



MEDIA RELEASE

NEW DATA SHOWS OVER 57,000 ONTARIO YOUTH USING FLAVOURED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Ban Needed on All Tobacco Flavours: Health Agencies

Toronto – In light of first-of-its-kind data showing that over 57,000 grade 6-12 Ontario youth used flavoured tobacco products in 2010/11, a coalition of major Ontario health agencies is calling for a complete ban on flavours in tobacco products.

The Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco's (OCAT's) call for a flavours ban is also in response to the continuing failure of federal and provincial legislation designed to partially restrict flavours in some tobacco products.

"Today's data – from Canada's 2010/11 Youth Smoking Survey (YSS) – shows that the tobacco industry's flavoured products appeal to many more Ontario kids than we previously thought," said OCAT Director Michael Perley. "The industry has avoided a 2009 ban on flavours in small filtered cigars by simply increasing the size of their products, which in turn has exempted them from the ban. There is only one way to deal with this industry's efforts to seduce our kids with flavours: eliminate the latter outright." Today's data is the first analysis of YSS results that gives both national and provincial breakdowns of a specialized focus on flavoured and menthol tobacco product use among youth.

"While Ontario youth smoke fewer cigarettes and use fewer flavoured tobacco products than youth in other provinces – likely due to the province's comprehensive tobacco control strategy – even this lower rate of use translates into health risks for far too many Ontario kids."

"Another ingredient of concern is menthol, which has been used in cigarettes since the 1920s. Over 23,000 Ontario students also smoke menthol. This ingredient must also be eliminated," Perley said.

"The Canadian Cancer Society's youth volunteers have been taking action against flavoured tobacco products in our community, and today's report shows how many kids are at risk," said Rowena Pinto, Vice-President of Public Affairs and Strategic Initiatives for the Canadian Cancer Society's Ontario Division. "These figures are authoritative, of great concern and also show that we must pay urgent and special attention to protecting the large number of kids who find flavoured tobacco products – whether combustible or smokeless – attractive," she said.

"The Heart and Stroke Foundation has been monitoring the activities of the Industry and its blatant attempts to hook a younger generation of kids to smoke through the introduction of these novelty products that come in appealing flavours like appletini and pina colada," said Mark Holland, National Director, Children and Youth and Ontario Director, Health Promotion and Public Affairs. "We continue to witness an expansion of new flavoured products, packaged to look like candy, and therefore want to ensure the public are aware of the Industry's duplicitous tactics and we are calling on the government to address these concerns and to implement a complete ban on flavours, if this deceptive practice is to end," said Holland.

Founding Agencies

Canadian Cancer Society
Ontario Division

Heart and Stroke
Foundation of Ontario

Non-Smokers'
Rights Association

Ontario Medical Association

Supporting Agencies

Association of Local
Public Health Agencies

Cancer Care Ontario

Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies

Ontario Association of
Naturopathic Doctors

Ontario Federation of Home
and School Associations

Ontario Physical and Health
Education Association

Ontario Public Health
Association

Physicians for a
Smoke-Free Canada

Registered Nurses
Association of Ontario

The Ontario College
of Family Physicians

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Today's data was released by the PROPEL Centre for Population Health Impact at the University of Waterloo, and includes data from Canada's 2010/11 Youth Smoking Survey. The report – by PROPEL's Dr. Steve Manske and colleagues – is available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/propel/news/flavoured-tobacco-big-issue-canadian-youth>.

Pictures of flavoured products now available in the Toronto region are included on the next page. Samples of these products can also be seen/filmed at the Ontario Campaign's offices at Suite 900, 150 Bloor St. West (n/e corner of Avenue Rd.), Toronto.

The Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco was founded in 1992 by the Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division), the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, the Non-Smokers' Rights Association, and the Ontario Medical Association to promote comprehensive tobacco control in Ontario.

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KID-FRIENDLY FLAVOURED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Bluntarillos (cigars wrapped with tobacco leaves) sold with no health warnings



Little cigars sold in packages of 10 or 20



Flavoured oral tobacco



Flavoured shisha sold with no health warnings



Little flavoured cigars sold in single units (no health warnings)



Assortment of flavoured tobacco products mixed in with candy

