

STANDARD PROTOCOL - LYING VARIATION

Description for Parents of Youth Confederates

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. 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. These outlets have been chosen randomly from various cities.

During the time your child will be participating in this study, she/he will visit a number of stores and attempt to purchase a pack of cigarettes. We estimate that this will take approximately 30–40 hours, depending on how often your child is available and how much he/she is willing to work with us. This time will be spread out over weekday afternoons or early evenings (anywhere between 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.) and weekends. Your child will never visit stores after dark. Your child will be paid \$3–\$5 for each store that s/he visits.

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 adult can inform you in advance of the general area that your child will be visiting if you so desire; however, neither the adult nor your child can release the actual names of the stores being visited.

When your child enters the store, she/he will ask, "Can I have a pack of Marlboros?" If the retailer proceeds to sell the merchandise without any additional questions, the child is to pay for the purchase and leave. Money for purchases will be held by the adult accompanying your child. If anyone else talks to the child (e.g., comments on how young they are to be buying cigarettes, or how it is not nice for "girls" to smoke, etc.), your child is instructed to politely ignore them. In any instance, your 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, your child is to keep track of the price paid. The accompanying adult will wait outside the store with the appropriate data sheet, and your child will report the above information immediately after each transaction for the adult to record.

One thing we have noticed lately is that sales clerks are using different ways to get around the laws against selling cigarettes to minors. One such way is to just ask the child if he/she is 18. Although the law requires that the clerk have proof of age before making a sale, some stores are just accepting whatever age the child says he/she is, regardless of how old the child actually is. Thus, the issue of children lying about their age has become important in these types of studies. One of the things we hope to do in

this study is to see if lying about age increases the number of cigarettes children are able to buy. Thus, when your child goes into a store, we will ask your child to lie about how old they are. We will only ask your child to lie in certain circumstances. That is, if the clerk asks, "How old are you?," we will ask your child to say, "Old enough." If the clerk asks something like, "Are you 18?," we will ask your child to answer "Yes," regardless of how old your child actually is. At no time will we ask your child to lie about their age on their own or to offer that they are age 18 before the clerk mentions it. We are not trying to entrap clerks, we are only trying to see if a sale will be completed if a child says they are 18 after a clerk asks. We will explain what we are doing to your child in detail before the study, and we will repeatedly emphasize the importance of being truthful at all other times except when they are participating in this study.

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 lie about their age, and ask that you remind your child that lying about their age at other times is not acceptable behavior. 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. Children will also be asked to lie about their age. In addition, although the adults will be given a preferred order in which to visit the stores, these adults understand that your child's safety is of the utmost importance. Thus, if at any time either an adult or your child has concerns about safety, feels threatened, or feels there is a potential for harm, the adult is 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 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 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 per store visited (\$3–\$5 per purchase attempt).
- My child will be asked to lie about his/her age.
- 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.

Signature of Parent (or Guardian)

Date