ACS CAN POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: ADDRESSING BIG TOBACCO'S TACTICS

Findings from this report show that the tobacco industry's ability to reach and influence young people continues to evolve, as a new #toxic smoking aesthetic gains visibility on Instagram and TikTok. While the tactics are familiar, the scale and speed at which tobacco content can spread are not. Addressing these challenges requires rebuilding a robust public health infrastructure that includes:

- **Funding and strengthening federal tobacco control infrastructure,** including ensuring expert-driven, highly qualified staff at the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. Strong federal leadership is essential to support state tobacco control programs, monitor emerging tobacco industry marketing practices, conduct surveillance and scientific research, and reduce the burden of tobacco-related disease.
- **Increasing funding for state tobacco prevention and control programs** that are proven to reduce youth initiation and adult smoking, alongside comprehensive smoke-free laws and higher tobacco taxes that discourage tobacco use and help shift social norms around smoking
- **Strengthening regulatory oversight of tobacco marketing on social media and digital platforms**, including tighter restrictions on influencer marketing, greater transparency around sponsorship disclosures, and stronger platform policies designed to reduce youth exposure to tobacco promotion
- **Investing in evidence-based counter-marketing campaigns** tailored to young people, particularly young women and girls, that challenge the normalization of smoking, expose tobacco industry marketing tactics, and address tobacco content embedded in contemporary aesthetics, identity, and online culture
- **Investing in surveillance and research on the reach, impact, and evolution of tobacco marketing across social media**, including emerging marketing practices, with a particular focus on populations historically targeted by the tobacco industry, including young women and girls, LGBTQIA+ people, and Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities
- **Ending the sale of menthol cigarettes and all other flavored tobacco products**, which continue to be marketed to young people through digital and social media channels
- **Supporting strong, evidence-based FDA regulation of tobacco products** and emerging marketing practices
- **Expanding access to evidence-based tobacco cessation treatments and services**, while integrating cessation messaging into digital tobacco prevention and counter-marketing efforts



A tobacco-free generation is within reach, but that progress is not guaranteed. As pro-tobacco content spreads across social media and Big Tobacco continues to invest billions in keeping their products visible and profitable, policymakers cannot afford to retreat from proven tobacco control strategies. Rebuilding and strengthening federal and state tobacco control infrastructure is essential to protecting young people from nicotine addiction and tobacco-related disease including cancer.

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