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Health Officials to Kids: Quit e-Cigarettes Now

Posted By Erin Sherbert on Mon, Jan 5, 2015 at 2:55 PM



NOT AGAIN, BIG TOBACCO!

E-Cigarette, the new Cigarette:

- Sold by Tobacco Industry
- Highly Addictive Nicotine
- Toxic & Cancer-Causing Metals & Chemicals
- Secondhand Harm to Others
- Public Use Restricted to Curb

Never before has giving up tobacco been a more appealing New Year's resolution than present day when there's a seemingly guiltless alternative: e-Cigarettes.

But alas, the health industry, always one step ahead, is here to ruin your fresh start with a campaign designed to take the batteries out of your nicotine buzz. Today, #CurbIt begins — a new advertising campaign, sponsored by San Francisco's Tobacco Free Coalition, aimed to get kids to quit e-cigarettes.

It's the first campaign like this in the nation, borrowing successful tactics from past efforts against the tobacco industry, including hard-hitting transit ads on buses, trains, shelters and stations with images portraying the negative health impacts of e-cigarettes that nicely shame smokers.

"Everything old is new again," said Tomas Aragon, San Francisco's Public Health Officer. "Once again, the tobacco industry is using misinformation to push its latest deadly product by marketing e-cigarettes as healthy alternatives to tobacco. And, once again, San Francisco is fighting back with a one-two punch of community-fueled policies and education to protect our residents and our youth."

Thanks to the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition, a grassroots coalition of health, youth-serving and environmental agencies, you will find these #CurbIt ads on Muni and BART starting this week. The \$115,000 multi-lingual campaign features five distinct ads in English, Spanish, and Chinese that "counter the misleading advertising" by e-cigarette companies, many of which are owned by big tobacco companies.

Some of the campaign's ads include the following messages:

#ToxicVapor – E-cigarettes are not regulated and have been shown to contain tobacco related carcinogens, toxic chemicals, and heavy metals. E-cigarettes also contain highly addictive nicotine and are heavily marketed to youth using sweet flavors.

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#BigTobacco – Big tobacco is at it again! They know the public is getting smarter about cigarettes, so they need a new product to replace dead smokers.

The #CurbIt campaign is being driven in part by social media, utilizing hashtags for Twitter, including #CurbIt #ToxicVapor; #EcigsAreCigs; #SmokelessNotHarmless; and #BigTobacco

“We’ve done such an effective job over the years at reducing smoking, that the big tobacco companies need to come up with new ways to hook new smokers,” said Karen Licavoli, co-chair of the SF Tobacco Free Coalition.

Although there's been some confusion and mixed reviews about whether e-cigarettes, which do not contain tobacco but do use nicotine from tobacco products, are safe or not, San Francisco has come out strong against the battery-powered cigarette, going as far as to extend its smoking ban to e-cigarettes last April. Meanwhile, local researchers continue to release studies associating e-cigarettes with nicotine addiction and **debunking theories that e-cigarettes are a "safe" alternative.**

It doesn't help that these new cigarettes come in flavors appealing to youngsters, including bubble gum, chocolate, and vanilla. It's worth noting that the number of middle and high school students using e-cigarettes doubled between 2011 and 2012.



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About The Author



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Erin Sherbert has been Online News Editor for SF Weekly since 2010. She's a Texas native and has a closet full of cowboy boots to prove it.

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Though the SFPD called the meeting in response to the shooting, the gathering seemed to spiral out of the Department's control before it even began.



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