



Talking to pre-teens about not smoking

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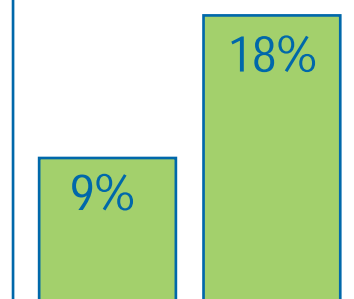
The younger people are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to become addicted.¹ A recent national survey of teenagers found that 18 percent reported that they had tried to smoke at least one cigarette before they were 13 years old.²

That's why it's so important to start talking to your children about not smoking while they're still very young, to tailor your approach to their stage of development, and to continue those talks throughout their adolescence.^{3, 4} Preteens are more influenced about issues related to smoking by their parents than by their friends.^{5, 6}

Your opinions and guidance really count during this stage of your children's development. They may act bored or even roll their eyes when you bring up health-related issues, but they're really listening to what you have to say. Don't be discouraged.

► See back page for tips ►

When 9-12th Graders Smoked a Whole Cigarette for the First Time



By age 10 By age 13

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2003).
Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System.

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 **Youth Smoking Prevention**
Philip Morris USA

Tips for Parents

In addition to talking about the significant health risks of smoking, there are some issues that are especially relevant to pre-teens. Children this age often look for ways to test their independence and to show how mature they are. That's why some try smoking. Here are some tips that can help you be more effective when you talk to them about the reasons for not smoking:

- Let your child know that *smoking is not common*. Children who smoke tend to overestimate the number of teenagers who smoke.⁷ Talk about how *the large majority of teens do not smoke* and why they choose not to do it.
- Talk about how *using tobacco will limit how well they do in sports and other activities*. Describe how it affects

their stamina and breathing, especially during competition or performance.

- Emphasize how *smoking means that they have less money to spend on other things* they want. Calculate how much cigarettes cost and what else they could buy with that money.
- Discuss how smoking *is not a sign of maturity*. Most adults are non-smokers. Many who do smoke wish they'd never started. Real maturity means standing up to social pressure.
- Talk about how *it's okay to say no* to someone who offers you a cigarette, even if it's a friend. After all, a real friend wouldn't give you something that could harm your health. Practice "refusal skills" so that your children feel comfortable and confident saying no if someone offers them tobacco.

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 where you'll find many 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" brochure series, including the "Raising kids who don't smoke," "Peer pressure & smoking," and "Educando a los niños para que no fumen" parent brochures, and more parent tip sheets like this one. To order these publications by phone, call **1-800-768-7297**.



Additional Resources

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

"The Surgeon General's Report for Kids About Smoking"

www.cdc.gov/tobacco/sgr/sgr4kids/sgrmenu.htm

Office of the Surgeon General

www.surgeongeneral.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

"What You Need to Know: Younger Students Still Smoking"

<http://family.samhsa.gov/set/stillsmoking.aspx>

Note: Website addresses and content are subject to change. This newsletter 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 newsletter or the policies and positions of Philip Morris USA and its Youth Smoking Prevention department.

This newsletter 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. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People: A Report of the Surgeon General*. 1994.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *National Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System* (2003). <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/yrbss/>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "You(th) & Tobacco." http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/educational_materials/yuthfax1.htm
4. Cohen, D.A., Richardson, J., and LeBree, L., "Parenting Behaviors and the Onset of Smoking and Alcohol Use: A Longitudinal Study." *Pediatrics*, September 1994, 94(3): 368-75.
5. Sussman, S., "School-based Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation: Where Are We Going?" *American Journal of Health Behavior*, May/June 2001, 25(3): 191-9.
6. Simons-Morton, B.G., "Prospective Analysis of Peer and Parent Influences on Smoking Initiation Among Early Adolescents." *Prevention Science*, December 2002, 3(4): 275-283.
7. Simons-Morton, B.G. et al., "Psychosocial, School, and Parent Factors Associated with Recent Smoking among Early-Adolescent Boys and Girls." *Preventive Medicine*, 28: 138-148, 1999.