



# TAKE DOWN TOBACCO

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

## ACTIVITY: Honk & Wave

Use visibility and public support to show decision-makers that your community cares about protecting kids from Big Tobacco's influence.

### OVERVIEW

A Honk & Wave is a high-energy, public action where advocates gather in a visible location (near a busy road, school, or community space) and hold signs encouraging drivers and passersby to "Honk for a Tobacco-Free Generation" or a specific policy ask. This action builds public awareness, demonstrates community support, and creates momentum for change – often catching the attention of media and decision-makers.

To learn about active campaigns in your state, visit [takedowntobacco.org/key-issues](https://takedowntobacco.org/key-issues) (Advocacy Action Map) or contact us at [dayofaction@tobaccofreekids.org](mailto:dayofaction@tobaccofreekids.org).

TIME NEEDED	GROUP SIZE	SKILL LEVEL	IMPACT
1-2 hours	5-30+ people	Beginner-friendly	High impact

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Large, readable signs with clear messages (see sign ideas below)
- [Take Down Tobacco branded](#) materials (banners, posters)
- Smartphones or cameras for documentation
- Water bottles and sunscreen (for outdoor events)
- First aid kit (always good to have on hand)
- Permission or permits (if required by your location)
- Fact sheets with current tobacco statistics from [tobaccofreekids.org](https://tobaccofreekids.org)
- Contact information for local media outlets

### BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

#### Step 1: Choose Your Policy Focus

Select a specific tobacco control issue that matters to your community. Options include:

- Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products
- Increasing tobacco taxes
- Supporting smoke-free public spaces
- Funding tobacco prevention programs
- General awareness about Big Tobacco's targeting of youth

## Step 2: Power-Map Your Location

Choose a location that maximizes visibility, safety, and impact. Consider:

LOCATION TYPE	BENEFITS	CONSIDERATIONS
Busy intersection	High traffic, maximum honks	Check traffic laws, stay on sidewalk
Near schools	Connects youth voice to issue	Coordinate with school administration
Government buildings	Direct visibility to decision-makers	Check permit requirements
Community events	Built-in audience	Coordinate with event organizers

## Step 3: Know Your Audience

Identify who will see your action and tailor your message accordingly:

AUDIENCE	STRATEGY
General public	Focus on health facts and community protection
Parents/families	Emphasize youth protection and addiction prevention
Elected officials	Highlight constituent support for policy change
Media	Have spokesperson ready with key messages and statistics

## Step 4: Create Your Message Plan

Sign Ideas:

- "Honk for Tobacco-Free Kids!"
- "Big Tobacco Lies—We See Through It!"
- "Protect Our Community—End Flavored Tobacco!"
- "[Your Town] Says NO to Big Tobacco!"
- "We're Not Fooled—Take Down Tobacco!"
- "1.6 Million Kids Use E-Cigarettes—Time to Act!"
- "[Your Organization] supports a tobacco-free generation"

## Step 5: Prepare Your Team

Assign clear roles to ensure a smooth, safe, and effective event:

- **Lead Coordinator:** Oversees event flow, ensures safety protocols
- **Media Liaison:** Speaks with press, has key facts ready
- **Social Media Lead:** Captures photos/videos, posts in real-time
- **Safety Monitor:** Watches for hazards, manages first aid

## Step 6: Alert the Media

Media coverage amplifies your impact exponentially. Take these steps 3-5 days before your event:

1. **Create a media advisory** including: event name, date/time/location, brief description, contact info, and visual opportunities
2. **Send to local TV, radio, & newspaper contacts** (news desks, assignment editors, health reporters)
3. **Follow up the morning of** with a phone call or email reminder
4. **Prepare a designated spokesperson** with 2-3 key talking points
5. **Have printed fact sheets ready** to hand to reporters

## SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WHAT:** "Honk & Wave for Tobacco-Free [Your Community/Generation]" Rally

**WHEN:** [Date, Time]

**WHERE:** [Exact Location]

**WHY:** Local advocates rally to urge [specific policy action or to stand up and speak out against big tobacco] as part of the Take Down Tobacco National Day of Action.

**VISUALS:** Colorful signs, community members, youth advocates

**CONTACT:** [Name, Phone, Email]

## DURING THE ACTIVITY

- **Arrive early** to set up, claim your space, and brief volunteers
- **Position participants safely** on sidewalks or designated areas – never in the street
- **Hold signs high and visible** so passing vehicles and pedestrians can easily read them
- **Encourage participation** by waving, smiling, and chanting together
- **Celebrate every honk!** Cheer and thank supporters – energy is contagious
- **Document everything:** Take photos, short videos, and note participation numbers
- **Stay positive and professional:** If anyone reacts negatively, remain calm and don't engage
- **Be ready for media:** If reporters arrive, direct them to your designated spokesperson

## AFTER THE ACTIVITY

### Immediate Follow-Up (Within 24 Hours)

- Thank all participants via text, email, or social media
- Share photos and videos on social media with campaign hashtags
- Send a thank-you email with photos to decision-makers (if applicable)
- Submit your action to the Advocacy Action Map at [takedowntobacco.org](http://takedowntobacco.org)

### Build Momentum

- Follow up with any media who attended—send additional quotes or photos
- Connect participants to upcoming advocacy opportunities
- Debrief with your team: What worked? What could improve?
- Plan your next action—keep the momentum going!

## SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

### Instagram/Facebook:

  We're out here making some NOISE! [Location] says NO to Big Tobacco! Honk if you agree—our community deserves to be tobacco-free! #TakeDownTobacco #TobaccoFreeKids #100DaysOfAction

### X (Twitter):

HONK if you support tobacco-free [community]!   We're at [location] demanding action. Join the movement → [takedowntobacco.org](http://takedowntobacco.org) #TakeDownTobacco

### TikTok/Reels:

POV: You're at a Honk & Wave and EVERYONE is showing up for take down tobacco national day of action 🙌🏻  
[Video of honking cars, waving participants, energy] #TakeDownTobacco #YouthAdvocacy #BigTobaccoLies

## KEY FACTS TO USE

### YOUTH E-CIGARETTE USE

- Over 1.6 million kids use e-cigarettes (2024 NYTS)
- Nearly 90% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products
- 430,000 middle and high school students vape every single day
- Today's e-cigarettes can contain as much nicotine as 200 cigarettes

### NICOTINE POUCHES

- Nicotine pouch use among high school seniors increased from 1.4% in 2023 to 4.4% in 2025
- Sales nearly tripled from \$145 million to \$404 million between January 2023 and December 2024
- 360,000 high school students currently use nicotine pouches

### FLAVORED PRODUCTS

- Over 80% of e-cigarette sales are for flavored products
- Flavors mask harshness and make it easier for kids to start using tobacco
- Research shows flavor restrictions reduce youth tobacco use without increasing cigarette smoking

Find more state-specific facts at [www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts\\_issues/fact\\_sheets](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/fact_sheets)

## SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Confirmed location is legal and safe for gathering
- Obtained necessary permits (if required)
- Briefed all participants on safety protocols
- Designated a safety monitor with first aid supplies
- Established clear boundaries (stay on sidewalk, no street entry)
- Prepared water and shade/sun protection for participants
- Have emergency contact numbers accessible
- Plan for weather contingencies

One voice takes courage. Two voices create partnership.  
Three voices become a movement. Hundreds of voices ignite change.

[takedowntobacco.org](http://takedowntobacco.org) | [#TakeDownTobacco](https://twitter.com/TakeDownTobacco) | [dayofaction@tobaccofreekids.org](mailto:dayofaction@tobaccofreekids.org)