

## **“FLASH ID” PROTOCOL**

### **Description for Parents of Youth**

The purpose of the current study is to identify some of the factors that lead retailers to sell cigarettes to minors and then to intervene to stop them. Specifically, we are interested in the effect that showing picture ID has on selling tobacco, even if that ID shows the child is under the age of 18. This will be done by having 15–17 year-old boys and girls visit a number of retail outlets and attempt to purchase packs of cigarettes.

All children who participate in this protocol must already have a picture ID with their birth date on it. Stores have been chosen randomly.

During the time your child will participate in this study, s/he will visit a number of stores. In each store, your child will go up to the clerk and ask, “Can I have a pack of Marlboros? I have ID,” and then display their photo ID. If the clerk agrees to sell the cigarettes, your child will pay for them and leave. If the clerk refuses to sell the cigarettes, your child will leave. We estimate that it will take approximately 15–30 minutes total to complete each store (including drive time). Depending on how often your child is available and how much he/she is willing to work with us, they may participate for 10–12 hours a week total. This time will be spread out over weekday afternoons, weekends, or early evenings (anywhere between 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.). Your child will never visit stores after dark. Your child will be paid \$3–\$5 for each store s/he visits, regardless of whether or not he/she is sold cigarettes.

An adult will accompany children at all times to:

- Ensure the child’s safety
- Ensure that the experimental protocol is being adhered to
- Perform record-keeping activities
- Confiscate all purchased tobacco products for disposal by project staff

Prior to the start of the study, a complete list of stores and their locations and the specifics of the purchase protocol for each attempt to obtain tobacco will be prepared. Thus the adult accompanying your child will know in advance that your child will be visiting stores in a specific location. The research assistant can inform you in advance of the general area that your child will be visiting if you so desire; however, neither they nor your child can release the actual names of the stores being visited.

Money for purchases will be held by the adult accompanying your child. If the retailer asks the child’s age, the child is instructed to tell the truth. If anyone else talks to the child either when making cigarette purchases or other purchases (e.g., comments on how young they are to be buying cigarettes, on how it is not nice for “girls” to smoke, etc.), the child is instructed to politely ignore them. In any instance, the child is to take note of the ethnic background of the salesclerk, the gender of the clerk, and the presence of other people. If any tobacco products are sold, the child is to keep track of the price paid. The accompanying adult will wait outside the store with the appropriate data sheet, and the child will report the above information immediately after each transaction for the adult to record.

Before visiting stores, your child will participate in a training and education session. The focus of the session is to:

- Explain the study in detail to minors
- Role-play various responses that retailers or children might make

- Explain about the illegality of the task and about how they have special permission to purchase cigarettes only while they are working on this project
- Provide basic anti-tobacco information to the children to discourage them from initiating tobacco use
- Discuss any problems that may arise
- Provide a forum for general discussion and problem-solving

Throughout the project, we ask that you discuss with your child that the purchase of cigarettes by persons under the age of 18 and the purchase of single cigarettes by anyone is illegal and that they are doing this only by special permission in order to stop stores from illegally selling tobacco to children. We also ask that you discuss the special circumstances around us asking your child to participate in this study. In addition, we encourage you to continue to talk with your child about the negative aspects of tobacco use.

I am aware that the purchase of cigarettes by minors and the purchase of single cigarettes by anyone is illegal in the State of California. Although the project has obtained permission from local law enforcement agencies to conduct this study, children will be performing acts that are illegal. Although research assistants will be given a preferred order in which to visit the stores, research assistants understand that your child's safety is of the utmost importance. Thus, if at any time either a research assistant or your child has concerns about safety, feels threatened, or feels there is a potential for harm, research assistants are free to postpone a specified visit to any given store to a time when these concerns are not present. Should this happen, a member of the project staff will be informed. Thus, at all times an adult employed by the project has minute-to-minute control of what your child is doing and can take whatever steps are necessary to ensure your child's safety.

I have read the above and understand the following:

- I am agreeing to allow my child to participate in a comprehensive study of the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors.
- My child will participate as much as is convenient and will visit stores and attempt to purchase tobacco as well as other products.
- An adult will drive my child to the stores involved and will remain outside and available to collect the necessary data.
- My child will participate in a training and education session.
- For her/his participation in this study, my child will be paid \$3–\$5 for each store he/she visits.
- The information my child collects about the legal or illegal behavior of any specific retailer is to be kept confidential and not discussed with anyone outside of the project staff.

I further understand that I can withdraw my consent and cease participation at any time. If I have any questions or problems, I can meet with or call to discuss these with [*name and phone number*].

I have been given a copy of this form to keep for my future reference.

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Signature of Parent (or Guardian)

Date