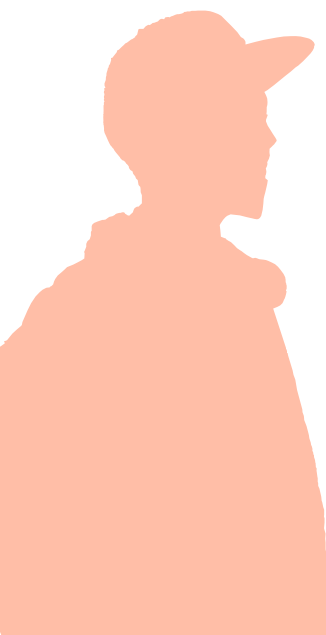


Community Insights: Thoughts on Tobacco Sales in Livingston



In March 2022, API PACT staff interviewed six community members (including high school students, parents, and school administrators) about tobacco sales in the City of Livingston. The following summary details responses from three key questions from these interviews.


If you could reimagine a healthier Livingston, how do you think tobacco sales here should be changed?



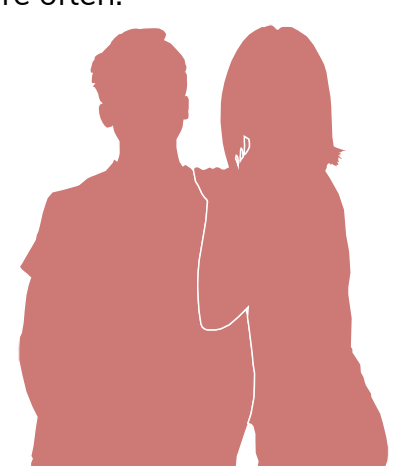
Livingston HS Student #1: Make sure that the **people who are actually purchasing the tobacco products are fully grown adults**. There is a big [vape] “pen” problem happening at the high school. When I need to use the restroom at the beginning of the 5th period, I see a bunch of kids just fogging up the bathroom because they’re vaping.

Livingston HS Student #2: Put more **restrictions on tobacco sales for certain people or make the age group for purchasing tobacco products higher** because a lot of teenagers that currently smoke get it from their siblings.

Former Livingston HS Student: We wouldn’t have any youth participating in buying tobacco products. I also think **this would play a factor in the quality of our air**. I had a lot of track friends who had a lot of asthma. They would have teammates that smoke on the bus to track meets, and my friends with asthma would need to use their asthma inhalers more often.



Parent of Livingston Student: I’ve seen various occasions in gas stations where a kid gives money to an adult and **the adult purchases cigarettes for the minor, so it’s important we regulate this**.



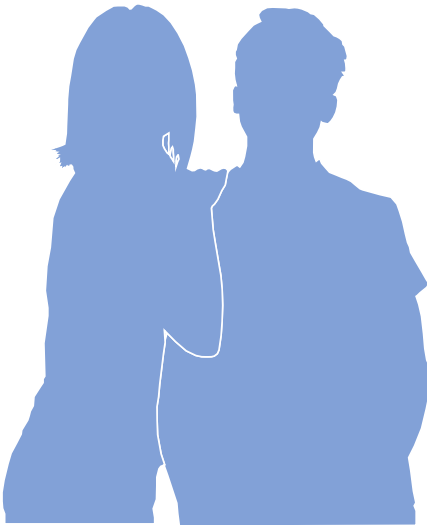
Livingston HS Admin #1: We need to **focus on reducing the sales of these products**, by increasing the prices of tobacco products, fewer promotions for these products, and trying to increase promotions of healthier items.

Livingston HS Admin #2: We need to make sure everyone should be checking ID in these stores. Get help from law enforcement and maybe go to these places and have a little talk explaining the consequences. **The minimum age [to purchase tobacco] can be moved up to 21.**

What do you think about the fact that over 33% of all tobacco retailers in Livingston are located close to youth, within 1,000 feet of schools?

Livingston HS Admin #1: Tobacco products should never be close to schools at all. **The government needs to pass this law for retailers to be away from any school**, especially within walking distance.

Livingston HS Admin #2: These **stores should be at least two miles away from schools**, especially junior high and high schools. We need to make sure to give the least access to the youth to get to these places.

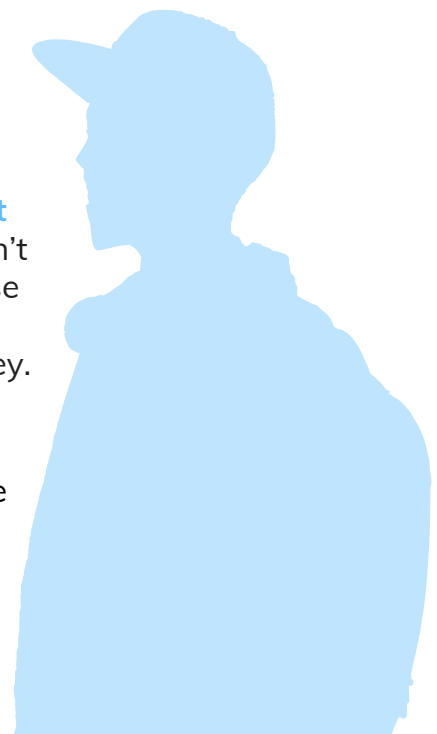


Parent of Livingston HS Student: It's really unfortunate. **The sale of tobacco needs to be regulated** and selling tobacco products should be restricted to individuals who seem mature at the time of purchase and are actually of age.

Livingston HS Student #1: Since they are close to schools some teenagers may just want to go ahead and **get tobacco products from the stores either before, after, or between school classes**.

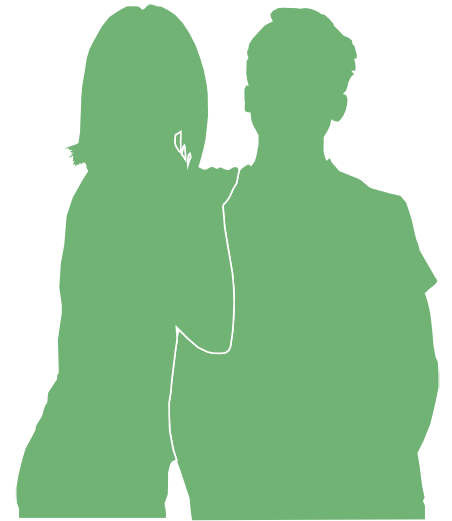
Livingston HS Student #2: Having these stores near the school **makes it more accessible for students to have these products** because they don't have to go to other cities to purchase them. The fact that they're so close to the schools makes it seem like they [the tobacco industry] are targeting teenagers on purpose to get more sales and make more money.

Former Livingston HS Student: I think **they [the tobacco industry] are preying on our youth** now, like they're trying to suck them in, even more now. They are taking advantage of such a vulnerable population. It's infuriating too!



How would you feel if a new store opened near a school, and it sold tobacco products?

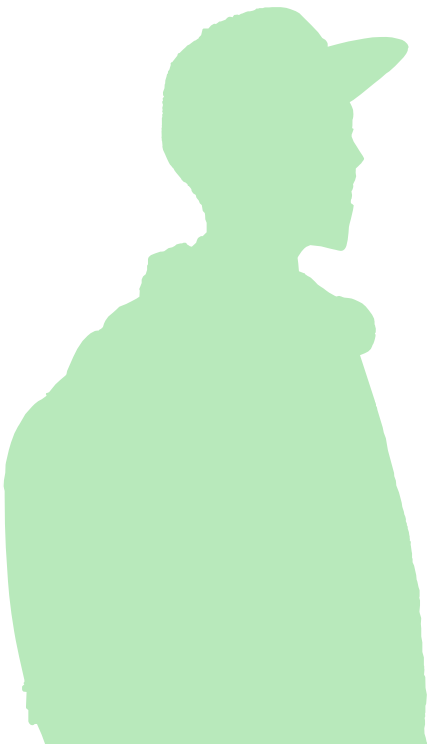
Parent of Livingston HS Student: **It would be extremely worrying.** I would start to reach out to school personnel or vouch for a parent meeting to be called so that we can do something to take control of the tobacco selling and advertising to the youth.



Livingston HS Student #1: I'm concerned. **It's really scary, especially for people who have medical conditions.** Like I have asthma, and I'm scared that teenagers around me who vape can trigger an attack.

Livingston HS Student #2: I'd be upset about it. **There are already so many.**

Former Livingston HS Student: I would be upset. They [the tobacco industry] are just trying to prey on them [students]. I feel like **they [students] are very likely to fall into their trap**, unless they're educated on tobacco, which is hard now too because society tries to normalize it.



Livingston HS Admin #1: **I am not happy with any tobacco or liquor store being close to any school location.**

Livingston HS Admin #2: I am strongly against any liquor store or tobacco store being close to any junior high school or high school. These **stores located near schools are easy to access for youth.**

