The Conch Shell symbolizes our awakening from the deep slumber of unawareness and urges us to accomplish our and others' welfare.
This toolkit was developed to provide scientific evidence regarding raising the minimum legal age of sale of tobacco products. This toolkit is not for or against any specific legislative proposal.

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A comprehensive approach to reduce and prevent youth tobacco and e-cigarette use, includes limiting youth access to tobacco products and e-cigarettes.

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LEGAL PRECEDENTS

- In 2005, Needham, Massachusetts was the first town in the United States to raise the minimum legal age (MLA) to 21. In 4 years, there was a decrease in tobacco use by 47%.

- Over 150 cities and 2 states have enacted laws that raise MLA to 21, including Hawaii (Senate Bill 1030 signed by Gov. Ige in June 2015) and California (SBx2-7 signed by Gov. Brown in May 2015). 1

- Guam’s retailer violation rate (the rate of businesses’ non-compliance with the Tobacco Control Act of 1998) was 4.7% in 2015. 3 The clear identification of an underage (under 21) individual on Guam driver’s licenses will make retailer compliance more manageable.

- A common argument against raising the MLA to 21 is that if at 18 a person can choose to join the military, then he or she can choose to smoke. However:
  ◊ There is no constitutional right to smoke. 5
  ◊ The US Military itself recognizes the danger of being addicted to tobacco; the US Army Surgeon General stated that soldiers who smoke are less ready for combat and have delayed wound healing. 4
  ◊ The Department of Defense has issued a Directive (DoDI 1010.10, “Health Promotion and Disease Prevention,” April 28, 2014) to promote tobacco-free living as one of the seven targeted priorities. 8
  ◊ “Tobacco use undercuts military readiness and harms individual performance.”
    (Dr. Jonathan Woodson, Asst. Sec. of Defense for Health Affairs) 5

- Policy impact of raising the minimum legal age for alcohol to 21. On Guam, there was a decrease in high school and middle school students who had ever tried alcohol after the passing of PL 30-156: Ramon Someros Oberiano Act in 2010:
  ◊ Guam HS: 68.5% in 2007 down to 58.4% in 2011 and 55.3% in 2013 6
  ◊ Guam MS: 34.4% in 2007 down to 31.2% in 2011 and 22.5% in 2013 6

RECENT FEDERAL UPDATES
In 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) passed “Deeming Tobacco Products To Be Subject to the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act”. This “extends the FDA’s authority to include the regulation of electronic nicotine delivery systems (such as e-cigarettes and vape pens), all cigars, hookah (water pipe) tobacco, pipe tobacco and nicotine gels”, and goes into effect on August 8, 2016. 7

Sources:
1. Tobacco 21
2. IOM, 2015.
3. PEACE office, Synar Program, 2016
7. FDA, 2016.
8. DoDI 1010.10, April 28, 2014
As of 2015, Guam has the highest smoking rate (29.2%) among adults of all the US States & Territories. 1

As of 2015, Guam maintains the highest prevalence of youth (20.2%) who are current smokers in the US. 2

Nationally, tobacco kills up to 1 in every 2 users. 3 On Guam, over 65% of deaths on Guam in 2014 were related to or worsened by tobacco use. 4

Youth Tobacco Use:

1 in 5 high school and 1 in 10 middle school youth currently smoke. 5,6

More youth males (19.2%) report current smoking than females (15.9%). 5

Majority of high school youth smokers are: 5

- Chamorro (20.1%)
- Other Micronesians (23.2%)
- Filipino (5.9%)

4 in 5 high school smokers have attempted to quit in the past 12 months. 5 It takes an average of 11 attempts for a tobacco user to quit.

Tobacco advertisements increase the willingness and likelihood of smoking among youth. 8

Sources:
5. Guam High School YRBS, 2015.
6. Guam Middle School YRBS, 2015
RISK FACTORS

- **More than 90%** of current adult smokers **first used cigarettes before 19**, and almost **100%** reported first using cigarettes before 26.\(^1\)

- On Guam, **2 out of 3 current adult smokers started before 18**.\(^2\)

- According Guam PDN's poll on December 2, 2015, **75%** of respondents were in favor of raising the MLA to 21.\(^3\)

- Youth rely on the 18-20 year olds in their **social circles to get them cigarettes**.\(^3\) Raising the MLA to 21 years would limit youth's access to cigarettes.\(^4\)

- Smokers on average tend to **have more accidents/injuries at work, use more sick days at work, and access more healthcare benefits than non-smokers**.\(^5\)

- Adolescent brains are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of nicotine—this means that adolescents are more prone to forming a biological and behavioral addiction.\(^6\)

**Sources:**
1. Institute of Medicine, 2015.
2. DPHSS Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013
6. Institute of Medicine, 2015.
82% of 12-17 year olds reported having seen an e-cigarette ad in 2015.¹

60% of high school students on Guam have experimented with e-cigarettes, and 32% are current users.³

Among middle school students on Guam, 38% have experimented with e-cigarettes, while 23% are current users.⁴

Youth who reported using e-cigarettes are twice as likely to smoke regular cigarettes than youth who have never used e-cigarettes.³

Exposure to liquid nicotine, found in e-cigarettes has led to a dramatic increase in calls to poison control centers (3,073 calls in 2015). More than half of those calls reported accidental ingestion and exposure by children under the age of 6 years.⁵,⁶

25 e-cigarette explosions caused fires between 2009-2014. However, most e-cigarette explosions are reported only if they cause injury so it is likely that the number of explosions from e-cigarettes are much higher.⁷

E-cigarette vapor contains known Group 1 carcinogens such as formaldehyde and acetaldehyde. Increasing the amount of voltage of the device, increases the amount of toxins vaped.⁸ Toxins are inhaled not only by the user but also by those around them.

Sources:
4. Guam Middle School YRBS, 2015
7. FEMA, 2014
COST OF TOBACCO USE

Economic Costs

- In Needham, MA, the first locality to raise the minimum age of tobacco sales to 21, no tobacco retailers went out of business after the bill was passed.¹
- Tobacco sales to 18-20 year olds are only 2-3% of retail tobacco sales, therefore raising the age to 21 would not dramatically reduce revenue.¹
- $170 billion annually Smoking costs amount to 8.7% of total annual healthcare spending in the U.S.²
- $85 billion annually Over 60% of smoking-attributable healthcare spending was through public health assistance programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.³
  - 14,287 individuals enrolled in Medicare on Guam in 2015.³
  - 37,370 people enrolled in Medicaid in first quarter of 2016 (Oct 2015-Dec 2015); may increase due to Medicaid expansion which would expand services to childless adults.⁴
  - Smoking accounts for approximately 11% of Medicaid program expenditures.⁵
  - 37% of adults on Medicaid smoke.⁶
- Average price of cigarettes is $7 on Guam.⁷
  1 pack of cigarettes is equal to:
  = 3 L of milk ($2.56/liter)⁸
  = 24 eggs ($3.44/dozen)⁸
  = 2 loaves of bread ($3.26/loaf)⁸
  = 6.6 lbs of rice ($1.06/lb)⁸

Cost of Smoking-Related Illness

- On Guam, expenses for a 65 year old smoker’s smoking-related illness can cost as much as $480,954 annually compared to a 65 year old non-smoker’s illness costs of $9,466 annually. Smokers’ illnesses cost 48.9 times more to treat than non-smoker’s illnesses.⁹
- Smoking-related illness in the United States costs more than $300 billion each year, including⁵:
  - Nearly $170 billion for direct medical care for adults
  - More than $156 billion in lost productivity including $5.6 billion in lost productivity due to secondhand smoke exposure

Sources:
1. Winickoff et al, 2014
2. Xu X et al, 2014
3. Cms.gov, 2015
4. DPHSS Medicaid program, 2016
5. Cdc.gov, 2009
9. Staywell Guam, 2014
PEACE uses SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework, a 5-step planning process to guide the selection, implementation, and evaluation of effective, culturally appropriate, and sustainable prevention activities. The effectiveness of this process begins with a clear understanding of community needs and depends on the involvement of community members in all stages of the planning process.