

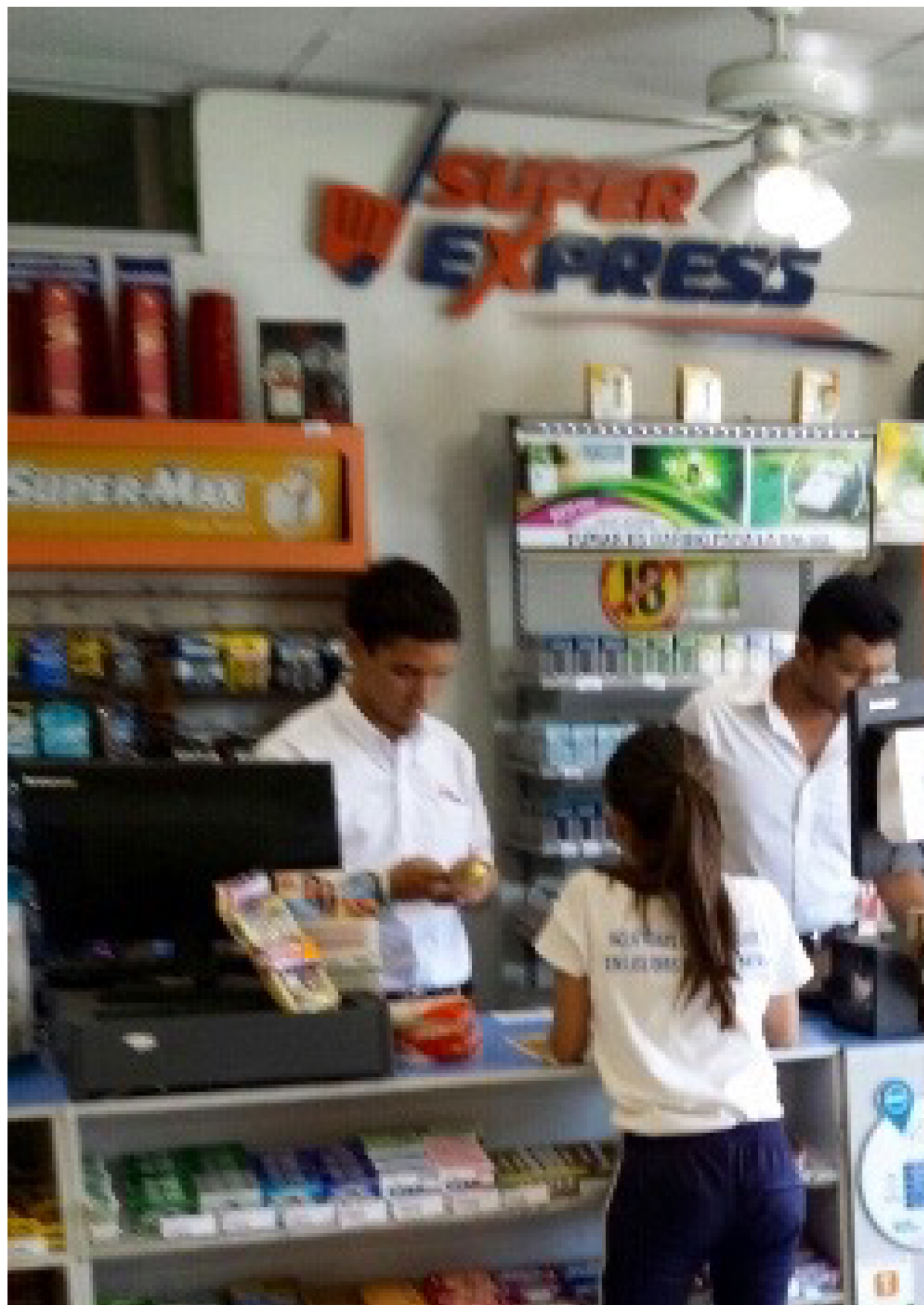


JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
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Institute for Global Tobacco Control

Technical Report on Tobacco Marketing at the Point-of-Sale in Managua, Nicaragua

Product Display, Advertising, and Promotion around Primary and Secondary Schools



Written by:

Jennifer Brown, MPH
Caitlin Weiger, BS
Ashley Grant, MPH
Joanna Cohen, PhD

Produced August 2016 by:

Institute for Global Tobacco Control
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
2213 McElderry St., Fourth Floor
Baltimore, MD 21205 USA
www.jhsph.edu/igtc
www.globaltobaccocontrol.org

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For more information, please contact:

igtc@jhu.edu

Background and Introduction

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease across the globe.¹ Although global estimates of tobacco marketing expenditures are not available, US cigarette manufacturers alone are estimated to have spent over 26 billion US dollars between 2011 and 2013 on advertising and promotion.² Tobacco companies use deceptive and predatory marketing practices to increase consumption of their products, and to make tobacco use appear glamorous or socially acceptable while dismissing the products' adverse health effects.³ Article 13 of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) calls for a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS), including the retail display of tobacco products.⁴ Evidence shows that the tobacco industry responds to partial TAPS bans that regulate only certain types of TAPS strategies (such as television or radio) by re-directing their resources to market their brands on unregulated channels such as the point-of-sale (POS).⁵ Numerous longitudinal studies have demonstrated that exposure to tobacco product advertising and promotion increases the likelihood that youth will start to smoke.⁶ The display of tobacco products at the POS has the same effect and influence on behavior as traditional media advertising.⁷ Marketing in retail environments specifically has been shown to increase the likelihood of smoking initiation among youth.⁸ One study found that stores where adolescents frequently shop may contain nearly three times as many marketing materials and shelf space for popular tobacco brands.⁹

The country of Nicaragua became a party to the FCTC on July 8, 2008.¹⁰ Among Nicaragua's population of six million people¹¹, an estimated 25.1% of youth use tobacco products on a regular basis.¹² Prevalence of adult tobacco use is unknown. In October of 2010, Nicaragua issued Law No. 727 on Tobacco Control.¹³ Article 11 of this law prohibits advertising or promotion of tobacco products in newspapers, radio, television, and billboards but explicitly permits advertising inside points-of-sale.

Methods

This report describes a study about tobacco marketing at the point-of-sale in Managua, Nicaragua. The work was led by the Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH). IGTC partnered with the Universidad Católica Redemptoris Mater (UNICA). UNICA provided guidance and context about the sampling framework, and IGTC designed the survey instrument and data collection protocol. Investigators from IGTC trained six paid university students to conduct the fieldwork and submit daily reports for review in real-time. The IGTC study team was in Managua for training and data collection to troubleshoot any logistical or technical issues. Data cleaning, validation, and analysis were carried out by IGTC.

Sampling Approach

This study surveyed retailers in the city of Managua, Nicaragua's capital and largest city with a population of around 900,000 people.¹⁴ Fifty-seven primary and secondary schools were selected within the city (Figure 1), with consideration for the surrounding neighborhood's (1) retail density, (2) school density, (3) safety and (4) ease of accessibility for data collectors traversing the city. The 57 primary and secondary schools selected were assigned unique identification codes. An online mapping and distance tool was used to define a sampling area radius of 200 meters surrounding each school, ensuring that none of the sampling areas overlapped. The study surveyed a convenience sample of convenience stores, grocery stores, kiosks, street vendors, pulperias and bars within each sampling area.

Figure 1. Selected Schools (n=57)



Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed to assess tobacco product placement, advertising, promotion, presence of health warnings, and brand stretching, including known trends in POS marketing that may target youth (Figure 2). The survey also asked whether the store was within eyesight of the school and provided fields for data collectors to enter the sampling area code, retailer address, name brands of tobacco products displayed or advertised, and other notes or comments about the retailer.

Figure 2. Survey Instrument Content

Display or Ad Characteristic	Product Placement
Signage	Cashier zone
Use of movement	Behind the cashier zone
Use of lights	On a branded stand or cabinet
Signage with warning labels	On a power wall
Mention of flavor	Eye level of children
Mention of menthol	Near sweets, snacks, or soda
Any text in English	Brand Stretching
Promotion	Tobacco accessories with tobacco branding
Discounts	Imitation tobacco products (candy and toys)
Free tobacco products	Functional products with tobacco branding
Free gift	Products with tobacco branding (not accessories)
Loyalty scheme	Other
Presence of brand representative	Tobacco accessible to customer
Tobacco brand sponsorship of event or activity	Signage stating that vendor does not sell cigarettes to minors
Contest or competition	

Data Collection Protocol

Observations and photos were collected from retailers during normal business hours from July 13-15, 2016. Each data collector received a packet of sampling area maps including the unique school identification code and space to record the addresses of retailers in that area (Appendix A). Street names and radii boundaries were clearly visible on all sampling area maps. Data collectors identified convenience stores, grocery stores, kiosks, street vendors, pulperias and bars within the sampling area by using the maps to follow a systematic walking pattern, observing all streets within the 200-meter radius. All convenience stores, grocery stores, kiosks, street vendors, pulperias and bars within the sampling area were observed, but an abbreviated survey was used to record data about retailers that did not sell tobacco. Data collectors wrote the address of each retailer they observed on the corresponding sampling area map. Observational data and photos of tobacco product displays or ads were recorded and uploaded to a cloud-based database in real-time within Magpi, a mobile data collection application installed on smartphones. The mobile app automatically captured the date, geographic coordinates, and data collector name for each record uploaded to the dataset. The order of questions and format of response options were designed to facilitate rapid and discrete observation by data collectors. At the end of each day, data collectors reported the address and sampling area code of each retailer they observed by entering information into a spreadsheet hosted on Google Drive. The IGTC study team reviewed these reports daily in order to check the uploaded dataset and ensure that the mobile software application was functioning properly.

Training

Six paid university students attended one and a half days of training on how to implement the study protocol on July 12 and 13, 2016 – immediately before the data collection period. The IGTC study team explained the purpose of the study, the current tobacco control law, the survey content, key terms and definitions, the Magpi software application, and data collection procedures in detail. Data collectors were instructed to behave as customers in order to discretely observe

the retail environment and capture photos. In order to estimate the placement of products at the eye level of children, each data collector used a measuring tape to identify a 1-meter reference point on their body. The data collection team was trained to recognize required health warnings and signage announcing age sales restrictions. During the training, data collectors participated in a field test of the study protocol to practice using the survey, mobile app, and data collection procedures in nearby retailers.

Results

There were a total of 57 school sampling areas. Data collectors observed 355 convenience stores, grocery stores, kiosks, street vendors, pulperias or bars within a 200-meter radius of the 57 schools. Of the retailers observed, 174 retailers sold tobacco products - 61 of which were located within eyesight of the school. Retailers that sold tobacco products were identified within 54 of the 57 school sampling areas. The remaining three areas were primarily residential and did not contain any retailers.

Warnings were visible on all tobacco advertisements in about half (51%) of the retailers that displayed advertisements. Many retailers (40%) that sold tobacco products did not display signage stating that tobacco is not sold to minors. Some stores (10%) displayed tobacco in a manner that the product was directly accessible to the customer. Packs were frequently displayed in or around the cashier zone and on a branded stand or cabinet (Figure 3). Packs with flavors, including menthol, were frequently displayed (Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Tobacco Product Displays

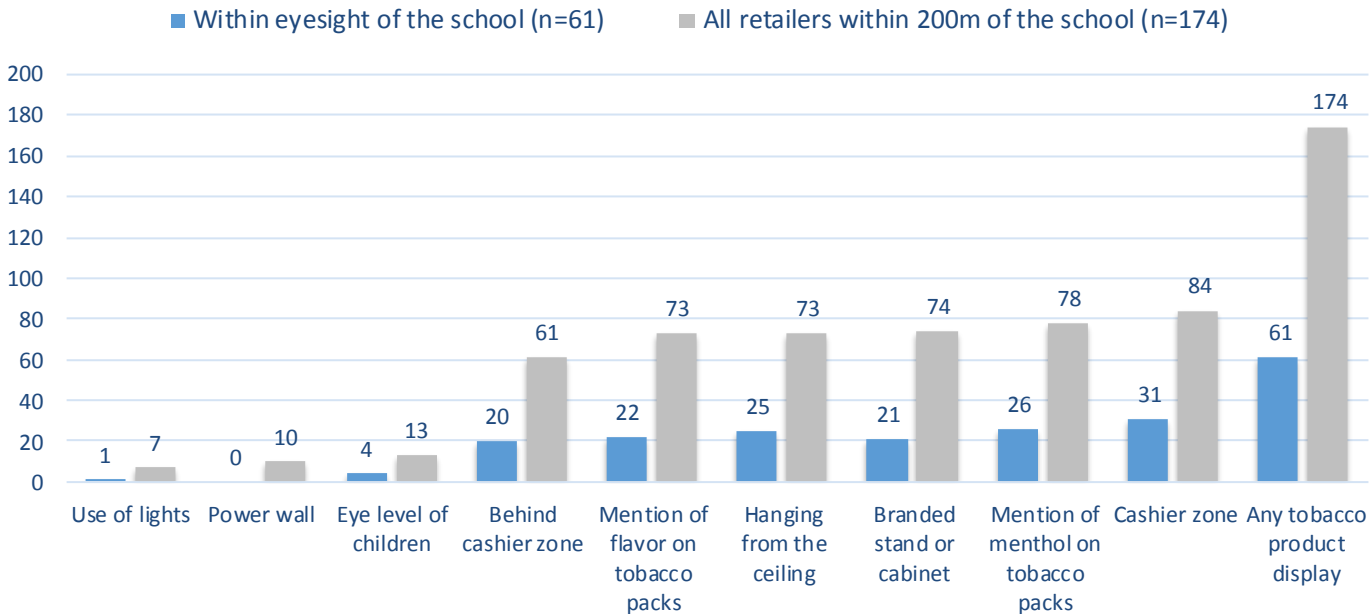


Figure 4. Citrus Flavored Tobacco Product

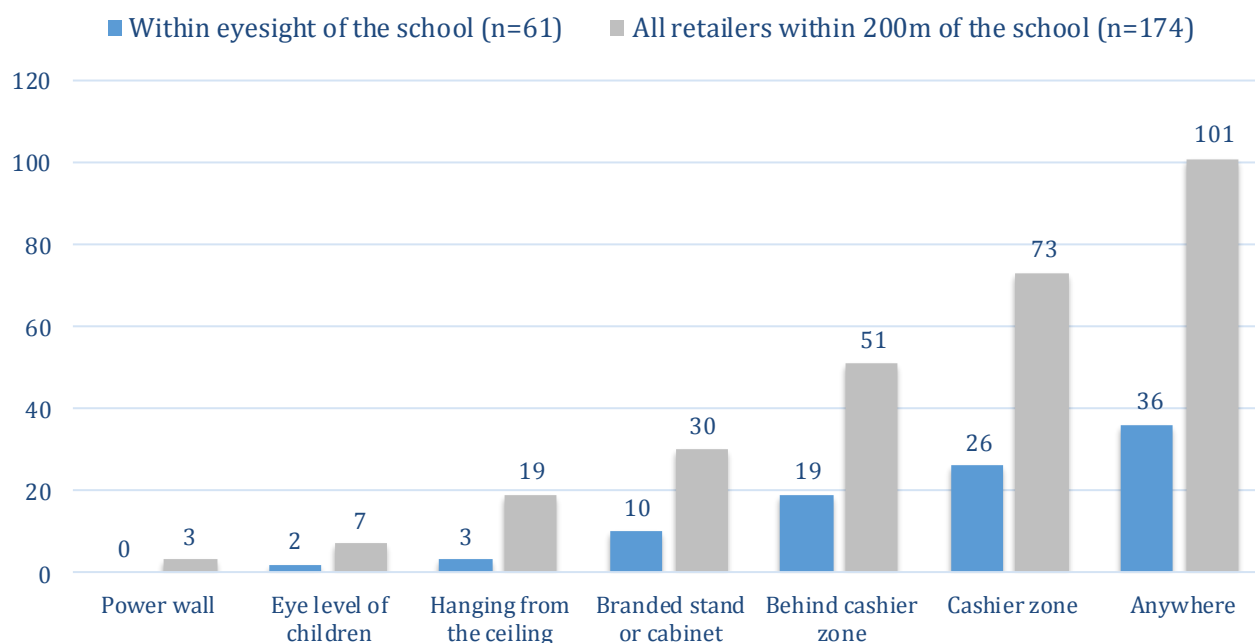


Tobacco products were frequently displayed with sweets, snacks, or soda in or near the cashier zone. Some tobacco products were displayed with sweets, snacks or soda on a branded stand or cabinet (Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5. Tobacco Displayed Near Sweets and Snacks at the Point-of-Sale



Figure 6. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Tobacco Product Displayed Near Sweets, Snacks, or Soda

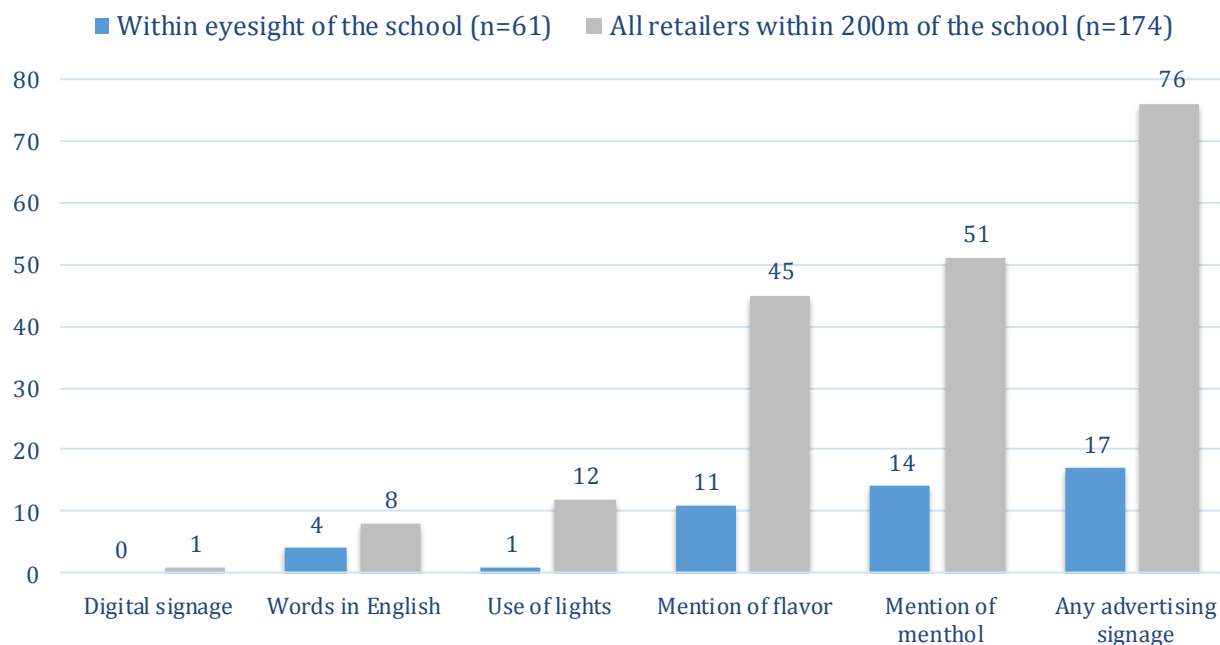


Tobacco was frequently advertised using signage (Figure 7). Many advertisements mentioned flavored tobacco products, including menthol flavored tobacco products. Some retailers displayed advertising signage with lights (Figure 8).

Figure 7. Advertising Signage for Flavored Cigarettes at the Point-of-Sale



Figure 8. Number of Tobacco Retailers Using Tobacco Product Advertising Signage



Signs mentioning free tobacco products, contests or competitions, or a loyalty scheme were present at one retailer for each instance. Free tobacco products, with or without purchase, were advertised at five retailers.

Four retailers distributed tobacco accessories (e.g. matches) with tobacco branding and one retailer displayed a functional product with tobacco branding (e.g. outdoor table umbrella). No retailers sold or distributed other products (e.g. cups, hats) with tobacco branding or imitation tobacco products.

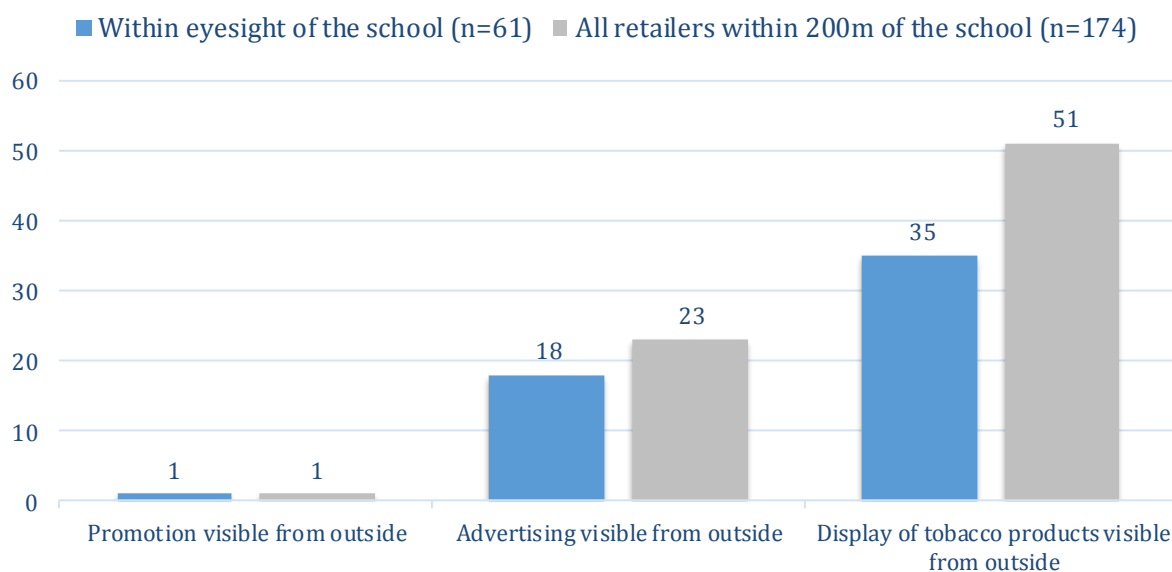
Belmont and Dunhill were the most frequently displayed and advertised tobacco brands displayed in retailers, followed by Pall Mall, Marlboro, Casino, and L&M (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Tobacco Brands Displayed at the Point-of-Sale

Brands Displayed at the POS	# of Retailers
Belmont	136
Dunhill	116
Pall Mall	96
Marlboro	93
Casino	91
L&M	88
Windsor	14

Display of tobacco products and tobacco product advertising were frequently visible from outside the retailer (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Tobacco Product Promotion, Advertising and Display Visible from Outside the Point-of-Sale



Discussion

This study identified numerous examples of retailers that sell tobacco and advertise and market tobacco products in close proximity to schools and thus are easily accessible by students. Many retailers displayed and/or advertised flavored cigarettes, products that appeal to youth. Some retailers displayed tobacco so that it was directly accessible to the customer. In many retailers near schools tobacco products were displayed at the point-of-sale alongside products that appeal to children, such as candy and soda.

Limitations

This study used a convenience sample of schools in one city in Nicaragua. Therefore, the results may not be representative of all types of tobacco retailers or generalizable to all areas of Nicaragua. In addition, the lack of a formal address system and street names in Nicaragua made it difficult to identify where the 200-meter radius around schools extended to, therefore, in some areas data collectors may have potentially collected data outside the 200-meter radius or missed some retailers inside the radius.

Conclusions

Partial bans of tobacco marketing allow the tobacco industry to exploit deficiencies or loopholes in regulations by redirecting their resources to mediums that are not regulated – thereby violating the spirit of the Nicaragua tobacco control law which aims to “protect the health of present and future generations of the Nicaraguan population from the harmful effects, the consequences and the damage caused by tobacco consumption or exposure to tobacco smoke”.¹³ This study clearly demonstrates that the tobacco industry places their products and ads in areas that are visible and accessible to youth. A complete ban of tobacco product display, advertising, and promotion at point-of-sale would comply with FCTC provisions and more effectively achieve the goal of protecting the public from the harms of tobacco products.

Key Terms and Definitions

Advertising signage: branded print or digital/electronic media such as posters, banners, flyers, or shelf liners that are intended to promote awareness and favorable opinions of a tobacco brand or product

Brand stretching: the presence of non-tobacco items that carry a tobacco brand name

Cashier zone: directly on top of, in front of, or to the side of the counter or cash register where consumers make a purchase

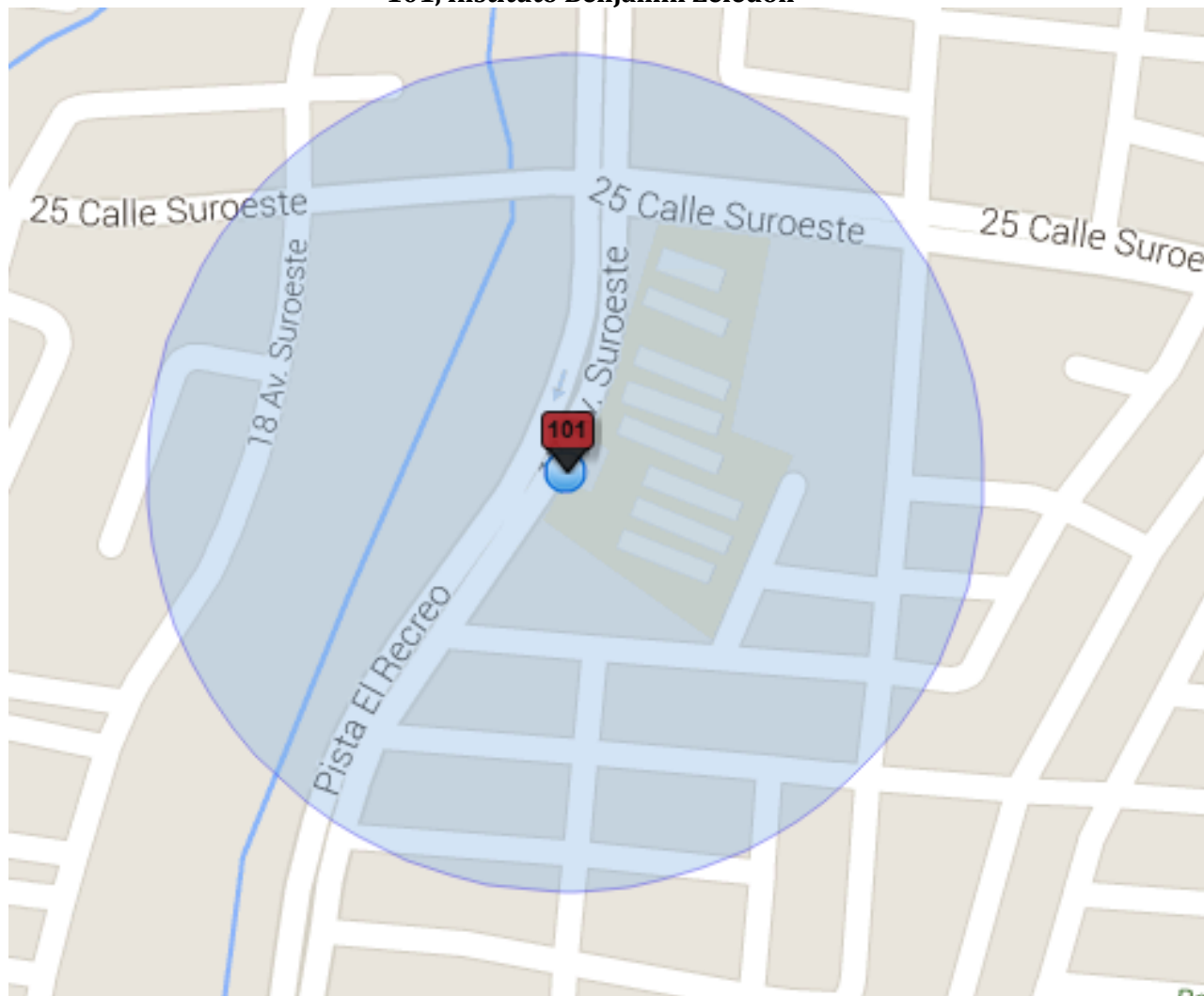
Eye level of children: placement of products 1 meter or less from the ground

Power wall: an excessive display of tobacco products showing multiple packs on multiple shelves

Product display: physical packs of tobacco products that are visible to potential consumers

Appendix A. School Sampling Area Map

101, Instituto Benjamin Zeledon



Please record the address of each store you observe. If needed, continue lettering and addresses on next page.

A.	F.
B.	G.
C.	H.
D.	I.
E.	J.

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