

Tobacco Advertising & Youth

The Essential Facts

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Tobacco companies must attract a new generation of tobacco users to survive. The industry constantly loses customers because many current smokers quit smoking or die from tobacco-related diseases. As a result, tobacco companies develop massive marketing campaigns to entice youth to smoke and become long-term smokers.¹ A comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is one of the most effective policy measures to reduce youth tobacco use.² Article 13 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) requires parties to enact a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. As such, countries must implement comprehensive bans as a part of their tobacco control strategy.^{3,4}

Youth Tobacco Consumption

- Tobacco use among youth is a major public health problem around the world. Everyday, some 80,000-100,000 young people around the world become addicted to tobacco.⁵
- If current trends continue, 250 million of today's children will die from tobacco-related diseases.⁶
- Most people start smoking before the age of 18, and almost a quarter of these smokers began smoking before the age of 10.⁷



Youth purchasing cigarettes (Ukraine, 2007)

Big Tobacco Targets Youth Using Advertising, Promotion And Sponsorship

- Children are exposed to tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship through paid media, paid sports sponsorships and at retail stores.⁸
- The tobacco industry claims their advertisements are only for adult smokers and adult non-smokers; studies have shown that industry advertisements effectively target non-smoking youth.⁹
- Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship foster positive attitudes towards tobacco use among youth,¹⁰ which effectively motivates youth to smoke.^{11,12}

“Many manufacturers have ‘studied’ the 14-20 market in hopes of uncovering the ‘secret’ of the instant popularity some brands enjoy to the almost exclusion of others... Creating a ‘fad’ in this market can be a great bonanza.”¹³

— RJ Reynolds internal document, 1973

Strategies Used By The Tobacco Industry To Target Youth

Tobacco companies use carefully calculated marketing strategies to reach vulnerable underage populations. Marketing tactics tobacco companies use to target youth include:

- Advertising heavily at retail outlets near schools and playgrounds using large ads and signs clearly visible from outside the stores.
- Sponsoring schools, school programs, or special school events.



Billboard (Jamaica, 2005)

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Strategies Used... (continued)

- Placing cigarette ads at children's eye-level.
- Advertising in popular youth-oriented magazines.
- Sponsoring sports with a large youth fan base, such as soccer and cricket.
- Advertising near schools using large billboards depicting glamorized images of tobacco use.
- Placing tobacco products in prominent movies for the youth audience.
- Developing counterproductive youth tobacco prevention programs, which actually encourage use.



Tobacco store (Beijing, China, 2007)

A Comprehensive Ban on Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship is Necessary to Reduce Tobacco Use among Youth

- Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship entice young people to use tobacco, encourage smokers to smoke more, and decrease smokers' motivation to quit.^{14, 15, 16}
- Voluntary regulations are not effective as the tobacco industry often fails to comply.^{17, 18}
- Partial bans have little to no effect on tobacco consumption.^{19, 20}
- Only a comprehensive and enforced ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship reduces tobacco use, especially among youth.^{21, 22}
- Countries must adhere to Article 13 of the FCTC and adopt comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

(1) World Health Organization (WHO) Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2008: The mpower package. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2008, p 36. (2) WHO, 2008, p 36-38. (3)WHO. Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Geneva: WHO; 2003. (4)WHO, 2008, p 36-38. (5)The World Bank, 1999, p 92. (6)Murray CJ, Lopez AD, eds. The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability from Disease, Injuries and Risk Factors in 1990 and Projected to 2020. Cambridge, MA: Harvard School of Public Health, 1996. (7)WHO Tobacco Free Initiative, 2008. (8)Johnston LD, O'Malley PM, Bachman JG, Schulenberg JE. Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use – Overview of Key Findings, 2003. Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse; 2004 (9)DiFranza JR, Wellman RJ, Sargent JD Weitzman M, Hipple BJ, Winickoff JP. Tobacco Promotion and the Initiation of Tobacco Use: Assessing the Evidence for Causality. Pediatrics. 2006; 117:e1237-e1248. (10)Slater SJ, Chaloupka F, Wakefield M, Johnston LD, O'Malley P. The Impact of Cigarette Marketing Practices on Youth Smoking Uptake. Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine. 2007; 161:440-445. (11) DiFranza, 2006. (12)Warner KE. Selling Smoking: Cigarette Advertising and Public Health. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association; 1986. (13)RJ Reynolds Internal Document "NFO Preference Share data "Youth" Market. 1973 Mar 8. Bates No. 501167049/7051. (14)Andrews RL, Franke GR. The determinants of cigarette consumption: A meta-analysis. Journal of Public Policy and Marketing. 1991; 10:81-100. (15)Warner KE. Selling Smoking: Cigarette Advertising and Public Health. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association; 1986. (16)WHO, 2008, p 36. (17)WHO, 2008, p 38. (18)Roemer R. Legislative action to combat the world tobacco epidemic, 2nd ed. Geneva: World Health Organization; 1993. (19)Quentin W, Neubauer S, Leidl R, Konig HH. Advertising bans as a means of tobacco control policy: a systematic literature review of time-series analyses. Int J Public Health. 2007;52:295-307. (20)World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe. It can be done: a smoke-free Europe. Copenhagen: World Health Organization; 1990. (21)WHO, 2008, p 38. (22)Quentin, 2007.