



## Preventing kids' access to cigarettes

By Lawrence Kutner, Ph.D.

One of the keys to preventing children from smoking is restricting their access to tobacco. As a parent, you can have more influence than you may think.

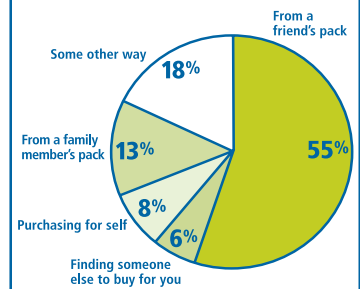
Teenagers and pre-teens who smoke get their cigarettes from a variety of sources. Many take them from a friend's, a parent's, or an older sibling's pack. Others purchase them illegally from a store or get a friend to buy them.<sup>1</sup> According to the 2003 Monitoring the Future national survey of youth, 63% of 8th graders and 81% of 10th graders said that it would be "fairly easy" or "very easy" for them to get cigarettes if they wanted them.<sup>2</sup>

Some research suggests that simply issuing fines to retailers for selling tobacco to minors isn't a comprehensive enough approach toward solving the problem.<sup>3</sup> Enforcement of laws should be combined with other aspects of a broad youth smoking prevention program.<sup>4</sup>

➤ See back page for tips ➤

### Youth Access to Cigarettes

How kids report they usually obtained cigarettes in the past 30 days<sup>1</sup>



Among 11-17 year-olds who smoked a cigarette on at least one of the past 30 days

Source: Philip Morris USA Youth Smoking Prevention (2005). Teenage Attitudes and Behavior Study - 2004 Results

**One of the keys to preventing children from smoking is restricting their access to tobacco. As a parent, you can have more influence than you may think.**

**Youth Smoking Prevention™**  
Philip Morris USA

## Tips for Parents

As a parent, you play a critically important role in helping prevent your children from using tobacco. Here are some specific things you can do:

- Talk with your children often and specifically about not smoking. **Make your values and beliefs clear.**
- If you or another family member is a smoker, **don't leave cigarette packs unattended around the house** or in other places where it's easy for children to find them.
- Children whose friends smoke are more likely to have tried cigarettes themselves.<sup>5</sup> If you notice that some of your child's friends are smoking, **ask about what's going on.** Listen carefully to what your child says, so that you can talk with them about ways to handle the reasons why they say they or their friends smoke. These might include peer pressure, weight loss, social acceptance or stress.
- If you find that your child is getting cigarettes from a friend, consider talking to that friend's parents about the situation. You may be able to **work together to solve the problem.** This also shows your child that no parent wants his or her child to smoke.
- Encourage your teenager to **socialize at places that prohibit smoking**, whether it's a teen club or a friend's house. Talk to your child about ways to resist peer pressure and to say no if offered a cigarette.

**Talk to your kids about not smoking. They'll listen.**

### Resources for Parents from Philip Morris USA

For more information, please visit the Parent Resource Center at [www.philipmorrisusa.com](http://www.philipmorrisusa.com) where you'll find tools and tips from child development experts to help you talk to your kids about not smoking.

You can also order or download copies of resources in the *Raising Kids Who Don't Smoke* series, including:

- *Raising kids who don't smoke*
- *Peer pressure & smoking*
- *Could your kid be smoking? and*
- *Educando a los niños para que no fumen*

as well as more parent Tip Sheets like this one. To order these free publications by phone, call **1-800-PMUSA-YSP (1-800-768-7297)**.



### Additional Resources

#### American Cancer Society

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

#### Office of the Surgeon General

[www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Tobacco Information and Prevention Source

Minors' Access to Tobacco Fact Sheet  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr\\_2000/factsheets/factsheet\\_minor.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr_2000/factsheets/factsheet_minor.htm)

#### Health Canada, Ministerial Advisory Council

Challenging conventional wisdom on youth access to tobacco: redefining youth access interventions  
[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/advisorycouncil\\_rec5/pt1.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/advisorycouncil_rec5/pt1.html)

Note: Website addresses and content are subject to change. This Tip Sheet contains citations to a number of third-party information sources. The inclusion of these sources and websites in no way indicates their endorsement, support or approval of the contents of this Tip Sheet or the policies and positions of Philip Morris USA and its Youth Smoking Prevention department.

This Tip Sheet was created for parents on behalf of Philip Morris USA Youth Smoking Prevention by K&O Communications in conjunction with an expert advisory board. As the manufacturer of a product intended for adults who smoke that has serious health effects, Philip Morris USA is committed to helping prevent kids from smoking cigarettes. We have a dedicated Youth Smoking Prevention department that supports positive youth development programs, produces advertising for parents and conducts research to help prevent youth smoking.

### References:

1. Philip Morris USA Youth Smoking Prevention (2005). *Teenage Attitudes and Behavior Study - 2004 Results*.
2. Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G., & Schulenberg, J.E. (2004). *Monitoring the future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2003*. (NIH Publication No. 04-5506). Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse.
3. Rigotti, N.A. et al. (1997). The effect of enforcing tobacco - sales laws on adolescents' access to tobacco and smoking behavior. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 377(15), 1044-1051.
4. Lantz, P.M. et al. (2000). Investing in youth tobacco control: A review of smoking prevention and control strategies. *Tobacco Control*, 9, 47-63.
5. Abdelrahman, A.I. et al. (1998). The epidemiology of substance use among middle school students: The impact of school, familial, community and individual risk factors. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 8(1), 55-75.