

California Chapter 2

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Press Release

Pediatricians in Support of South Pasadena Tobacco Sales Ban

LOS ANGELES, CA (October 16, 2021)

Pediatricians support tobacco bans and urge the city of South Pasadena to pass a new ordinance to prohibit the sale of all tobacco products and applaud both Manhattan Beach and Beverly Hills for already taking this step to protect the health of children.

The evidence is clear that tobacco products are detrimental to the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents. Tobacco smoke exposure harms children from conception onward, either causing or exacerbating the risks of preterm birth, congenital malformations, stillbirth, sudden infant death, childhood obesity, behavior problems, neurocognitive deficits, wheezing, more severe asthma, more severe bronchiolitis, pneumonia, middle ear infection, reduced lung functioning, and cancer (<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/5/998>). According to a 2014 US Surgeon General's Report, "If we continue on our current trajectory, 5.6 million children alive today who are younger than 18 years of age will die prematurely as a result of smoking."

Accessibility to tobacco products harms adolescents. A 2012 Surgeon General's report found that nearly 90% of tobacco dependent adults initiated their tobacco use well before their 18th birthday. Moreover, nicotine has been documented to be detrimental to the developing brains of children and adolescents.

Tobacco harms children. Smoke free legislation and bans on flavored tobacco are steps towards protecting children and adolescents from the harmful effects of tobacco smoke exposure and consumption. But we need to do more. Bans on the sale of all tobacco products will further limit accessibility, consumption, and the risk for second and third hand smoke exposure.

The Southern California Chapter 2 of the American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 1,500 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

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