



Should shisha cafes be allowed to trade near schools?

It's Still Tobacco

March 2018



NO.

The purpose of this briefing document is to make a case for shisha cafes to be included as part of the prevention strand of the London Health and Care Devolution. In particular, we argue that shisha cafes should be excluded from the 400m healthy “superzones” around primary and secondary schools. We outline three reasons why.

1 Schools closer to shisha cafes have a higher rate of shisha tobacco use.

Only one UK study has looked at shisha cafes’ proximity to schools[1]. Nearly 2,400 secondary school students from 15 schools in the London Borough of Brent completed a survey about shisha tobacco use. Each school was mapped to the known number of shisha cafes in the area. The study found that the prevalence of shisha tobacco use was over twice as high among students attending schools within a 0.5 mile radius to shisha cafes, than those who were further away from shisha cafes. This relationship was independent of the students’ sex, age, ethnic background or socioeconomic status.

Another study from North Carolina (USA) came to a similar conclusion. Among more than 3,700 students surveyed, it was found that colleges with the highest rates of shisha were more likely to have at least one shisha café within 10 miles of campus[2]. In particular, in the three campuses that had shisha cafes nearby, 65% of current shisha tobacco users reported usually smoking in a shisha café.

2 The London Borough of Brent, among others, have already excluded shisha cafes from a **400m healthy “superzone” around primary and secondary schools.**

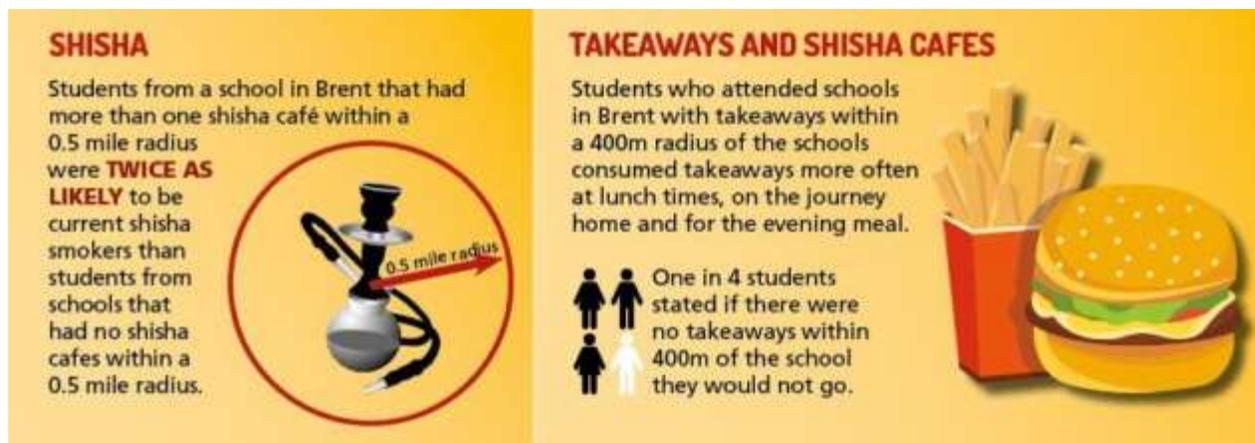
As a result of the evidence presented above, the London Borough of Brent have introduced an exclusion zone which includes shisha cafes. As part of the Development Management Plan, shisha cafes will only be permitted outside a 400 metre zone of secondary schools or further education establishments[3]. National laws prohibiting the trade of shisha cafes within a certain distance of education establishments are also present in Turkey and several Gulf countries[4], emphasising the importance of the issue to maintain public health.

3 Shisha tobacco use is disproportionately high among young people in the UK.

Shisha tobacco use is generally quite low among adult populations in the UK. Among younger age groups, however, shisha tobacco use has been consistently found among prevalence studies in the UK, including across different ethnic groups[5]. Further studies have found that many young people begin smoking shisha before the age of 18. For example, in a survey of secondary school students in Stoke-on-Trent, 27.1% of all regular shisha users reported illegal underage use i.e. smoking regularly in a shisha café[6]. Additionally, studies indicate that a significant proportion of young people first initiate shisha tobacco use in a shisha café: a third secondary school respondents in southeast London reported doing so[7].

Concluding remarks

Shisha tobacco use is prevalent among young people, and there is an established relationship between shisha café proximity to schools and the rates of its use. The prevention strand of the London Health and Care Devolution should therefore consider excluding shisha cafes from a 400m healthy “superzones” and follow the example led by the London Borough of Brent.



Source: Kilburn Times

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