

You Can Make a Difference!

There are many ways that you can show the tobacco industry that you are tired of them preying on our children. For example:

- Discuss deceitful marketing tactics with your children.
- Propose and support local ordinances in your community that limit the visibility of tobacco products in stores, and limit areas where smokers can expose your children to harmful secondhand smoke.
- Write your state and national legislators to support further restrictions on tobacco advertising, further expansion of smoking restrictions in public, and regulation of flavored tobacco products that target children.

For additional information, contact the Quit Doc Research and Education Foundation (866-355-QUIT, www.qdref.org), or the Health Access and Tobacco Division of the Florida Department of Health (850-245-4144)



5944 Coral Ridge Dr., #255, Coral Springs, FL 33076
Phone: 866-355-QUIT (866-355-7848)
Fax: 877.576.1434
www.qdref.org

Copyright 2010, Quit Doc Research and Education Foundation



Strange Candy! How Big Tobacco Targets Your Children by Blurring the Lines Between Candy and Tobacco



Tel: 866-355-QUIT (866-355-7848)
www.qdref.org

The Tobacco Companies still market nicotine addiction directly to your children! Do you know why?

- Over 400,000 loyal customers of the tobacco industry die prematurely each year from a smoking related illness. On average, those smokers die 15 years earlier than if they had never smoked.
- At this rate, you would think that the tobacco companies would eventually run out of customers! Unfortunately, Big Tobacco is able to replace those lost customers by enticing over one million new children and teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 to try their addictive products.
- In all, 85% of all new smokers start before the age of 18. The remaining 15% generally start in college. Older

adults rarely pick up the habit. The tobacco industry knows this. They realized long ago that there is no point in advertising to adults. Despite what they say in public, every new marketing tactic that they use is designed to encourage children and teens to start using tobacco.

In order to stop this trend, it is important that we provide our children with the information that the tobacco companies are unwilling to share in their advertising... that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable, early death.

Role Modeling: Kids Naturally Want to Act “Grown-Up”

Take a look around your house, and you will find all sorts of toys that let your children model adult behavior. You daughters may have baby dolls, doll houses, or a play kitchen. Your sons may have action figures, toy vehicles, or a plastic tool set. These toys are clearly designed to allow your kids to pretend that they are older... to give them a way to act like their adult role models.

Now take this a step further and consider the issue of toy guns. Children have played with toy guns for decades. Clearly, every child that plays with a toy gun does not grow up to use a real gun. However, researchers have shown that toy guns do lead to an increase in aggression both during and after the time that a child has played with a toy gun. Also, there is a concern that using a toy gun during play sends the wrong message: that violence is an acceptable means to solve problems.

Of course, we all know that children will use their finger and yell “bang” if they do not have a toy gun. This is not a natural behavior, but a behavior learned by seeing violence... either real violence, or fake violence in movies and on television. In other words, kids will still mimic the adult behavior, even when they do not have a toy or “prop”.

The Role of Tobacco-Shaped Candy

Candy manufacturers have provided kids with similar tobacco-shaped “props” for several decades. While these are not seen as often anymore, they are still manufactured and sold in candy stores and ice cream parlors. You can find candy, gum, and chocolate made to look like cigarettes and cigars. Most kids are also aware of the shredded bubble-gum that mimics chewing tobacco. There are even licorice candies available that look like pipes!

Why do these products exist? Clearly, they are designed so that kids can model adult tobacco use. Children can purchase tobacco-shaped candy and pretend to smoke or chew just like their role models, whether they are real (such as family members) or fake (such as actors in movies and on television).

Not everyone who plays with candy cigarettes or bubble-gum cigars goes on to become a regular smoker... just as everyone who plays with a toy gun does not commit murder. However, the use of these



Candy cigarettes: The great imitator?

products is a way to practice... to feel what it is like to handle a cigarette... to feel what it is like to dangle it from their lips. Then, when these children are offered a chance to smoke, they are better prepared to handle a real cigarette, put it in their mouths, and take that first drag.

The Role of Candy-Flavored Tobacco



Candy or tobacco? Can your kids tell the difference?

Recently, the bigger danger has been the creation and marketing of flavored tobaccos. Instead of candies that look like tobacco, we now have several kinds of tobacco that are marketed as candy.

For example, cigarette companies started marketing products with names that included “mocha”, “mint”, “toffee”, and “frost”. These cigarettes were sold in metal packaging that looked like candy tins (instead of traditional cigarette packs), a ploy to mask the contents of the package. In September 2009, these flavored cigarettes were banned as part of the new law giving the Food and Drug Administration the role of regulating tobacco products.

Cigar companies have created similar candy and fruit flavored products; these products are sold individually in brightly-colored plastic tubes that resemble bubble-gum cigars. Chewing tobacco companies have also increased the variety of fruit-flavored products in recent years. Unfortunately, these products are not currently regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.



It is unclear whether Big Tobacco has created these products to trick teens into buying the product without



being aware that they are buying tobacco, or simply to help teens hide tobacco use from concerned adults. However, one thing is very clear: these products target children and teens.

The Role of Nicotine Candy

As pressure mounts on smokers to isolate themselves from the public, the tobacco industry has responded by selling newer forms of smokeless tobacco. These products are marketed for use when smokers are in a public place that does not allow smoking.

Some of these products are known as Snus. These are teabag-like pouches of tobacco that users place between their lips and gums, allowing users to get a nicotine fix without creating smoke or spit. American tobacco companies have recently purchased European companies, and have started to label these products with the names of their most popular cigarettes.

Even more dangerous are products marketed as “hard snuff” or “dissolvable tobacco”. These are essentially nicotine candies... dissolvable pieces of nicotine that are packaged like gum or breath mints.

The question is not whether Big Tobacco is targeting children. The question is just how far are they willing to go to create generation after generation of nicotine addicts?



Tobacco candy! Nicotine addiction even your kids can enjoy!

The Role of Our Communities

Chew on this: the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates chocolate; in fact, there are strict criteria on how much cocoa butter must be in a product before it can call itself “chocolate”. However, the FDA does NOT regulate these edible tobacco products. Big Tobacco has created these products to fall through the loopholes in the current FDA rules. As the FDA starts to respond to these new products, the tobacco industry is already designing the next wave of products.

What does that mean? It is up to concerned parents, educators, and organizations to monitor the predatory marketing practices of Big Tobacco to prevent their harmful, addictive products from reaching the hands of children and teenagers.

Anyone can take an active role in this fight. You can show your children the products when you see them, and explain exactly what they are. You can monitor the advertising practices of the local stores in your community, and boycott businesses that seem to make tobacco products accessible to children. You can report any new products, or disturbing ads, to the FDA. For more information, visit <http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts/ProtectingKidsfromTobacco/default.htm>.

Whatever you do, **do NOT let your children take this candy from these strangers.** That is just what Big Tobacco is counting on!