



American Heart Association®

EmPOWERED to Serve™

# Create Smoke-Free Communities

#EmPOWERChange

# CREATE SMOKE-FREE COMMUNITIES | Lesson Overview

## Welcome

- What is EmPOWERED to Serve™?
- Program topic and urgent community need

## Health Lesson: *Clear the Air*

- Key issues surrounding clearing the air
- Identify actions to take to increase access to smoke-free air
- Join *You're the Cure*

## Closing Thoughts

- Your voice matters
- Online resources



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EmPOWERED to Serve™

# WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

**EmPOWERED to Serve** is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.

**AHA's Mission Statement:**  
To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.



# PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, you'll be able to take three steps to clear the air

- Gather facts about the effects of tobacco use.
- Be an advocate for smoke-free communities.
- Join *You're the Cure* and make yourself heard.



# POINT 1 – GATHER THE FACTS

## Gather the facts for your elevator speech:

- Smoke-free workplaces and public places improve the health of communities.
- Reducing tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke improves heart health.
- People have fewer heart attacks after smoke-free air laws go into effect.
- Like traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes should be subject to smoke-free air laws.



# GATHER THE FACTS

## Secondhand smoke causes real problems

- It causes heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and other illnesses in nonsmoking adults.
- It contributes to about 41,000 deaths among nonsmoking adults and 400 deaths in infants each year.
- It increases children's risk for many conditions.

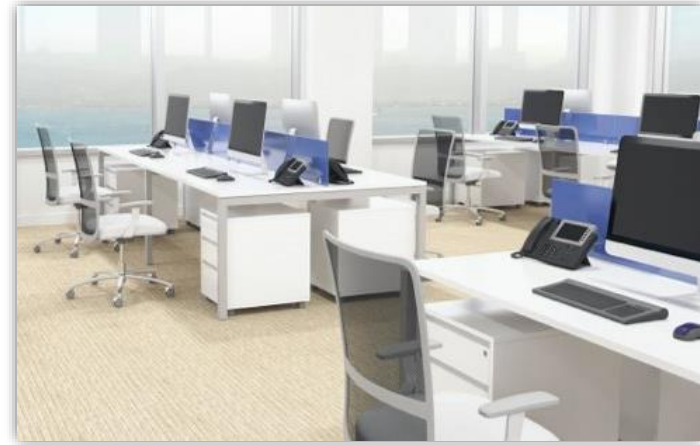


# GATHER THE FACTS

**Annual Cost of Tobacco Use: \$320 Billion**



**\$170 billion per year**  
in health care expenditures  
associated with tobacco use



**\$150 billion per year**  
in lost productivity  
associated with tobacco use



# GATHER THE FACTS

Evidence shows that smoke-free laws (which should include e-cigarettes) significantly improve public health

Evidence also shows that smoke-free laws do not harm business.

- They don't significantly affect a business's sales.
- Sales often increase, in fact, once a business is smoke-free.





# GATHER THE FACTS

## The Tobacco End Game

- Only about 14% of people in America smoke. The goal is to drive that rate down below 5%, saving millions of lives.
- But e-cigarettes pose a significant threat to this goal. More on this shortly.



# GATHER THE FACTS

Let's support what's already working.



**Public  
education  
campaigns**



**Clean  
indoor air  
laws**



**Youth  
prevention  
programs**



**Raising the  
tobacco sales  
age to 21**

# GATHER THE FACTS

## Addicting a New Generation

- 1 in 4 high-school-age kids now report using e-cigarettes (vaping). They're the most popular tobacco product among adolescents.
- Many adolescents think vaping is safe. It's not – and it can deliver higher concentrations of addictive nicotine than traditional cigarettes.



# GATHER THE FACTS

## Addicting a New Generation

- Adolescents clearly prefer flavored e-cigarettes. The AHA advocates for laws that remove all flavored tobacco products from the market.
- About 95% of adult smokers began smoking before they were 21. If they don't start by 26, they're unlikely to ever start.



# GATHER THE FACTS

## The Vaping Industry's Lies

Vaping isn't smoking.

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The vaping industry is not Big Tobacco.

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The vaping industry isn't marketing to teens.

## The Truth

But the nicotine in one pod equals what's in **an entire pack of cigarettes.**

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But the tobacco giant that makes Marlboro cigarettes **owns 35% of Juul.**

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But **flavored products** demonstrate otherwise.

# GATHER THE FACTS

## The AHA is educating the industry about the dangers of lying:

- Lying leads to nicotine addiction.
- Lying leads more people to smoking.
- Lying is producing lung disease, heart disease and cancer.
- Lying has landed hundreds of e-cigarette users in hospitals.

To get more information and share it with others, visit [QuitLying.org](https://www.QuitLying.org).

HEYHEYHEY  
HEYHEYHEY  
**BIG VAPE**  
**#QUITLYING**  
HEYHEYHEY  
HEYHEYHEY  
**SINCERELY, EVERYONE & THEIR MOM**

# HOW CAN WE MAKE A CHANGE?

The AHA is urging the FDA to crack down on aggressive targeting of children, including:

- Immediately removing flavored e-cigarettes from the market.
- Restricting all other flavored tobacco products, including flavored cigars and menthol cigarettes.
- Prohibiting all marketing, including on social media, shown to appeal to children.
- Suspending online sales of e-cigarettes until we have effective age verification mechanisms.



# VIDEO: YOUTH ADVOCATES & THE E-CIGARETTE EPIDEMIC





# POINT 2 – BE AN ADVOCATE

## Here's how you can help:

- **Stay tobacco-free.** If you smoke or use tobacco, make a plan to quit now.
- **Talk with young people in your life** about the dangers of vaping and *any* tobacco use.
- **Advocate for strong, comprehensive tobacco policies and regulation.**
- **Join local efforts** in your community and state at [yourethecure.org](https://yourethecure.org).



# BE AN ADVOCATE

**Community, state and federal leaders want to know what each of us think.**

**Since they are busy people:**

- Keep your message short.
- Make it personal.
- Add one or two compelling facts.
- Finish by saying what you want the decision-maker to do.
- Ask for a commitment.



# BE AN ADVOCATE

## Make Yourself Heard



**Post:** Share info on your social networks of choice.



**Attend:** Go to local meetings and town halls.



**Call it in:** Telephone your elected officials.



**Visit:** Build relationships.



**Write:** Send letters to the editor and emails to elected officials.



# BE AN ADVOCATE

## Join Our Efforts

The American Heart Association is working on behalf of multicultural communities on:

- Comprehensive smoke-free air laws that apply to all indoor workplaces and public environments and include e-cigarettes.
- No delays in enforcing local laws.
- No exemptions for hardships, opting out or ventilation.
- No exemptions for casinos and gaming organizations, bars or private clubs.



# POINT 3 - JOIN *YOU'RE THE CURE*

## Let's Be the Cure

Let's figure out what issues as a group we want to identify as our key actions.

- Get engaged with *You're the Cure*.
- Share our stories online.
- Recruit five friends to join *You're the Cure*.
- Respond to action alerts.
- Ask friends to respond to action alerts by sharing on Facebook and Twitter.



# LET'S GET HEARD

**As a united community voice, we can make a difference**

- We can push for healthy changes in our community.
- We can influence those who make policies.

The American Heart Association's *You're the Cure* program helps advocates by:



Offering structure & guidance



Providing updates



Giving direction



Connecting to AHA state contacts



# YOUR VOICE MATTERS

We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.

Join **You're the Cure** today and be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

**Text EMPOWER to 46839 join today!**



# USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!

**Join us as we impact the health of ALL in our communities!**





# WRAP-UP

**We appreciate your thoughts!**

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:  
[empoweredtoserve@heart.org](mailto:empoweredtoserve@heart.org)



# WE ARE **EMPOWERED TO SERVE**

...serve our health, serve our community



**The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:**

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