

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott  
Governor

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**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
February 27, 2013

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### **Health Officials Are Concerned about Use of Candy-Flavored Tobacco Products**

PENSACOLA, FL. – Tobacco use continues to be a major public health threat in Escambia County, Florida. Approximately 3,800 youth under the age of 18 will try their first cigarette each day in America resulting in about 1,000 of them becoming daily cigarette smokers

In order to maintain a supply of consumers<sup>1</sup>, tobacco companies target adolescents<sup>1</sup> and one method of developing young customers involves using flavored tobacco products<sup>2</sup>. According to a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) report on flavored tobacco, sweet flavors mask the bad taste of tobacco which makes starting tobacco use easier for children and youth<sup>3</sup>.

Although the FDA banned flavored cigarettes in 2009, non-cigarette flavored tobacco products and dissolvable products are increasingly popular with young people because of their sweet taste and cheap price tag. The FDA ban on flavored tobacco does not include such products as smokeless tobacco, chew, snuff, snus, cigars, and cigarillos<sup>4</sup>. It also does not include dissolvable tobacco products such as sticks, orbs, and strips which often also have the appearance of common candy products<sup>5</sup>. Flavored tobacco products are as addictive and carry the same health risks as regular tobacco products including lung disease, cancer, and stroke<sup>6</sup>.

According to the Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (2011)<sup>7</sup>, across Florida:

- 1 in 6 children between the ages of 11 and 17 have tried flavored tobacco.
- 19% of high school students have tried a flavored cigar.
- 9.8% of high school students have smoked a flavored cigar at least one time in the last 30 days.
- 7.9% of high school students have tried flavored smokeless tobacco.
- 4.6% of high school students used flavored smokeless tobacco in the last 30 days.

Escambia County Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT), supported by Tobacco Free Escambia and Healthy Environments Are Tobacco-free (HEAT), have been working to promote awareness of the dangers of flavored tobacco products and to raise local support to discourage the use of such products. As a result of these efforts, both the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners and the Pensacola City Council have adopted resolutions discouraging the sale of flavored tobacco products in their respective jurisdictions. SWAT continues to encourage the town of Century, Florida to adopt a similar resolution. For more information on how you can help combat this issue in Escambia County, Florida contact the Tobacco Free Escambia program at 850/595-6072.

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<sup>1</sup>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). 2011. *Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*, NSDUH Series H-41, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 11-4658. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011.

<sup>1</sup> Tobacco Free Florida. (2012). Candy flavored tobacco. Retrieved from <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/Contents-13/Candy-Flavored-Tobacco-The-Issue/>

<sup>2</sup> Tobacco Free Florida. (2012). Candy flavored tobacco. Retrieved from <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/Contents-13/Candy-Flavored-Tobacco-The-Issue/>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (2011b, March 7). FDA Parental advisory on flavored tobacco products - What you need to know. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/ProtectingKidsfromTobacco//ucm183196.htm>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (2011a, March 7). Candy and fruit flavored cigarettes now illegal in United States; Step is first under new tobacco. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (2011a, March 7). Candy and fruit flavored cigarettes now illegal in United States; Step is first under new tobacco. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/>

<sup>6</sup>U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). (2012, January 12). FDA parental advisory on flavored tobacco products - What you need to know. Retrieved from <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/ProtectingKidsfromTobacco/FlavoredTobacco/ucm183196.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS). (2011). 2011 Statewide-Level FYTS Data. Retrieved from [http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease\\_ctrl/epi/Chronic\\_disease/FYTS/2011\\_FYTS/FS4-SpecialtyTobacco.pdf](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/Chronic_disease/FYTS/2011_FYTS/FS4-SpecialtyTobacco.pdf)