

New Tobacco Marketing Tricks Addict

On May 31st, 2013 health care organizations around the world bring attention to World No Tobacco Day. This year's theme is "Ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship". Tobacco advertising bans aim to counteract the misleading information used in marketing campaigns and also strive to prevent youth from being exposed to the lure of tobacco advertising. Sadly, only 6% of the world's populations are protected from exposure to tobacco industry advertising tactics.

In Canada, the [Tobacco Act](#) aims to protect the health of Canadians by regulating tobacco advertising, restricting access to tobacco products and increasing public awareness of the health hazards of using tobacco products. The [Tobacco Products Labelling Regulations](#) require that tobacco product labels include health warning messages covering 75% of the front and back of the packaging of cigarettes and little cigars. Health information messages such as "never quit trying to quit" are required to be included inside the packaging and a Canadian quit line number must also be provided to link smokers with cessation services in their province.

Because most tobacco users begin before the age of 14 it is important to ensure our youth are not exposed to tobacco promotions. The Tobacco Act prohibits tobacco marketing directed at youth but despite this, the tobacco industry remains aggressive in promoting tobacco products to youth in new and clever ways.

Flavoured products and colourful packaging have recently been used to attract youth to tobacco products. Flavoured tobacco comes in almost every imaginable flavour - cherry, strawberry, banana and mint and more. Many youth equate these products to candy, rather than seeing them as harmful and addictive tobacco products. Flavours appeal to kids because they reduce the unpleasant odor and disguise the bad taste of tobacco. Flavoured tobacco products are just as addictive as other non-flavoured products. The tobacco industry is also using flavours in other products such as hookahs and electronic cigarettes to entice children, youth and adults.

The global tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year. Over 600,000 people are non-smokers dying from exposure to second hand smoke. It is projected tobacco will kill more than 8 million people every year by the year 2030. Over 80% of these deaths are preventable.

Tobacco advertising bans can play an important role in preventing people from starting to use tobacco and subsequently reducing others from being exposed to second hand smoke. Let's support and drive national efforts to protect future generations so they can live, work and play in a smoke free world.

For more information on tobacco advertising bans and World No Tobacco Day:

<http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/en/>. For more information on flavoured tobacco: http://www.smoke-free.ca/pdf_1/2009/Flavoured-Jun2.pdf

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