

### Flavored Tobacco Easier To Buy Than Fruit In Fresno County, Says Survey

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CLOVIS (KMJ) — Health officials in the Central Valley say tobacco and alcohol advertisements are responsible for the poor lifestyles in local children.

It comes after a statewide survey which shows that flavored tobacco products are easier to find than fruits and vegetables in Fresno County stores.

"The flavored tobacco products, the alcohol beverage signs placed at child eye level, the relatively inexpensive pricing of individual little cigars, the paucity of fresh fruits and vegetables in our stores," details Fresno County Health Officer Dr. Ken Bird.

"All are threats."

Dr. Bird adds that pressure must be put on decision makers to bring about change.

"Encourage your local merchants to offer affordable healthful products, and reduce marketing of unhealthy products. And urge your public officials to set sensible limits on unhealthy marketing."

He was one of a series of medical professionals who came together inside Clovis Veterans Memorial District Wednesday morning, to blame the marketing efforts which they say is adversely affecting the health of young people.

"In California obesity cost families, employers, healthcare industry, and the government, more than \$21 billion each year. The Central Valley region has higher than average obesity rates," reveals Fresno based pediatrician Dr. Razia Sheik.

"To help counter the obesity epidemic our families need access to healthy food – not more tobacco and alcohol."

The survey itself was conducted between May 2016 until June 2016, and looked at more than 7,100 stores across all 58 California counties. The results have set the groundwork for the statewide effort "Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community", which aims to improve the health of Californians through change in the retail environment (click this link to find out more).

Hear the report from KMJ's Dominic McAndrew as it aired:



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