

Banning tobacco sales near schools could reduce socioeconomic disparities, new study shows

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Banning tobacco sales within 1,000 feet of schools could reduce socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in tobacco density across neighborhoods, according to a study being published today in the journal *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*.

Researchers tested the potential impact of a policy banning [tobacco](#) sales near schools in the states of New York and Missouri, and results indicate that such a ban would either reduce or eliminate existing [disparities](#) in tobacco retailer density by income level and by proportion of African American residents.

Currently, there are notable disparities in the number and density of tobacco retailers in the country by race and income, with more tobacco retailers in areas with lower incomes and greater proportions of African American and Hispanic residents. A high proportion of retailers located in these areas were in urban areas, which also have stores located in closer proximity to schools.

If policymakers implement a ban on tobacco product sales within 1,000 [feet](#) of schools, the existing disparities would effectively be eliminated.

While the study was a test of how this policy would impact retail density and it did not test the impact of such a policy on actual tobacco use, the results suggest possible health benefits to low-income communities.

Policies banning tobacco product sales near schools appear to hold great promise for reducing tobacco-related disparities at the point of sale. Local communities across the United States are starting to pass and implement bans on tobacco sales near schools.

"Having more tobacco retailers in your community is linked with having higher smoking rates, so many communities want fewer tobacco retailers. Our study found that a policy banning [tobacco sales](#) near schools significantly reduces the number of tobacco retailers while also ensuring that they are not highly clustered in poorer and racially and ethnically diverse [neighborhoods](#) like they are in most communities," said lead study author Dr. Kurt M. Ribisl, professor at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program at UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

More information: The paper "Reducing disparities in tobacco retailer density by banning tobacco product sales near schools" is available at: ntr.oxfordjournals.org/lookup/...i/10.1093/ntr/ntw185

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