This chart shows cigarette sales to under-age youth in Sutter County compared to the state. In 2011, tobacco sales to under-age youth in Sutter County were **twice** the state rate. In some cases IDs were checked, yet cigarettes were still sold.\(^1\)

*Nearly 9 out of 10 smokers start smoking by age 18.*\(^2\)

**"Is it hard to buy tobacco if you are under 18?"**\(^3\)

**"It’s really easy to get cigarettes at cigarette-only stores."**  
**Sutter County female, 17**

**"When they ask for my ID, I just tell them I left it at home, and they give it [tobacco] to me anyway."**  
**Sutter County female, 16**

**"The roll-your-own store doesn’t card, and they give out free cigarettes to let us try them."**  
**Sutter County male, 15**

According to the Surgeon General of the United States:  
*"Because of nicotine addiction, about **three** out of **four** teen smokers end up smoking into adulthood, even if they intend to quit after a few years."*\(^4\)
In 2011, more than 200 Sutter County adults were asked if they agreed with this statement:

“I would support a local law that makes it more difficult for underage youth to purchase tobacco in Sutter County”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Smokers</th>
<th>Never Smoked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both smokers and non-smokers living in Sutter County overwhelmingly support laws that would limit youth access to tobacco.  

“How would you feel about a retail licensing policy that collected fees from retailers to support compliance checks [checking for sales to underage youth] at least twice a year?”

“Cigarettes should not be accessible to minors. There are lifelong consequences.”

– local public health official

“Stores should not sell to youth…I would support having to pay [such a fee]. Other retailers should support it also.”

– local store owner

“[Tobacco retailers] should be monitored. Stings are a first line of defense to keep tobacco from youth.”

– member of local law enforcement

Local tobacco retailer licensing ordinances with strong enforcement provisions are effective in reducing illegal sales of tobacco to minors.

For more information contact: Sutter County Public Health @ 822-7215 or http://www.suttercounty.org

References:
1. Sutter County Tobacco Control Program Youth Tobacco Purchase Survey Report, 2011
3. Sutter County Tobacco Control Program Youth Focus Groups, May 2012
5. 2011 Surveys in Sutter County conducted by county Tobacco Control staff
6. Interviews with key informants conducted by county Tobacco Control staff, July 2011
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