

# Still Widespread: Tobacco and Nicotine Product Sales and Marketing at Points of Sale Near Schools in China

## Background

China prohibits tobacco and nicotine product sales near schools and, as of 2022, bans the sale of non-tobacco flavored e-cigarettes anywhere. This observational study assessed changes in tobacco and nicotine products sales and marketing near the same schools in ten Chinese cities from 2021 to 2023.

## Methods

- 879 schools (731 urban, 148 rural) sampled using multistage sampling
- Tobacco sales and marketing observed at retailers within 100 meters of urban schools and 250 meters of rural schools in 2021 and 2023
- McNemar and paired t-tests conducted

## Results: Retailers, 2021–2023

- Total number of cigarette retailers decreased (1,584 vs. 1,118)
- Total number of e-cigarette retailers decreased (59 vs. 11)
- Over **90%** of cigarette and e-cigarette retailers near schools displayed tobacco/nicotine products

# Cigarette and flavored cigarette sales/displays near Chinese schools remained pervasive during the study period



## Results: Schools, 2021–2023

- Presence of cigarette retailers decreased near urban (57% vs. 47%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and rural schools (70% vs. 63%,  $p < 0.05$ )
- Presence of retailers selling flavored cigarettes decreased near urban schools (43% vs. 39%,  $p < 0.05$ ) but stayed high near rural schools (52%)

## Conclusions

- Cigarette sales and displays remained widespread despite a decrease in the overall number of retailers selling and displaying cigarettes/flavored cigarettes near schools
- Following a law banning non-tobacco-flavored e-cigarettes and disallowing e-cigarette retailers from exclusively selling a single brand of product, the number of e-cigarette retailers near schools decreased
- To protect China's youth, it is necessary to:
  - Specify (in laws/regulations) the distance around schools in which tobacco sales/marketing are prohibited
  - Effectively enforce bans
  - Implement a comprehensive advertising ban and restrictions on flavored cigarettes

## Authors

Qinghua Nian, Jennifer Brown, Elizabeth Crespi, Shuai Zhang, Rusi Long, Joanna Cohen



◀ Access the fact sheet based on this study

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