ORDINANCE, RAISING THE MINIMUM LEGAL SALE AGE TO 21 WILL HELP SAVE LIVES.

There is evidence that raising the minimum legal sale age prevents youth use: The rate of youth smoking decreased by nearly 50% in Needham, MA within five years of raising the age to 21.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Healthy Kids Colorado Survey. (2017). Retrieved July 2018 from <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/hkcs>

<sup>2</sup> Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults. (n.d.). Retrieved September 20, 2016, from <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/factsheet.html>

<sup>3</sup> Calculated based on data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s public online data analysis system (PDAS), National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2016, <https://pdas.samhsa.gov/#/survey/NSDUH-2016-DS0001>

<sup>4</sup> Healthy Kids Colorado Survey. (2017). Retrieved July 2018 from <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/hkcs>

<sup>5</sup> Kessel Schneider S, Buka SL, Dash K, et al "Community reductions in youth smoking after raising the minimum tobacco sales age to 21 Tobacco Control" 2016;25:355-359. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2014-052207>

**More than a dozen states  
and 475+ cities have  
raised the legal sale age  
for tobacco to 21.**



**As of June 2019, Colorado city and town councils in Aspen, Basalt, Edgewater and Snowmass Village have added a provision raising the minimum legal sales age to 21 to their tobacco retail licensing law.**



Service members between 18 and 21 deserve the same protections as their civilian counterparts from tobacco addiction. Of current smokers in the military, 38% report they began after joining the service.<sup>6</sup>



**Raising the minimum legal sales age should be done in conjunction with retailer licensing in order to provide enforcement and have the greatest impact on reducing youth access to tobacco.**

[www.tobaccofreeco.org/tobacco21](http://www.tobaccofreeco.org/tobacco21)



<sup>1</sup> Secretary of Defense Ash Carter April 2016 Policy Memorandum 16-001. Department of Defense Tobacco Policy. Available at <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/tobaccofree-living/INCOMING-CARTER-Tobacco-Policy-Memo.pdf>; accessed December 20, 2016.