

The Tobacco Free Times

New State Tobacco Laws Will Save Lives

By Jennifer Hill

Expect the numbers of youth smokers and vapers in Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie counties to drop after July 1. New state laws aiming to curb youth tobacco use and prevent today's generation from becoming new tobacco users go into effect that day. The new laws will:

1) Prohibit retailers from using coupons and multi-pack discounts on the sale of all tobacco and e-cigarette/vape products.

Significance: The tobacco industry has long targeted youth, low-income communities, minority populations, and people trying to quit smoking with more frequent and steeper discounts and other pricing schemes than other populations.

Consider that 90% of smokers start smoking by the time they are 18. Youth exposed to tobacco ads and

discounts are 20% more likely to smoke than those who aren't. The tobacco industry knows these facts very well and uses the discounts and pricing schemes to hook a new generation of smokers.

The discounts also enable those with low incomes to continue using tobacco. High poverty rates often correlate with high smoking rates, which is the case in Delaware and Otsego counties, and to some extent, in Schoharie County, as shown in the table below:

2019 County v. NYS Smoking and Poverty Rates		
	Smoking	Poverty
Delaware	23.4%	16.5%
Otsego	19.7%	16.1%
Schoharie	18.1%	13.9%
New York	12.8%	15.1%



The law's elimination of discounts will result in higher tobacco prices, which are linked to lower smoking rates.

2) Stop e-cigarette shipping and delivery of e-cigarettes and vapor products to private residences, ending online sales.

Significance: This law helps prevent illegal sales of e-cigarette/vapor prod-

Continue on p. 2

Don't Be Afraid to Speak Up, Otsego County's Youngest Rep Advises

By Christopher Bradley



Clark Oliver, Otsego County Board's youngest rep in history.

Engaging and mobilizing youth to prevent their peers from becoming a new generation of tobacco users is a key part of Tobacco Free Communities Delaware, Otsego & Schoharie's mission. To learn what draws youth to be active in their communities, we spoke

to a local expert, Clark Oliver. He became Otsego County Board's youngest representative in its history when he was elected at age 21 to the Board's Oneonta City Wards 1 & 2 seat last November.

"I was born and raised in Oneonta, but I lived in New York City for five years and was exposed to diverse cultures and different ideas," Oliver said. "That was the foundation. But my activism started when I saw the White House lit up in rainbow colors in June 2015 after the Supreme Court ruled for gay marriage."

Oliver, who is gay, continued, "I saw you can make the change you want to see by being active in politics and working with in political processes."

He majored in political science at SUNY Oneonta, graduating last December, one month after he won his election. This past May, Oliver received the Arnold S.

Harris Memorial Academic Achievement Award for both academic excellence in political science and community service.

Oliver's political involvement increased after Donald Trump's presidential win in 2016. While in college, he worked with and became president of the Otsego County Young Democrats, and campaigned for local candidates in the 2018 elections.

Most people don't see local politics as interesting as national politics," said Oliver. "But it's not polarized like national politics and you can effect change directly."

As an elected official, he advises young people "not to be afraid to call your decision makers and ask questions. Elected officials are there to listen to and work on behalf of their constituents."

"We have to give people grace and space, so we can come to a point of being open and accepting," Oliver said.

HUD Spotlights “Healthy Housing for All” in June

By Barbara Doyle



June was National Healthy Homes Month, created by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD.) It aimed to draw national attention to ways people of all ages can be safe, happy and healthy in their homes.

June 2020's theme, "Healthy Housing for All," was timely, given the global

pandemic forced people to stay indoors much more. HUD's [Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes](#) listed the campaign's three objectives:

- 1) raised awareness of the importance of home maintenance and the impact on health;
- 2) educated the public on available free local resources;
- 3) encouraged implementation of online activities and events in targeted communities.

Smoke-free housing is one of TFCDOS's key policy areas and an essential part of “Healthy Housing for All.” Sixty-five percent of indoor air is shared in multi-unit apartment dwellings. Cigarette

smoke drifting from neighbors' apartments can create unhealthy living for all tenants, including children.

Smoking is the leading cause of household fires and the #1 cause of fire deaths in the U.S. Secondhand smoke exposure can seriously impact the health of tenants, especially children and those with asthma and other underlying conditions. The U.S. Surgeon General has determined there is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure.

TFCDOS offers free assistance and resources to local tenants, landlords, and property owners to develop smoke-free housing policies. For more information, contact [Barbara Doyle at \[Barbara.Doyle@sphp.com\]\(mailto:Barbara.Doyle@sphp.com\)](#)

Without Clear Rating System, Onscreen Tobacco Use is Deadly for Youth

By Christopher Bradley

Most adults do not notice tobacco use in films and TV shows, but youth do and it's deadly. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), youth's exposure to tobacco use in films results in more than six million young smokers in the U.S. Two million of them will die from tobacco-induced diseases.

In 1971, youth stopped being subjected to traditional cigarette commercials on television, but tobacco companies have continued to market their products through implicit product placement and imagery in movies and on TV.

At the same time, technological advances have allowed more and more families to access video on demand (VOD) services such as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime Video at home. [Per capita](#), films were viewed four-



teen times more on digital media than in theaters in 2019. Quarantining at home because of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a spike in VOD viewership. That has all made it difficult for parents to monitor and control what youth watch, especially when potential risks and harm from the content are not outlined clearly for consumers.

A survey of nine popular VOD services found that three of them do not display film and TV ratings with their video

content. The other six services show ratings only after the user selects a title and the video is rolling.

To combat the danger of youth exposure to onscreen tobacco use and the lack of monitoring of it, TFCDOS works with Reality Check, a New York State program that engages youth to educate community leaders and peers on the deceptive and manipulative tactics of the tobacco industry. In January, TFCDOS held a smoke-free movie event at Sidney Memorial Public Library, where youth and community members advocated for the Motion Pictures Association to include an R-rating in their rating system for any content that includes tobacco imagery.

For more information on getting involved with TFCDOS and Reality Check, contact [Youth Engagement Coordinator Christopher Bradley at \[Christopher.Bradley@sphp.com\]\(mailto:Christopher.Bradley@sphp.com\)](#)

New State Tobacco Laws Continue from p. 1

ucts, including sales to youth and sales of products without review by the Food and Drug Administration. Previously, only online sales of cigarettes, Roll Your Own tobacco, and smokeless tobacco were restricted. Since nearly 40% of high school seniors in New York State use e-cigarettes or vape, and 27% of all high school youth vape, this law will help reduce vaping among youth, especially unregulated,

potentially dangerous products.

3) Prohibit the outdoor display of tobacco products and tobacco product advertising, including e-cigarettes and paraphernalia, within 1,500 feet of a school (or 500 feet in New York City).

Significance: The tobacco industry intentionally places ads near schools so that youth will see them and be more

likely to start smoking and vaping. This law eliminates key areas which expose youth to tobacco products.

4) Increase penalties for selling tobacco products to those under age 21 as well as other violations of the Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act.

For more details on NYS's new tobacco regulations, please go to <https://tobaccopolicycenter.org/tobacco-control/laws-of-new-york/fy2021budget>.