NICOTINE POUCHES

Small, flavored and easy to hide. Here's what chapters need to know.

Know the Basics

What they are

Small white pouches tucked between the gum and lip. They hold nicotine, flavorings and fillers, but no tobacco leaf.

Tobacco-free isn't nicotine-free

Popular brands come in 3 mg and 6 mg strengths, and some sell stronger. Nicotine is highly addictive, and teen brains are especially sensitive to it.

Easy to hide, easy to overuse

No smoke, smell or vapor means pouches are hard for adults to notice and easy to use all day, which speeds up dependence.

Common side effects

Sore or irritated gums, mouth sores, hiccups, nausea and a faster heart rate.

"FDA authorized" isn't "safe"

FDA has authorized some pouches for sale to adults 21 and older. That's permission to sell, not a safety approval, and it doesn't apply to teens.

BY THE NUMBERS

93%

of U.S. 12th graders did **not** use nicotine pouches in the past year. 7% did.
Monitoring the Future 2025 (national)

3% • 1%

of U.S. 10th and 8th graders used nicotine pouches in the past year.
Monitoring the Future 2025 (national)

2.0%

of Indiana 12th graders used smokeless tobacco, which now includes pouches, in the past month.
2026 Indiana Youth Survey

Data Check: Using These Numbers Right

- **There's no separate Indiana pouch number yet.** In 2026, the Indiana Youth Survey added "pouches" to its smokeless tobacco question, so pouch use is counted inside smokeless tobacco.
- **Don't compare** Indiana's past-month smokeless rate with the national past-year pouch rate. They measure different products over different time frames.
- **Label national data clearly** ("Nationally, more than 9 in 10 seniors…"), and ask your school or Local Coordinating Council whether any local survey asks about pouches.

Laws & Safety in Indiana

- **21** is the minimum age to buy nicotine pouches in Indiana and nationwide, including online.
- **Keep pouches away from young kids and pets.** Swallowing one can cause nicotine poisoning. Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222.
- **Pouches plus caffeine pouches or energy drinks** stack stimulants, raising heart rate and anxiety.

Campaign Angles

- **Lead with the majority:** most teens have never used pouches. Say "nationally" until you have local data.
- **Bust the myth:** "tobacco-free" still means nicotine and addiction.
- **Share support:** Quit Now Indiana, 1-800-QUIT-NOW, offers free coaching.

Sources: Monitoring the Future 2025, University of Michigan/NIDA; 2026 Indiana Youth Survey, Prevention Insights, IU School of Public Health-Bloomington; U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA); CDC.