Sample Meeting Outline

* Intro & why you are there (Include a connection to commercial tobacco if it feels right)
  + Introduce yourself
    - Example: My name is [Kayleigh Day] and I am the coordinator for the [xyz coalition]. We’re here today to talk to you about the work that we do and some of the issues that we’re seeing in the community around tobacco and vaping. I’m passionate about this work because [I’ve lost family members to lung cancer from smoking].
  + Volunteer introduces themselves
    - Example: My name is [Wendy Vander Zanden] and I live in [district 3]. [Connect to the work, e.g., “I have three children and I am concerned about youth vaping and don’t want my kids to get hooked on these products”].
* Describe alliance/network [designate speaker]
  + Our alliance is funded by the WI Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Treatment Program. We focus on commercial tobacco and vaping prevention.
  + We cover [number and names of counties or city]
  + Describe some of the work you do- work with youth, projects, WINS, etc.
* Key issue/issues [designate speaker(s)]
  + Pro-tips: use a combination of data and stories, and use your education materials (packet or other items you bring) to emphasize points, make sure if one of you lives in the district, you highlight that.
  + Some of the issues we see in our community are (pick issues below or add your own). Facts, figures, and talking points on each [topic are included here](#_iw47nshu9rtc) that you can incorporate as you see fit.
    - Underage sales
    - Tobacco 21
    - Youth vaping
      * Impact on mental health and brain development
      * Tax-best practice
    - Smoke-free indoor air
    - Flavored products & Menthol
    - Nicotine Pouches
* Questions
  + Note-these might happen throughout, so it’s ok if you don’t have a specific portion on questions.
* Wrap Up
  + Thank them for meeting with you
  + Provide your contact information.
    - Sample script: [“Here is my contact information, if you have any questions or need best practice information about commercial tobacco and vaping, please know that we’re a resource for you and your staff.”]
  + If you didn’t cover the education packet or handouts, share those.
    - Sample script: [“Here are some educational resources that cover commercial tobacco and vaping issues in Wisconsin and talks about the work we do.”]
  + Repeat any follow-up pieces (data, articles, etc,-include with your thank you)
    - Example: “I will follow up with you about your question about xyz.”

# Facts, Figures, & Talking Points

**Underage Sales**

* Statistics show 95% of current tobacco users say they started using tobacco or nicotine before they turned 21. By age 25, if a person hasn’t started, they probably never will.
* The Synar Survey (underage tobacco sales rate) results show an alarming increase in the underage tobacco sales rate in Wisconsin, which increased to 13.6% in 2023, up from 5.5% in 2019. (This one is already included in the education packet).
* Wisconsin risks losing a significant amount of federal funds for substance use prevention if the retailer violation rate for the underage sale (<21) of tobacco products continues to increase.

**Tobacco 21**

* Wisconsin is one of only 8 states where the state tobacco sales law doesn’t align with the Federal Law.
* Young people often turn to e-cigarettes to cope with anxiety, stress, and depression. But the problem is, nicotine in e-cigarettes is highly addictive and can actually worsen these very mental health issues. This creates a vicious cycle, making it even harder to quit. Raising the sales age for e-cigarettes helps keep them out of young people's hands in the first place, preventing this cycle of addiction and worsening mental health.
* Currently, law enforcement cannot enforce federal tobacco sales age law. Aligning our state law with federal law would mean that local law enforcement can help protect young people by holding bad actors accountable for selling to people under 21.
* The lack of a state Tobacco 21 law creates confusion for retailers due to the discrepancy of federal vs. state law. Aligning state and federal law will eliminate any questions about what the rules are around selling to young people .
* Wisconsin risks losing a significant amount of federal funds for substance use prevention if the retailer violation rate for the underage sale (<21) of tobacco products continues to increase

**Youth vaping**

* The most common reason youth give for continuingto use e-cigarettes is “I am feeling anxious, stressed, or depressed.” Nicotine is highly addictive and makes mental health conditions like anxiety and depression worse.
* Young people may turn to vaping to deal with stress/anxiety, become dependent on nicotine and then their addiction becomes a source of stress.
* Young people want to quit. In 2021, 47.5% (nearly half) of WI students who vape or used tobacco products tried to quit.
* Young people are especially vulnerable to addiction until age 25, with high levels of nicotine in vapes, young people get addicted quickly.

**Tax-best practice**

* Price point is a significant deterrent to youth purchasing tobacco and nicotine products.
* Studies show that a cigarette tax increase that raises prices by 10% reduces smoking among kids by 6-7%
* New studies show that increased e-cigarette prices and taxes reduce youth use.

* Right now e-cigarettes in WI are taxed at a fraction of the price of conventional cigarettes.
* One e-cig cartridge has as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes (and the tax differential is a $.05 tax on e-cigs compared to $2.52 on pack of cigarettes)

**Smoke-free indoor air**

* There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke or aerosol. Smoke-free air policies are the only effective way to protect people. Ventilation systems and other so-called mitigation methods are not effective at eliminating these health risks.
* Smoke-free air laws normalize and promote tobacco-free and nicotine-free lifestyles. Since Wisconsin’s smoke-free air law was enacted, youth cigarette use has significantly decreased.
* E-cigarettes, or vapes, release aerosols into the air. These tiny droplets contain harmful substances including nicotine, heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and ultrafine particulates that are known to cause cancer.
* The indoor smoke-free air law does not currently offer protection against secondhand exposure to e-cigarette aerosols or smoke from other substances that are smoked or vaped, like cannabis. Some counties and municipalities across the state have updated their smoke-free air ordinances to include these devices.

**Menthol & Flavored products**

* Note: Correction to point #4 on the printed packets:
  + In Wisconsin, nearly 85% of Black **adult** smokers use menthols. Each year 45,000 Black Americans **in the U.S** die from smoking and die at higher rates from tobacco-related diseases like cancer, heart disease, and stroke.
* African Americans die disproportionately from tobacco-related diseases compared to other racial and ethnic groups. A key factor promoting this disparity is African Americans' use of menthol tobacco products.
* Data show that among first-time tobacco product users, those who initiate with a flavored tobacco product have an increased likelihood of further tobacco product use compared to those who initiate use with an unflavored tobacco product.
* Youth are more likely than adults to initiate tobacco product use with flavored tobacco products, and the availability of products in appealing flavors is cited by youth as one of the main reasons for using e-cigarettes.
* Menthol Flavor
  + Menthol is an organic compound that has cooling, analgesic, and irritative properties, which can change the way the brain registers the sensations of taste and pain.
  + Menthol in cigarettes allow harmful chemicals to be more easily absorbed in the body.
  + Menthol also facilitates absorption by masking the harshness of, and making it easier to inhale, cigarette smoke.

**Smart Vapes (**[**link to educational handout from CTRI**](https://ctri.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/240/2025/01/Smart-Vapes-2025.pdf)**)**

* Smart vapes are like smart phones and vaping devices combined into one.
* Medical professionals are concerned that the combination of two highly addictive activities could addict another generation of people to nicotine and exacerbate screen time.
* At a similar price to e-cigarettes, smart vapes have digital displays that can include animations that display when puffing, built-games, reward systems for vaping such as points and rankings, touchscreens, photo wallpapers, and Bluetooth connectivity.
* These products are rapidly gaining market share per retail scanner data. Specifically, the smart vape brands Geek Bar Pulse and Raz which debuted in 10/23 have emerged as the 3rd and 6th top-selling e-cigarettes as of June 2024.
* These devices are not authorized for sale by the FDA and are being marketed illegally.

**Nicotine Pouches** (Visuals of these products are good to have!)

* Nicotine pouches are small, fiber pouches filled with a powdered form of nicotine salt that comes from tobacco leaves or is synthetically derived and then mixed with fillers, sweeteners, and preservatives. ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* They are placed between the lip and gums where nicotine is absorbed into the bloodstream, however, they are different from snus because they don’t contain tobacco. ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* Typically, each pouch contains around the same amount of nicotine as a cigarette, although some pouches contain more or less. ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* Currently the most popular brand is Zyn, though others such as On!, Velo, and Lucy exist too. ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* Several flavors are available including: wintergreen, spearmint, cool mint, peppermint, cinnamon, coffee, citrus, and other flavors such as “Zyn Chill” and “Zyn Smooth” ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf)).
* They can be used discreetly in places where other tobacco products are not allowed-there is no smoke, vapor, odor, or spitting needed with these products. ([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* A 2022 study of 44 nicotine pouch products found that 26 of the samples contained cancer-causing chemicals and several other chemicals such as: ammonia, chromium, formaldehyde, nickel, pH adjusters, and nicotine salt. ([ALA](https://www.lung.org/blog/zyn-nicotine-addiction))

Youth Use (Nicotine Pouches)

* Nicotine pouches are growing in popularity among youth. Nicotine is addictive and negatively impacts youth health and brain development.([PHLC](https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Popularity-of-Nicotine-Pouches-FAQ.pdf))
* Flavors are especially popular with youth. 85.6% of youth who are currently using these products are using flavored products. ([Truth Initiative](https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/emerging-tobacco-products/oral-nicotine-pouches))
* Nationally, in 2023 400,000 youth in the U.S. reported using nicotine pouches, which doubled from 2021. ([ALA](https://www.lung.org/blog/zyn-nicotine-addiction))
* Young people who use pouches are also using cigarettes and e-cigarettes. ([ALA](https://www.lung.org/blog/zyn-nicotine-addiction))

Other information (Nicotine Pouches)

* Marketing messaging claims that these nicotine pouches are “intended for individuals aged 21+ to help them quit using traditional tobacco products.” However, they are not an FDA-approved quit medication, and current research shows that the biggest increase in users is among young people. ([ALA](https://www.lung.org/blog/zyn-nicotine-addiction))
* The average user uses half a can (8-12) pouches per day ([ALA](https://www.lung.org/blog/zyn-nicotine-addiction))
* Zyn has an awards program where customers can scan cans to collect points in exchange for gifts. This is a similar tactic tobacco companies historically used to incentivize use of cigarette brands such as Newport, Marlboro, Camel and others. ([Truth Initiative](https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/tobacco-industry-marketing/zyn-rewards-program-follows-big-tobaccos-marketing))