
UC MERCED NICOTINE & CANNABIS POLICY CENTER



OVERVIEW PRESENTATION



WHY START A NICOTINE & CANNABIS POLICY CENTER AT UC MERCED?



NICOTINE & CANNABIS POLICY CENTER
EVIDENCE BASED SOLUTIONS FOR CENTRAL CALIFORNIA



TOBACCO IS STILL AN ISSUE

- ◊ Smoking is still the largest cause of preventable deaths
 - 1 out of 5 deaths are due to smoking
 - 1,300 people die from smoking every day
- ◊ Smoking costs \$300 billion each year
 - Medical care for adults due to smoking-related disease
 - Lost productivity due to disease and death due to SHS
- ◊ Every day, 3,200 youth start smoking
- ◊ 80% of smokers regret smoking
- ◊ 68% want to quit



AT HOME, TOBACCO IS AN ISSUE

- California is an international leader in tobacco control
 - CA led the charge for smoke-free laws and taxation
 - Lowest state-level prevalence
- Despite being in CA, the SJV is lagging behind
 - The state prevalence for adult smoking is 12%
 - SJV-Sierra Foothill rates are 16%-20%
 - On par with traditionally high smoking-states of Alabama and Georgia
 - 60% of rural adolescent males smoked in the past 30 days



WHAT ABOUT CANNABIS?

- ◊ Prop 64 has drastically changed the policy landscape for marijuana
 - Recreational use is legal, but it is still restrictive
 - Do people understand the risks involved with cannabis use?
 - Do people know and/or support cannabis policies and restrictions?
 - What is the intersection between tobacco and cannabis?
 - Will the increase in cannabis use have an impact on tobacco use?

NOTE: THE NCPC IS EXAMINING NICOTINE AND CANNABIS POLICY. IT DOES NOT RESEARCH ANY PLANTS, EXTRACTS OR THEIR PHYSICAL & MENTAL EFFECTS.



IS THERE A CONTROL ISSUE?

1

Tobacco Control has historically been difficult in the San Joaquin Valley and mountains

- A severe lack of infrastructure, uneven policy enforcement, and lack of understanding of, or support for, policy among the population has created lapses in tobacco and cannabis control effectiveness.
- SJV localities have not effectively implemented regulations around emerging tobacco control issues, including regulations of nicotine products such as e-cigarettes.
- Legalization of marijuana also poses a significant policy enforcement problem in the heavily agricultural area, where cannabis is perceived as a potential cash crop.



WHY IS MORE DATA NEEDED?

2

Central California and specifically the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) and mountains have largely been overlooked and underserved

- The SJV contains many ethnically diverse and underserved groups with numerous health problems, including tobacco-related diseases and yet very little data on the region exists.
- More data on whether people support tobacco and cannabis policies will help better direct when policy formation might be advantageous, where lapses in enforcement occur, and how tobacco control measures might best be communicated to the public.
- The SJV has also been prone to non-regional investigators who have attempted to conduct research in the area, only for those efforts to be short-lived, without long-lasting benefits.

UC Merced & NCPC is committed, long-term, to investigating & improving the health of residents in the San Joaquin Valley and mountains.



WHICH COUNTIES ARE INCLUDED?

THE NCPC CATCHMENT AREA

- The NCPC will be based in Merced but the research will be carried out in **11 counties** across the San Joaquin Valley. These counties include:

**San Joaquin / Calaveras / Stanislaus / Tuolumne /
Merced / Mariposa / Madera / Fresno / Kings /
Tulare / Kern**



- The 11 counties are home to over 4 million people, the region includes some of the poorest counties and populations in California.
- With a state-level smoking prevalence rates reaching 12% in 2016, the disparities in tobacco control implementation in California have resulted in adult smoking prevalence rates of 16% in the SJV, with rates reaching 19% in Fresno and 20% in Tuolumne, Calaveras, and Mariposa.





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