

# CREATING SMOKE-FREE MULTI-UNIT HOUSING

POWER IN UNITY CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

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THE UCLA CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH



# Persistent Disparities in MUH Barriers to Achieving Smoke-Free Policies

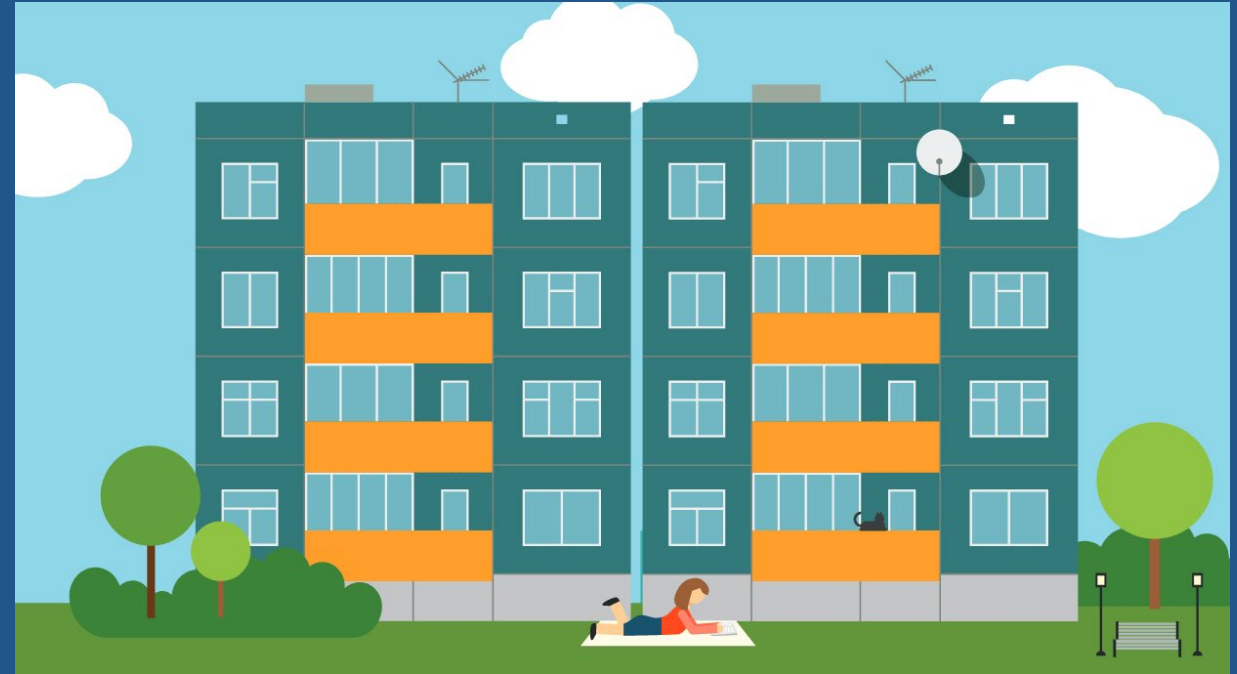
Peggy Toy - Health DATA  
(*Data. Advocacy. Training. Assistance.*)

# Multi-Unit Housing (MUH)

- Apartments, condos, townhouses, duplexes, etc.
- Any property where units share a common wall
- Shared plumbing, electrical, and ventilation systems

**878,755 MUH units in LA**  
**= > 1.8M persons**

—ACS 2016



# Unequal Protection Against SHS

- More than 1 in 3 nonsmokers who live in rental housing are exposed to secondhand smoke.
- 2 out of every 5 children (including 7 out of 10 African American children) are exposed.

*--Americans for Non-Smoker's Rights*

# Secondhand Smoke – No Safe Level of Exposure

- Cigarette smoke contains **more than 7,000** chemicals and chemical compounds
- **Similar toxins found in marijuana smoke and e-cigarette aerosol**
- Tobacco SHS: 33,950 deaths from heart disease and 7,330 deaths from lung cancer each year in the United States
- Marijuana SHS: repeated exposure affects heart health
- E-cigarette vapor is an aerosol that contains ultrafine particles that can worsen lung and heart health

# EVALUATION OF SHS EXPOSURE IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING IN LOS ANGELES

**Case #1:**

**UCLA smoke-free Air For Everyone (UCLA-SAFE)**

**CDC REACH AWARD**

*Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health*



## LA Housing: gap in tobacco control

- Efforts focused primarily on public housing
- Lack of stakeholder engagement on smoke-free market rate multi-unit housing
- Tenants rights organizations' well organized opposition stall smoke-free public housing policies and chill adoption in the private sector
- Fear of loss of affordable housing due to evictions for people who smoke drives opposition



# Unequal Protection Against SHS: City of Los Angeles

## THE GOOD

smoke-free Public Housing  
County of Los Angeles (2014)  
City of Los Angeles (2016)

**Units in City public  
housing: 7,572 units**

## THE BAD

**Most renters live in market  
rate (privately owned)  
apartments with no  
protection against SHS**

**Units in City market rate  
MUH: 156,481 units**

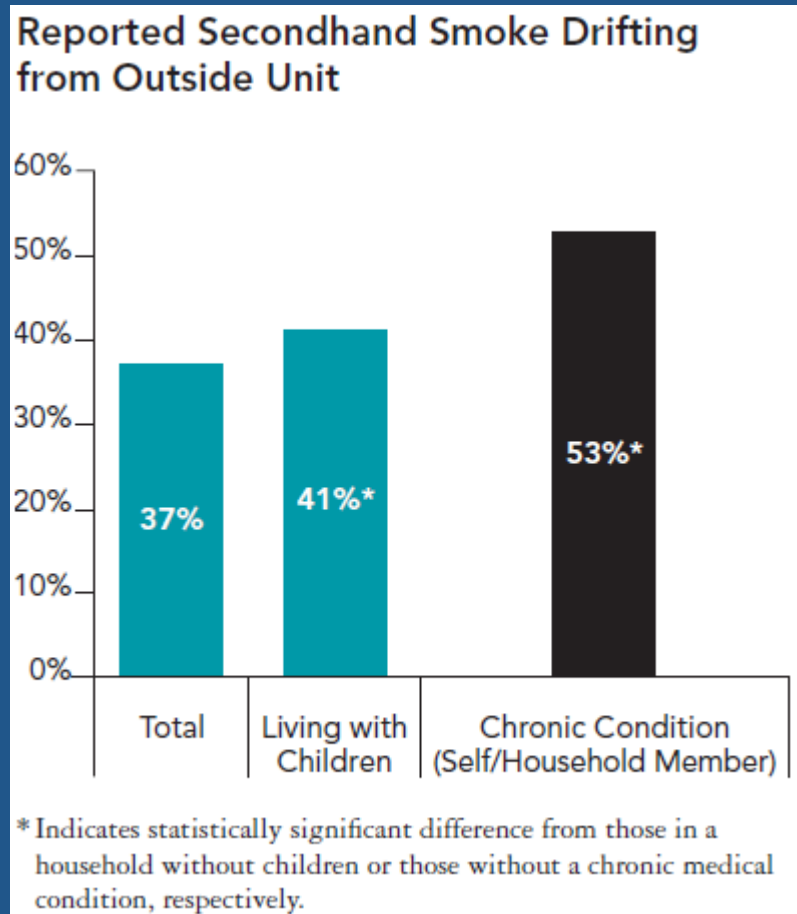


# Tenant and Landlord Surveys

- Understand tenants' and landlords' experience with secondhand smoke and their views on smoke-free apartments.
- Adult tenants (>18 years old Latinx, African American) living in privately-owned multi-unit housing (MUH)
  - 985 total surveys administered Oct 2015 to Jan 2016
- Owners of market-rate MUH in the City of Los Angeles
  - Preliminary data from 93 surveys administered Oct 2015 to Feb 2016



# Vulnerable Populations Disproportionately Exposed to SHS



- Living with children or with chronic health conditions are likely to report SHS exposures
- 71% of households with a chronic condition felt SHS exposure worsened health
- *UCLA-SAFE Tenant Survey 2016*

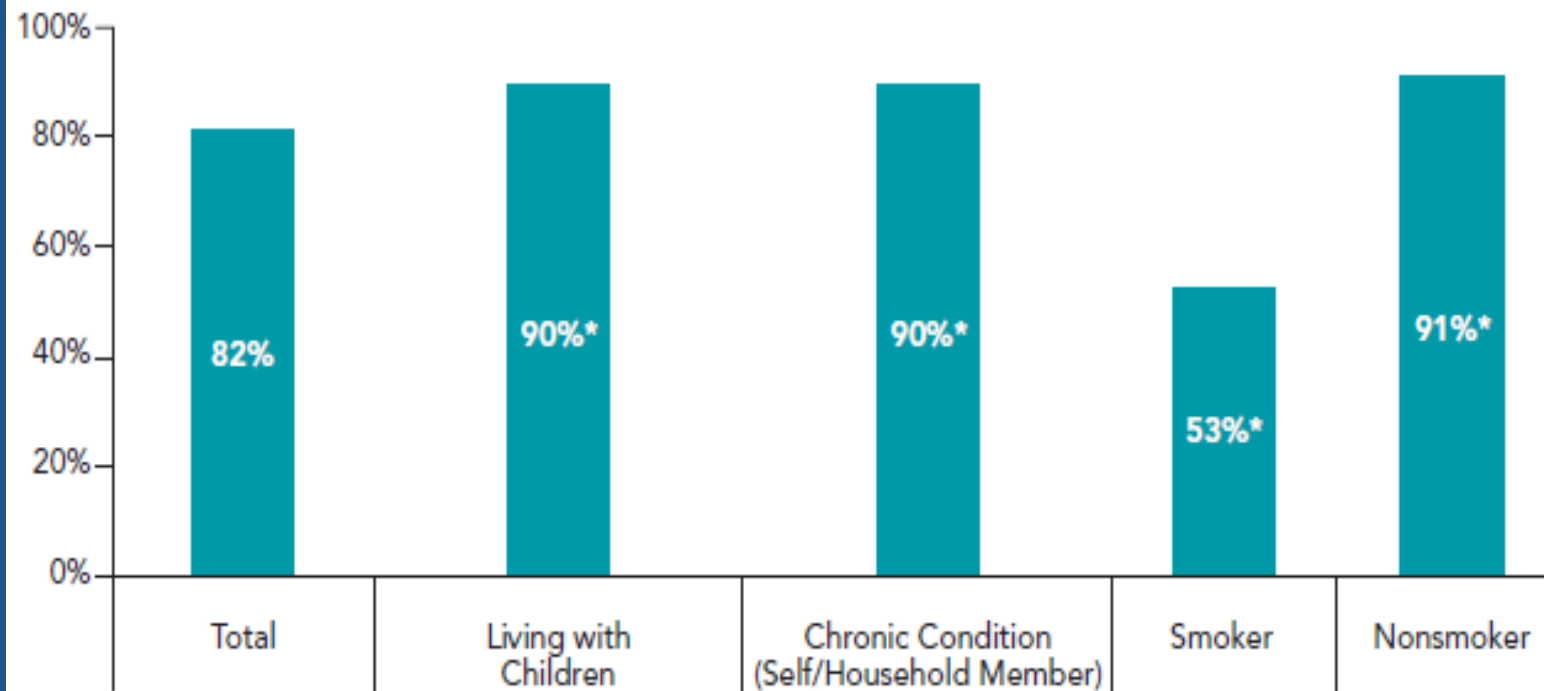
# Tenants Try to Take Action Against SHS

- **71% attempted to block SHS from entering**
- 22% complained to the smoker
- 19% reported incident to the property owner or management
  - Low reporting rate suggests owners may not be aware of a SHS exposure problem on their properties



# Tenants Prefer Smoke-Free Living

Preference for Living in Nonsmoking Part of a Building or in Entirely Smoke-Free Building



\* Indicates a statistically significant difference from comparison group, such as without children or without chronic condition and smoker vs. nonsmoker.

# Owners Voluntarily Adopted Smoke-Free Policies

- 37% of surveyed owners reported voluntary adoption of smoke-free policies
  - Approximately half restricted smoking in units
  - Less than half restricted smoking in units and common areas
- Reported benefits of policy:
  - Healthy environment, lower maintenance costs, fewer complaints from non-smokers

## Owners Without Policies Perceived Barriers to Adoption

- **47% had never considered voluntarily adopting a smoke-free housing policy**
  - 38% did not know they could do it
  - 35% never thought about it
  - 31% felt restricted because properties are under rent control
  - 27% needed more information



# The Perfect Storm

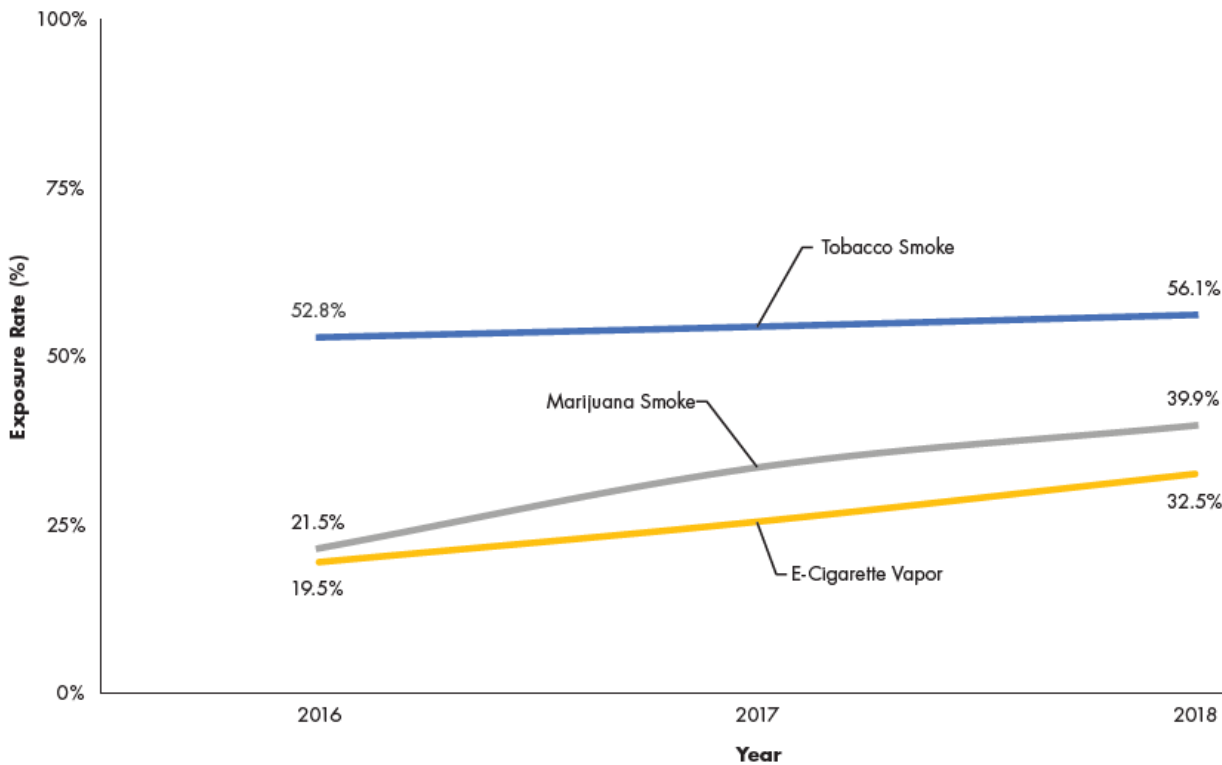
- California Healthcare, Research, and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act of 2016, Proposition 56 (Prop 56)
- Adult Use of Marijuana Act of 2016 (Proposition 64) legalizes the recreational use of cannabis
- Altria purchases 35% stake in Juul for \$12.8 billion in 2018



# ADULT SECONDHAND EXPOSURE

California has a comprehensive smoke-free law;<sup>17</sup> nevertheless, over the past three years, the rate of Californians reporting exposure to tobacco smoke, e-cigarette vapor, and marijuana smoke increased (Figure 15).<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 15. Secondhand exposure among California adults age 18 to 64, 2016 to 2018**



Note: Secondhand tobacco smoke, secondhand e-cigarette vapor, and secondhand marijuana smoke is based on self-reported past 2-weeks exposure in California. Source: Online California Adult Tobacco Survey, 2016 to 2018. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Public Health; November 2018.



# Perceptions of secondhand smoke exposure, and cannabis, vape, and tobacco smoke free multi-unit housing policies.

**Yaneth L. Rodriguez, MPH**

Rosa Barahona, Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati (Principal Investigator)  
University of Southern California, CA, USA

Triangulum (Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Marijuana) Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Low Socioeconomic Multi-Unit Housing  
Power in Unity, September 30, 2020

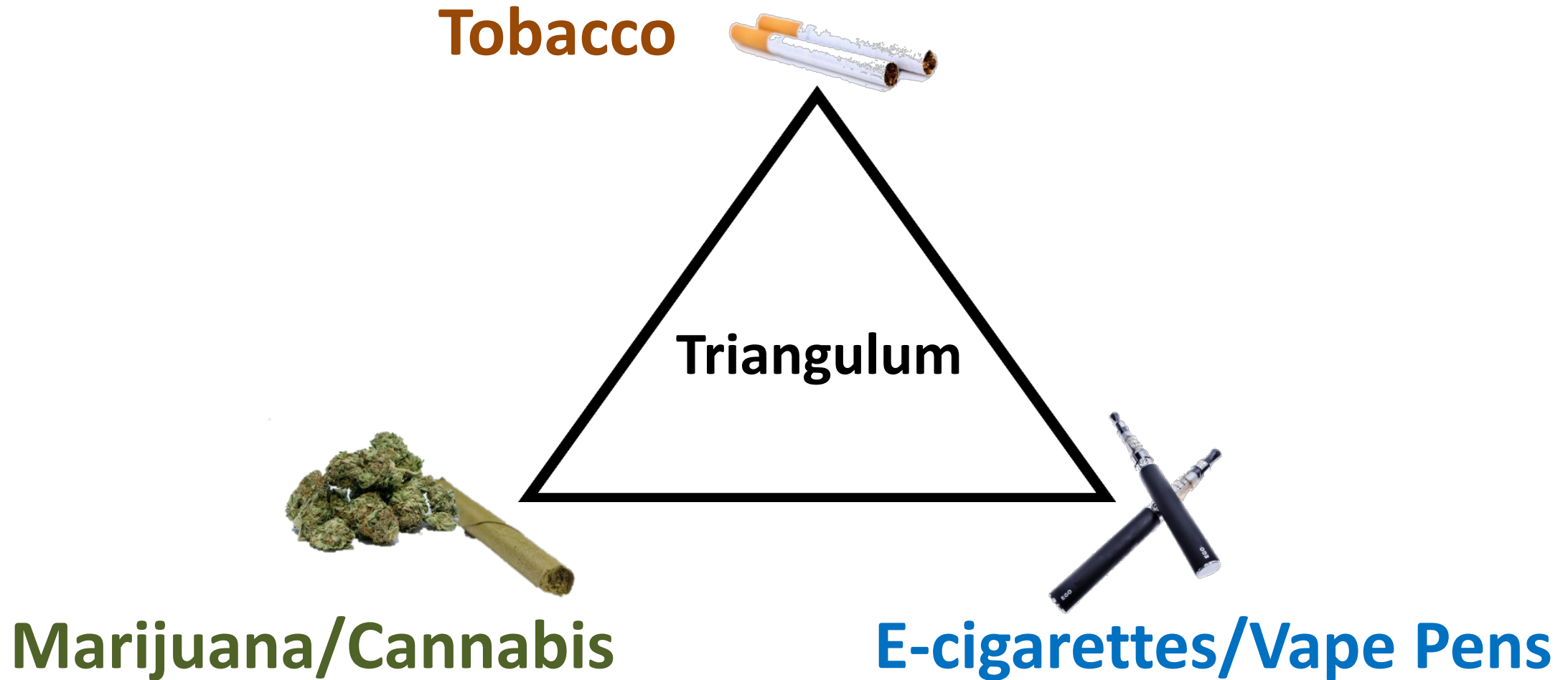
Funded by the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program of California (TRDRP) Grant Number: 26IR-0022 and  
the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute (NIH NCI) Grant Number: P30CA014089



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# The TRIANGULUM defined in our study





# Purpose of Study

## Perceptions of Triangulum (tobacco smoke/vape/marijuana) Exposure and Smoke-free Policies

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MUH Housing Tenants in  
LA neighborhoods with  
predominantly:

- African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Non-Hispanic White

Knowledge, Attitude and Beliefs

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Behaviors

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Compliance

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Support for Smoke-Free Policies

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**Door to Door Interview Surveys & Focus Groups**

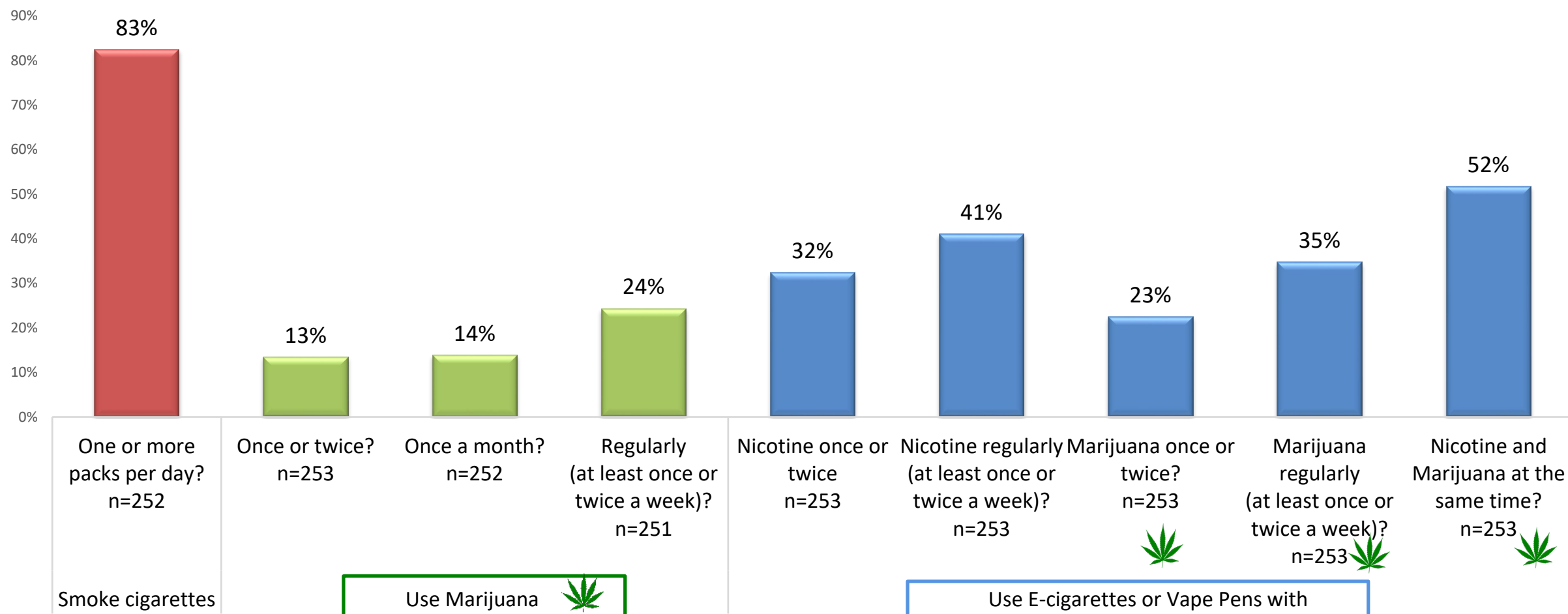


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# How much do you think people risk harming themselves physically if they:

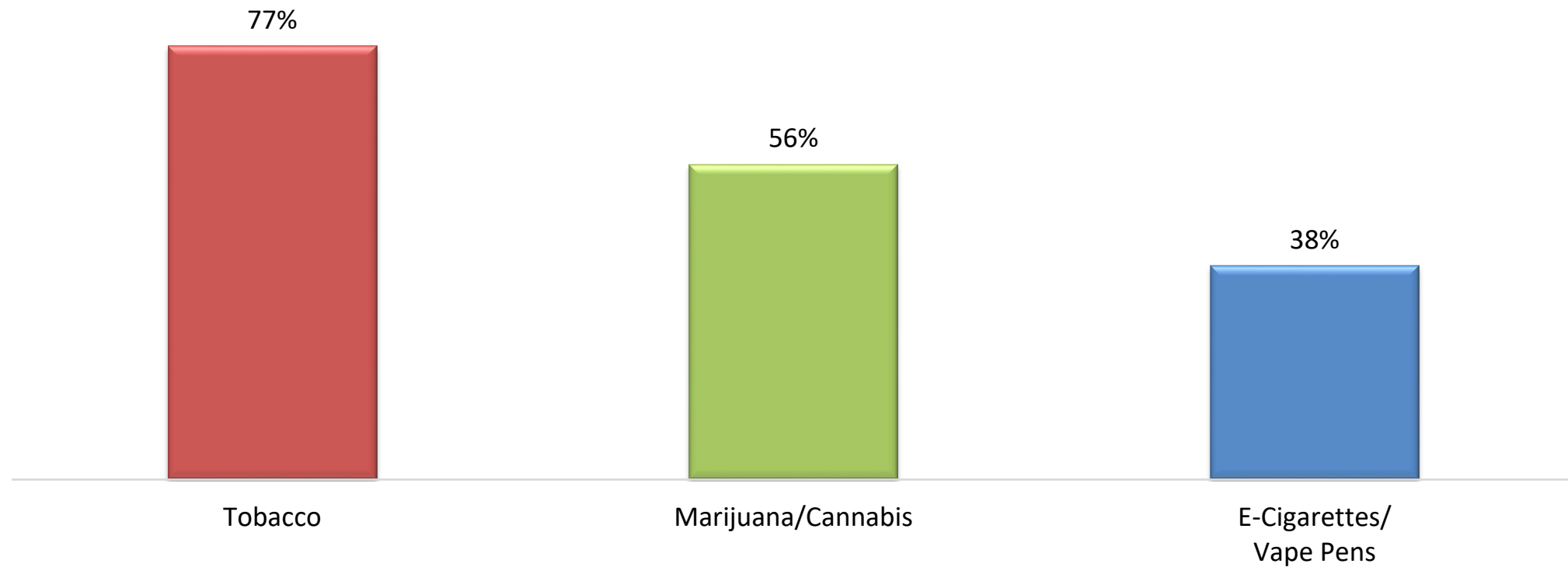
(Percent that stated “great risk”)



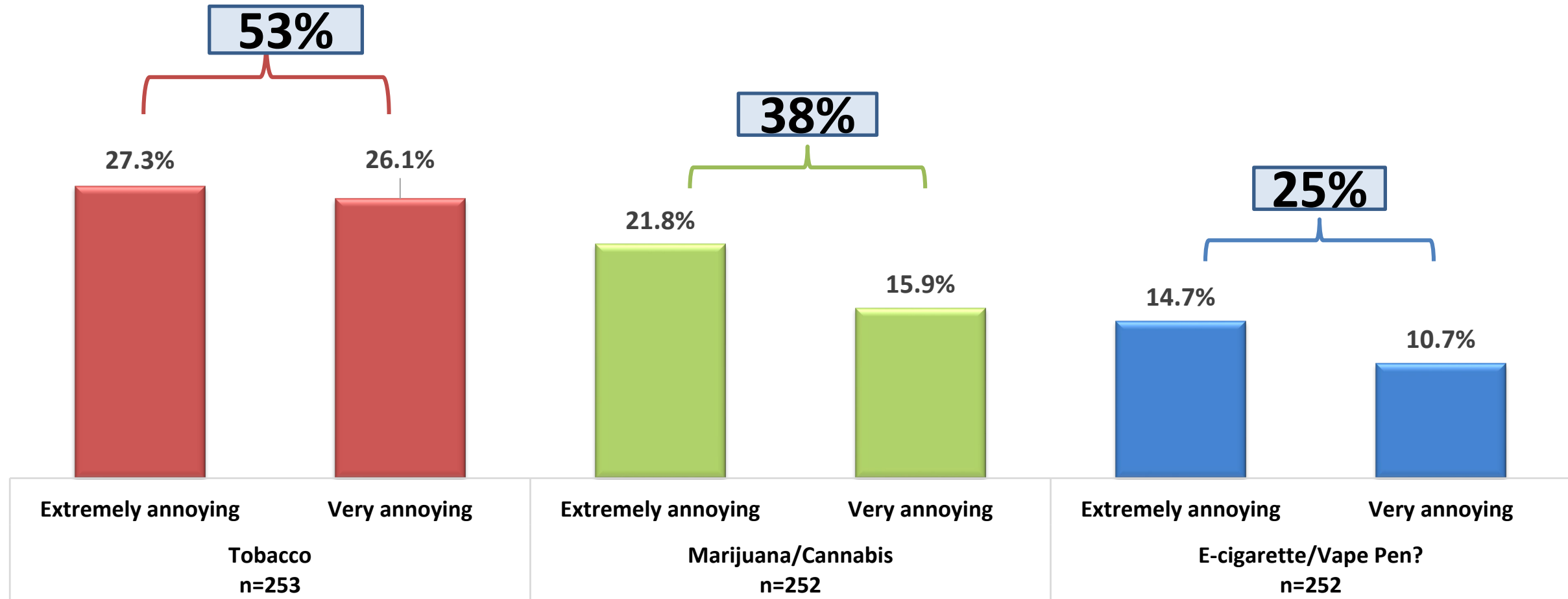


# Attitudes about smelling smoke/vape from tobacco, cannabis, or e-cigarette/vape pens

Does the smell of these items bother you? (% yes)  
n=252

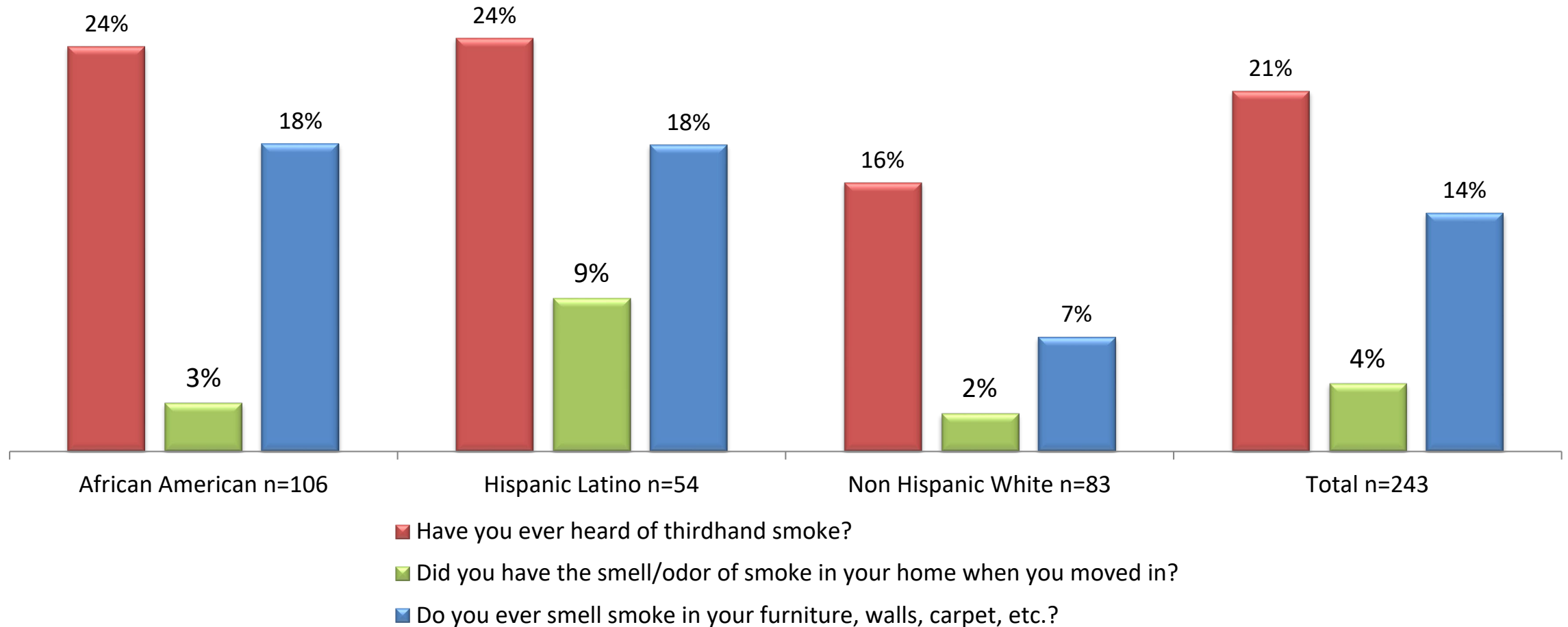


# How annoying do you find other people's smoke/vape?



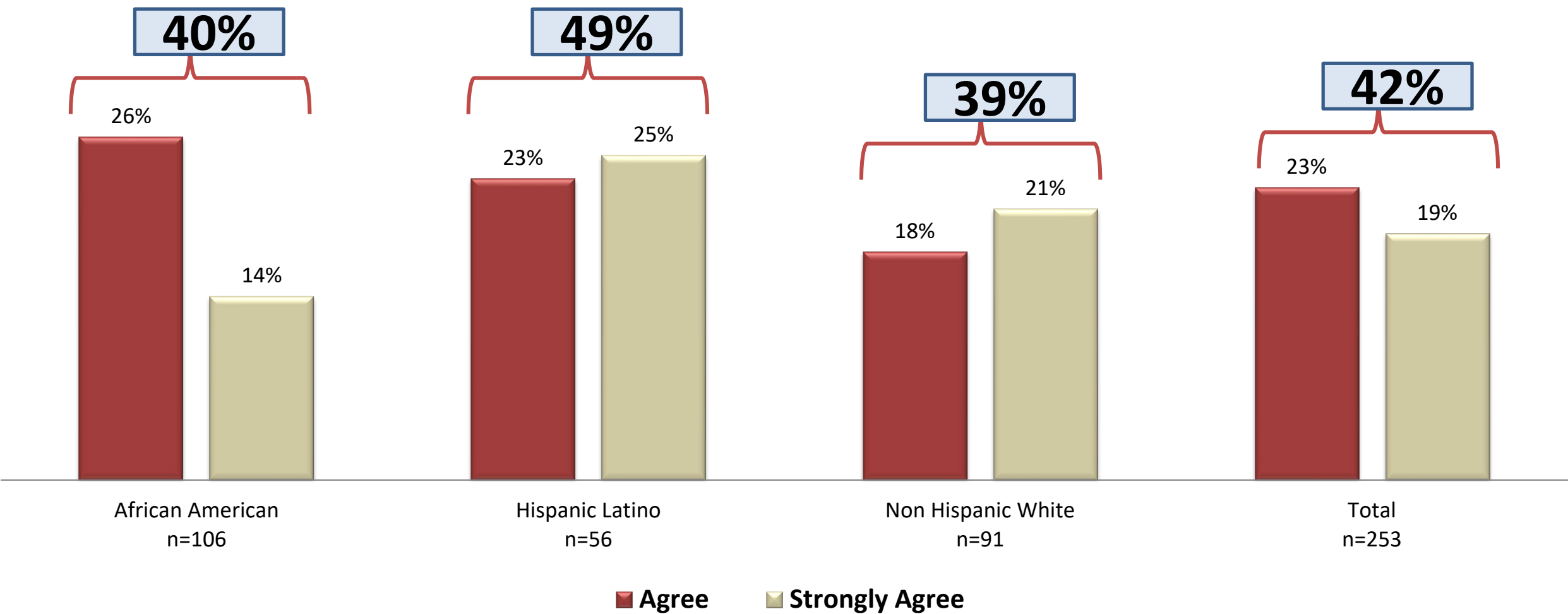


# Thirdhand Smoke Knowledge & Exposure (by COMMUNITY)

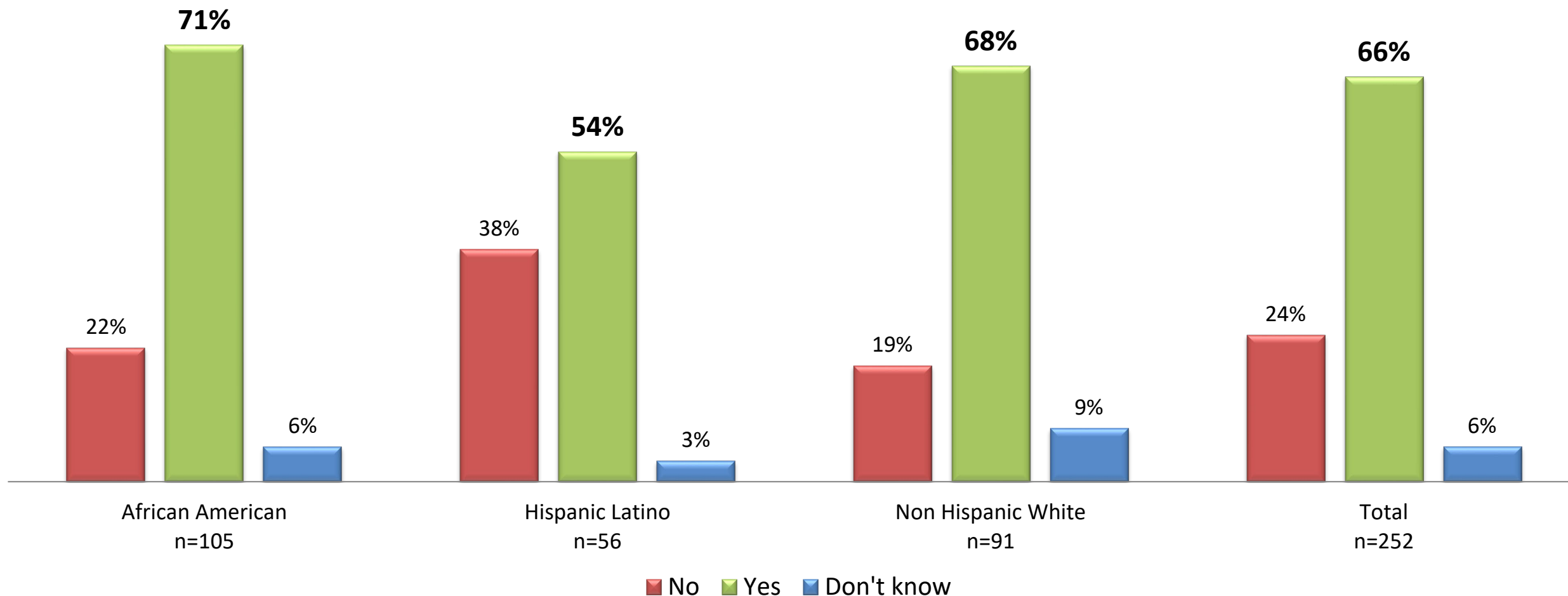




I prefer my neighbors to use marijuana in an edible form like brownies or cookies, instead of smoking or vaping it, so I can avoid breathing in the smoke or vapor. (by COMMUNITY)

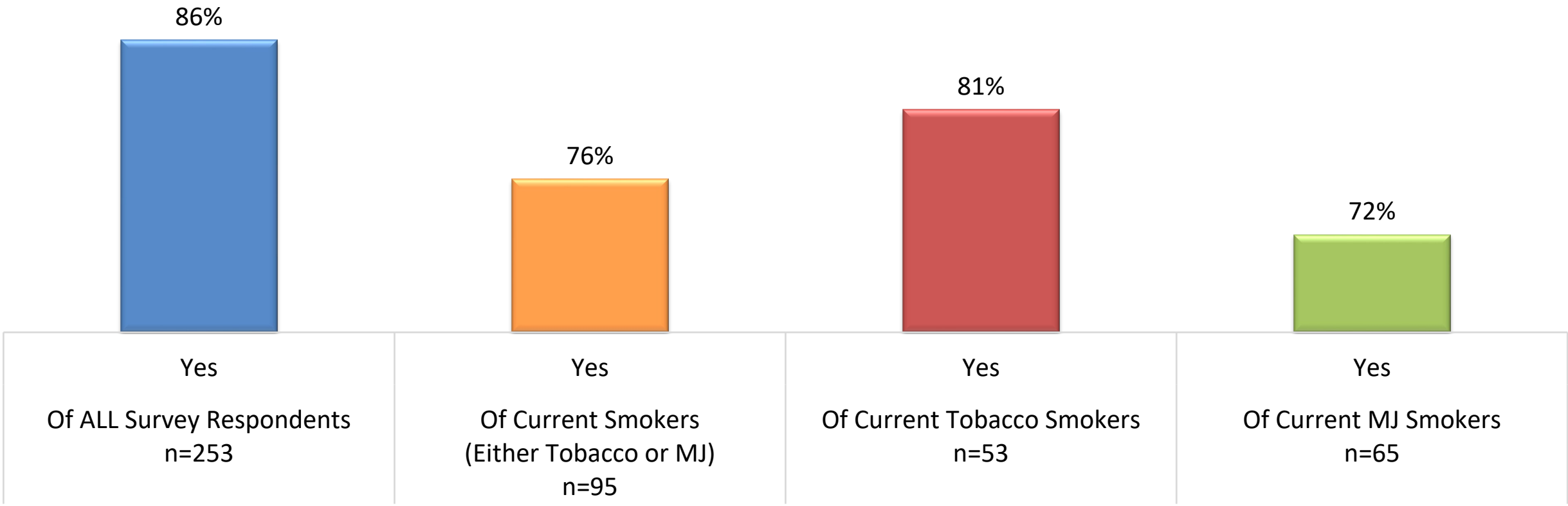


If a person needs marijuana for a health condition, should they be able to use it in their apartment even if the apartment building has a smoke-free rule?  
(by COMMUNITY)





Would you be in favor of a PARTIAL or 100%  
Tobacco/Marijuana Smoke-Free/Vape-Free Policy at your housing  
complex? (Of Current Smokers)





# Conclusions

- More than half of participants have been exposed to secondhand smoke/vapor.
- Most tenants reported being in favor of both partial and complete smoke/vape-free policies within their housing complexes that would restrict the use of tobacco, cannabis, and e-cigarettes.
- People are compassionate about individuals who use cannabis for medical reasons, need to educate on various forms of using cannabis that don't affect others health





# Implications for smoke/vape/marijuana free policies

- Tenants are being exposed to cannabis smoke and e-cig/vape aerosol, in addition to tobacco
- The majority of tenants want to live in a smoke and vape free environment
- Education is needed about the risk of using and breathing in other peoples marijuana/cannabis and e-cigarettes smoke and/or aerosol.
- Need to think of alternative solutions or locations for people to use these products.







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# Persistent Disparities in MUH Barriers to Achieving Smoke-Free Policies

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# EVALUATION OF SHS EXPOSURE IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING IN LOS ANGELES

**Case #2: Tobacco, Marijuana, E-Cigs SHS Exposure  
and Public Support for Smoke-Free MUH Policy**

*Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Tobacco Control and  
Prevention Program*

## 4 in 5 cities in L.A. Co. allow smoking in multi-unit housing

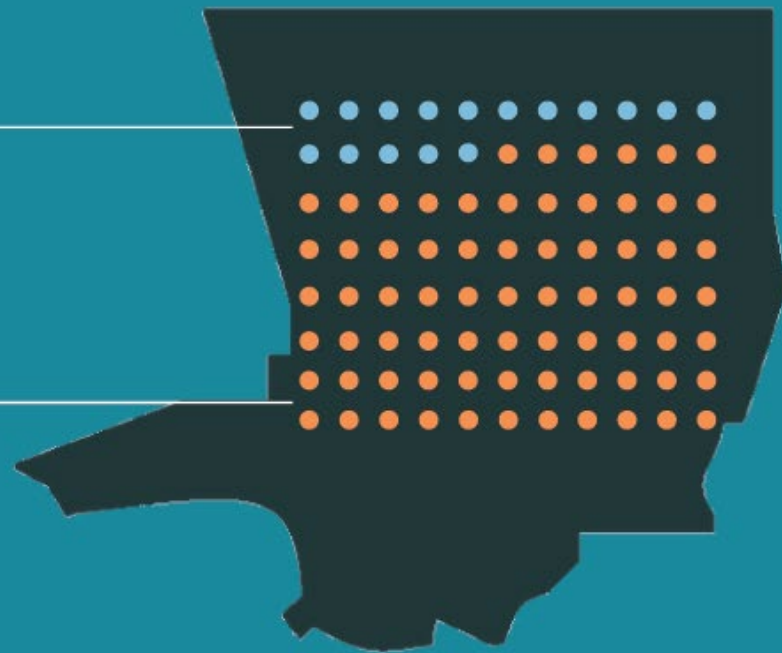
Only 1 in 5 cities have smoke-free policies for privately owned multi-unit housing complexes. The city of Los Angeles is not one of them.

**16 cities**

have smoke-free policies for multi-unit housing:

**72 cities**

do not have smoke-free policies for multi-unit housing:



Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

Read about the policy brief at <https://ucla.in/2yqcV9L>



# Smoke-Free MUH City of Los Angeles Study

- Secondhand smoke exposure in MUH from tobacco, marijuana, and e-cigarette vapor (aerosol)
- Attitudes of tenants and owners toward smoke-free housing policy including level of support for a citywide policy
- Tobacco-related health disparities prevalent among race/ethnic populations of Los Angeles
- **4,800 Tenant Surveys**—400 per Council District (12 total). Multi-Ethnic.
- **MUH Owners:** 156 surveys and 20 phone interviews—21,000 MUH units owned throughout Los Angeles
- Conducted 2018-2019

# Biggest invaders in multi-unit housing? Tobacco, marijuana smoke

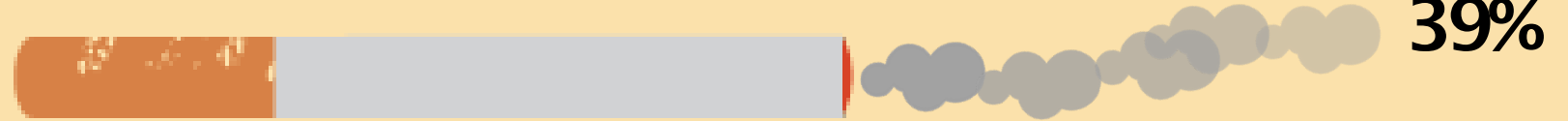
**1 in 2  
tenants**

**(49%)  
were exposed  
to secondhand  
smoke in the  
past year**

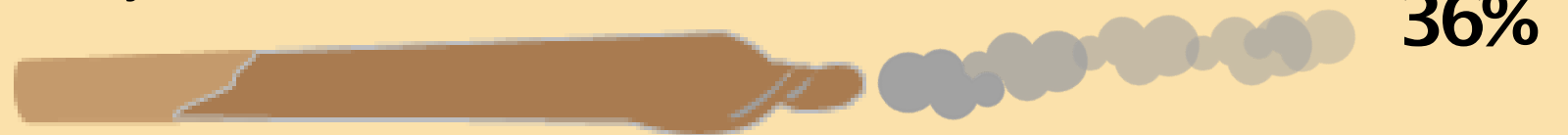


**Percentage of tenants in privately owned multi-unit housing exposed to smoke by product type**

Tobacco smoke



Marijuana smoke



Electronic cigarette aerosol



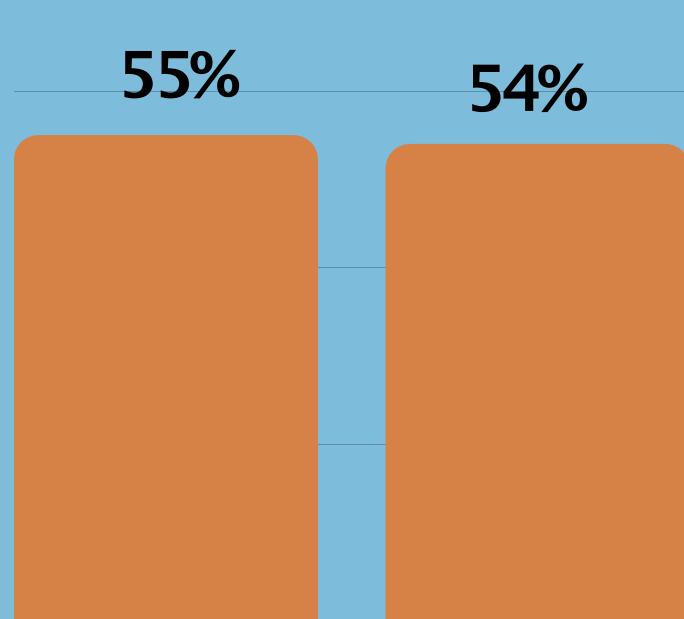
Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

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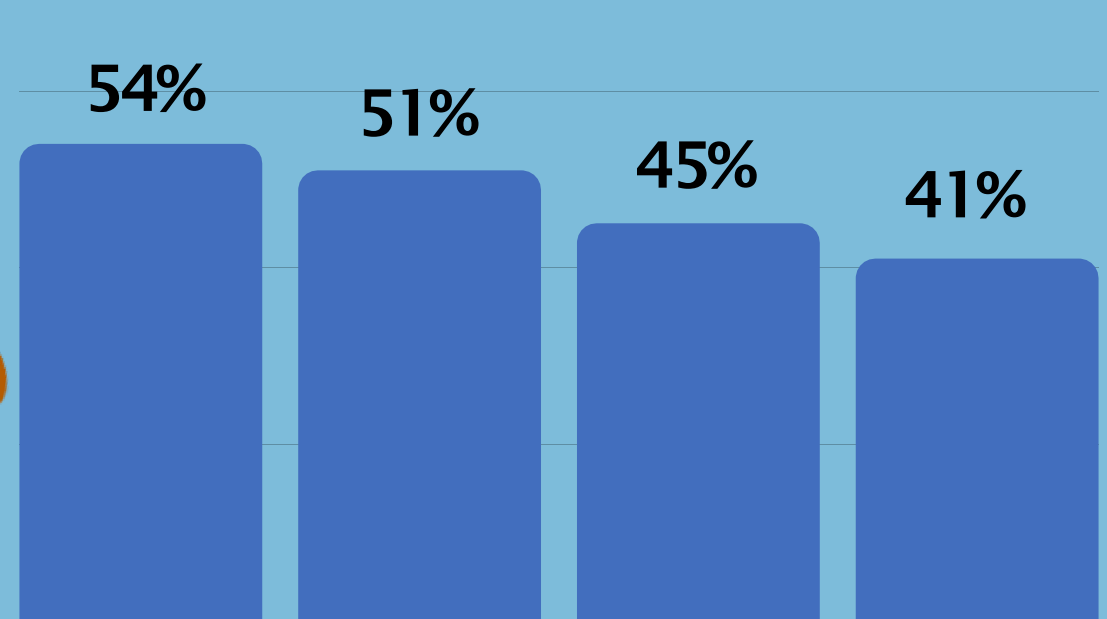
# Who is most exposed to secondhand smoke?

Tenants with chronic disease, children, those of Hispanic/Latino, and of African American/Black race or ethnicity had higher rates of exposure in privately owned multi-unit housing.

Exposure based on households with:



Exposure based on tenant race/ethnicity



Hispanic/  
Latino

African  
American/  
Black

White

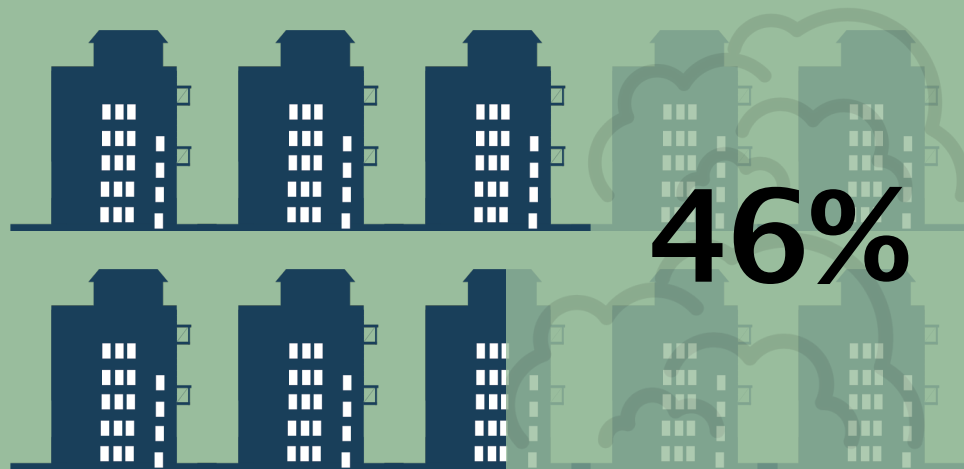
Asian

# Restrictions = lower secondhand smoke exposure

Secondhand smoke exposure is 9 percentage points lower for tenants in privately owned multi-unit housing with smoking restrictions. Exposure rates by housing type are shown below.



**Tenant lives in housing with some smoke-free policies**



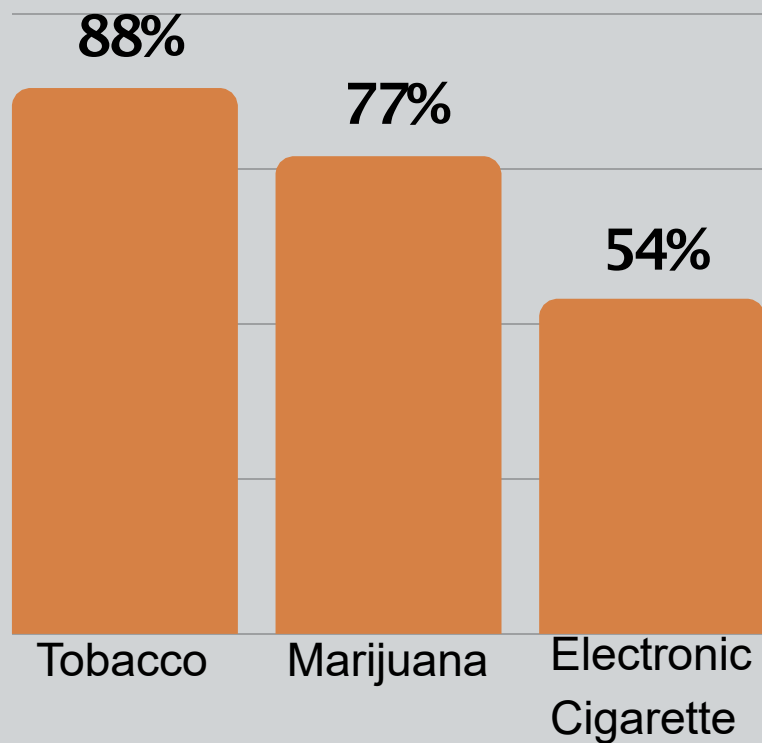
**Tenant lives in housing without any smoke-free policies**



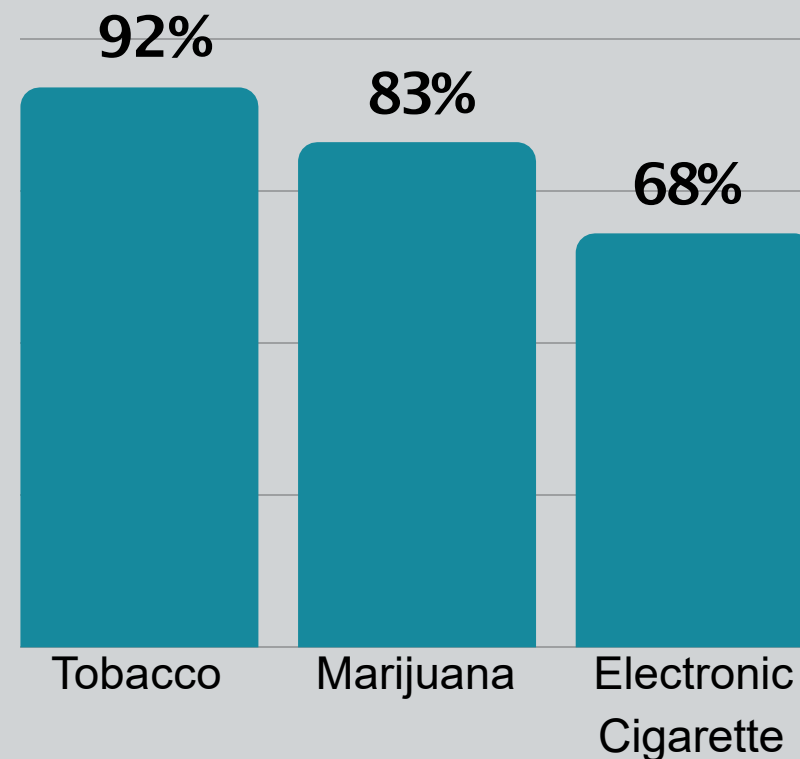
# Restricting smoking in multi-unit housing has strong support

A majority of tenants and owners of privately owned multi-unit housing in Los Angeles support citywide restrictions. Levels of support for restrictions on smoking products are shown below.

## Tenants support



## Owners support



Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

Read about the policy brief at <https://ucla.in/2yqcV9L>





# Barriers to Policy: Enforcement

- Eviction is rarely used as an enforcement tool: only 6% of owners with a smoke-free policy report attempting eviction for violation of smoke-free policies
- 72% of owners have either experienced or anticipate that they will experience challenges with enforcing a smoke-free policy
- 42% of owners who currently have a policy have experienced challenges with enforcement



# Barriers to Policy: Quotes from Owners

*“Well, you'd have to prove it.”*

*“[I am] completely against the city enforcing any more laws on landlords.”*

*“If you're going to make me the policeman, I'm not in favor of it.”*

# Policy Implications

- Partial policies existed and SHS exposure reported less among tenants in buildings with policies.
- There is broad support for smoke-free policies among owners and tenants.
- Uncertainty about enforcement is a significant barrier.

# **BASIC STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING SMOKE-FREE MULTI-UNIT HOUSING POLICIES**



# ENGAGE AND MOBILIZE MULTIPLE SECTORS

- Engage and mobilize community partners including youth organizations in all phases.
- Partner with apartment owner associations or related MUH owner associations. Establish common agenda.
- Buy-in from housing and tenants rights advocates is critical. Address housing scarcity as a health issue. Those exposed to SHS cannot move away from harmful health effects of SHS.

# EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- Dispel misconceptions about tobacco and marijuana SHS and vaping (aerosol) exposure and health risks to others especially children and family members with chronic health conditions.
- Develop and train community opinion leaders to advocate for smoke-free MUH and to educate their city's policymakers.
- **Emphasize compassion for people who smoke and promote cessation resources as part of the solution.**

# DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- ▶ Review model ordinances that can be adapted for your city or county.
- ▶ A 100% smoke-free policy for all MUH properties provides best protection.

See model ordinance at:  
<https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/CA-Smoke-free-MUH-Model-Ordinance.pdf>



# DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- Identify an equitable enforcement model that preserves tenancy and links tenants who smoke to resources.

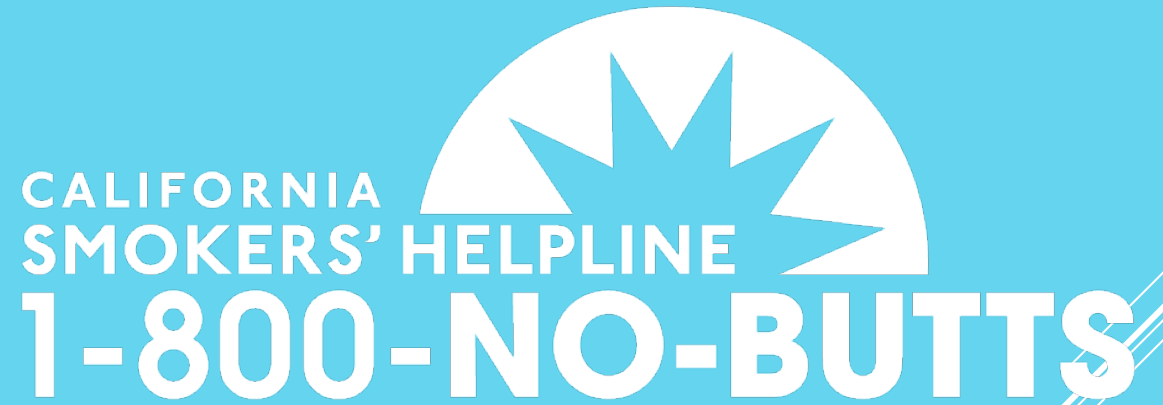
See “Equitable Enforcement to Achieve Health Equity. An introductory guide for policymakers and practitioners” <https://www.changelabsolutions.org/>





# INTEGRATE CESSATION RESOURCES

- ▶ Promote access to cessation resources to support compliance, reduce need for enforcement actions.



# QUESTIONS:

- ▶ **Peggy Toy – UCLA Health DATA (Data. Advocacy. Training. Assistance), Project Director SF MUH Evaluation Studies**  
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