

Tobacco Control

Tobacco control efforts represent some of the public health field's most effective prevention efforts. Policy changes such as tax increases and restricting smoking in public spaces and work places has shifted norms around tobacco use and saved many lives, while reducing costs associated with medical treatment for tobacco-related illness. Prevention Institute staff and leadership have not only played important roles in these efforts — from passing cutting-edge smoke-free policies at the local level in communities throughout the U.S. to waging international tobacco control communications and policy advocacy programs — but also regularly apply the lessons learned through tobacco prevention to other pressing public health problems. This is epitomized in our short video, [From Kools to Cancer Sticks](#), where we show how the approaches used in shaping tobacco prevention policies can be applied to today's pressing health and equity issues. In addition, throughout our history, we have added a powerful voice to the issues at the forefront of the tobacco control movement.

PI Tobacco Prevention Highlights

- **Health Equity in Tobacco Control:** PI co-planned and facilitated a Health Equity Summit in 2013 with the California Tobacco Control Program and more than 50 key stakeholders. Over the one-and-a-half day Summit, participants prioritized essential foundational approaches and 11 promising strategies that demonstrate potential in narrowing or reducing tobacco-related disparities in California. These outcomes are described in the [Health Equity Summit proceedings](#), published on the California Department of Public Health website.
- **A Practitioner's Guide for Advancing Health Equity: Community Strategies for Preventing Chronic Disease:** PI supported the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop this guide which helps public health practitioners advance health equity through community prevention approaches. It focuses on policy, systems and environmental changes to improve the places where people live, learn, work and play, and includes dozens of case studies showcasing successful initiatives of local health departments and community coalitions. Section 2, Maximizing Tobacco-Free Living Strategies to Advance Health Equity, covers four specific tobacco control strategies.
- **THRIVE (Tool for Health and Resilience in Vulnerable Environments):** Originally developed and piloted with support from the US Office of Minority Health (OMH), THRIVE provides a framework for understanding how structural drivers play out at the community level to impact daily living conditions which, in turn, influence health, safety and health equity. THRIVE also provides communities with a pathway for pushing back against unhealthy structural drivers that reflects and respects the wisdom, expertise and culture of community members. The original research that informed THRIVE's development included attention to tobacco as a Leading Indicator for Healthy People. Therefore, THRIVE has applicability for smoking prevention and tobacco control.
- **Voice for Tobacco Control and Prevention:** PI has played an important role nationally and in California in advocating for as well as setting the frame and messaging on emerging tobacco control issues and specific policies. Here are examples that reflect our voice on this topic:
 - Throughout his book, *Prevention Diaries*, (released on 12/1/16) PI's Larry Cohen highlights the dangers of tobacco, and the important roles that coalition building and grassroots policy play in

tobacco control. He writes about his time as director of prevention for Contra Costa County, when he pioneered the nation's first multi-city smoking ban, permanently shifting tobacco norms.

- [“Gov. Brown Signs Major Tobacco Bills, Raises Legal Age to 21”](#): This 2016 KQED report includes an interview about new tobacco legislation to regulate e-cigarettes, raise the tobacco-purchasing age from 18 to 21, and expand smoke-free workplace protections. The interview was precipitated by a [PI press release](#).
- [“San Francisco Supervisors Raise Tobacco Age to 21”](#): This 2016 KQED report quotes us on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' unanimous vote to raise the tobacco-purchasing age from 18 to 21. Larry states, *“Ninety-five percent of daily smokers pick up the habit before age 21. So the 21 age is really a critical number to reduce the numbers of smokers.”* The interview was precipitated by a [PI press release](#).
- [“Time to Push Back on E-Cigarettes”](#): This Op-Ed featured in the Sacramento Bee in 2015 comments on the California Department of Public Health's report and health advisory declaring e-cigarettes a community health threat. The piece was followed by a PI [e-alert](#).
- [“Vaping is not safe”](#): We contributed this op-ed to a Wallethub.com discussion among a panel of public health and addiction experts on whether vaping is unhealthy. The piece was followed by a [PI blog](#).
- [“Regulate e-cigarettes like tobacco products”](#): In this letter to the editor, we praise California Department of Public Health's health advisory declaring e-cigarettes a "community health threat" as a powerful call to action for advocates and regulators.
- [“E-Cigarette Makers Give Public the Finger”](#): PI co-authored this op-ed in Forbes in which we note, *“...we know better than to trust the tobacco industry's health claims about their products—or to trust the industry with our children's future.”* The piece was followed by a PI [e-alert](#).
- [“Smoking Bans And Car-Seat Bribes: Five Lessons From The 50-Year Effort To Reduce Smoking And Save Lives”](#): PI co-authored this op-ed in Forbes. The piece was followed by a PI [e-alert](#).
- [“Menthol: An Unequal Opportunity Killer. Why Hasn't the FDA Banned It?”](#): PI co-authored this op-ed in Forbes, a version of which [also ran in the East Bay Times](#). The piece was followed by a PI [e-alert](#).
- [“Underage smokers fuming over new tobacco law”](#): PI is mentioned in this article criticizing recent California smoking regulations signed into law.
- [“Why we support CA Prop 56 \(increasing tobacco tax\)”](#): In support of a November 2016 California initiative, this PI blog post notes, *“Raising the cost of cigarettes has effectively reduced smoking and discouraged people – especially teens – from starting. On November 8th, let's put public health over corporate profits...”*
- [“Don't let Big Tobacco Quash E-Cig and Smoking Age Bills in California Again”](#): This 2015 PI action alert urged readers to contact their legislators.
- [PI's Larry Cohen in ActionToQuit Interview](#): As part of a series highlighting tobacco prevention leaders, PI's Larry Cohen reflects on his 30 years of experience in the tobacco control movement. The interview is followed by a PI [e-alert](#).
- [From Kools to Cancer Sticks](#): In this short PI video, Larry Cohen shows how the approaches used in shaping tobacco prevention policies can be applied to today's pressing health and equity issues.