

Illegal Sales of Tobacco to Youth

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- FACT: It has been illegal to sell tobacco to minors in CA for over 100 years!**
- However, retailers continue to sell tobacco to kids at alarming rates
 - According to the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) survey conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 18.9% of 9th to 12th graders who identified as current smokers reported directly purchasing their cigarettes from stores or gas stations.
 - In a recent survey of 90 retailers in the City of Burbank, 26.7% were willing to sell tobacco to kids
- FACT: Tobacco and kids don't mix!**
- Nicotine addiction in kids is very different than in adults – often taking hold within weeks or just days after “youthful experimentation”
 - 3 out of 4 smokers start before they are 18
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the younger a person is when they start smoking, the more difficult it is to quit
 - Roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from diseases caused by smoking
- FACT: Sales of tobacco products account for a significant portion of retail revenue!**
- According to the National Association of Convenience Stores, average cigarette sales per store in 2003 were \$304,250, accounting for 34.5% of in-store sales and are the #1 product sold
 - There are 150 retailers in the City of Burbank that sell tobacco products
 - The focus of the California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Licensing Act of 2003 is on tobacco tax evasion and has NO public health provisions
- FACT: There is strong support for reducing youth access to tobacco!**
- According to the 2005 LA County Health Survey, 94% of Los Angeles County adults think that tobacco use is a very serious or somewhat serious health problem and 96% believe that cigarette use is a very serious or somewhat serious health problem for minors
 - A recent survey of Burbank residents revealed that 69.4% believes that it is easy for youth under 18 to buy cigarettes in the community
 - The survey also showed that 86.6% of current tobacco users and 88.1% of non-tobacco users agree that store owners should be licensed to sell cigarettes in the same way they are licensed to sell liquor or beer
- FACT: Local tobacco retailer licensing laws reduce youth access!**
- Over 30 jurisdictions in California have passed or are working to pass strong local tobacco retailer licensing laws to protect their kids from a lifelong addiction to tobacco
 - San Luis Obispo, Pasadena, Los Angeles, Sierra Madre, Carson, Lancaster, Sacramento, Sacramento County, El Cajon, Berkeley, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and Riverside County are just a few that have passed strong local tobacco retailer licensing laws
 - In Pasadena the illegal tobacco sales rate dropped from 19% to 5% after a local tobacco retail licensing law was adopted
- FACT: A strong local tobacco retailer permit should include:**
- Requirements that all retailers who sell tobacco products obtain a license
 - A fee set high enough to fund enforcement and administration
 - An enforcement plan which includes annual compliance checks
 - Compliance with all state, local and national tobacco control laws as a condition of holding the license
 - A schedule of penalties that includes suspension and revocation of the license for violators who repeatedly sell to minors

Strong local tobacco retail licensing laws will protect our kids!

For more information about the sources of information contained in this document, contact Alisha Lopez at Valley Community Clinic at: (818)763-1718 Ext. 311.

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