

STANDARD PROTOCOL

Description for Parents of Minor 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 youth visit selected retail outlets in specific neighborhoods and attempt to purchase packs of cigarettes or other tobacco products. These outlets have been chosen randomly to represent different neighborhoods.

During the time your child will be participating in this study, s/he will visit each store and attempt to purchase a pack of cigarettes (or other tobacco product). We estimate that this will take approximately 6 to 10 hours. This time will be spread out over 3 to 4 weekday afternoons or early evenings (anywhere between 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.). Your child will never be visiting 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 your 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.

When the child enters the store, s/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 the retailer asks for identification or asks the child's age, the child is instructed to tell the truth. If anyone else talks to the child (e.g., comments on how young they are to be buying cigarettes, on 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, the 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.

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 youth 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. 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, youth will be performing acts that are illegal. In addition, although adults will be given a preferred order in which to visit the stores, accompanying 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 working with 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 study of the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors.
- My child will participate for 3–4 days for approximately 2–3 hours each day and will visit stores and attempt to purchase tobacco products.
- An adult will drive my child to the stores 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, my child will be paid \$3–\$5 per store visited (\$3 per purchase attempt).
- 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 *[name and phone number]* to discuss these.

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

Signature of Parent (or Guardian)

Date