

DVDanger!

Overview

Looking for a quick way to get involved in the movie smoking issue? Educates and empower each time you rent or buy a DVD movie. Acting together, we can show the media companies that their home video market is fighting back to stop smoking in kid-rated movies once and for all!

DVDanger has 2 goals:

Goal #1 | Educate the families in your network about dangerous DVDs with smoking.

Goal #2 | Urge major DVD retailers to take commonsense precautions to protect young people from unlabeled, unsafe DVDs with smoking.

Rationale | DVDs are a major source of revenue for studios—and tobacco exposure for teens. By targeting the DVD retailing channel, we can put more pressure on studios and their parent companies to take effective action, saving lives.

DVDanger is designed to be a low-cost, low-effort way to make kids safe!

Step #1 | Use existing print or e-mail newsletters, or other routine routes to alert your network to the danger of DVDs with smoking.

Step #2 | Personalize and sign a letter from your group's leadership to major DVD retailers.

Optional | Use the DVDanger platform to educate public officials, local retailers, school boards and the media in your community.

7 retailers sell or rent millions of DVDs with smoking from the major studios:

• Michael T. Duke, President, CEO and Director
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, AR 72716

• Gregg W. Steinhafel, President and CEO
Target Corporation
1000 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55403

• Brian J. Dunn, President, CEO and Director
Best Buy Co., Inc.
7601 Penn Ave. South
Richfield, MN 55423-3645

• James W. Keyes, Chairman and CEO
Blockbuster, Inc.
1201 Elm Street
Dallas, TX 75270

• Reed Hastings, Chairman, President and CEO
Netflix, Inc.
100 Winchester Circle
Los Gatos, CA 95032

• Sherif J. Mityas, President and CEO
Movie Gallery, Inc.
9275 SW Peyton Lane
Wilsonville, OR 97070

• J. Mitchell Lowe, President
Redbox Automated Retail, LLC
1 Tower Lane, Suite 1200
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Your DVDanger campaign kit includes:

- Fact Sheet, with citations
- 2009 Movie List
- Sample letter directed at retailers
- Local press release—just add quotes!
- Newsletter print ads

More information: www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu



Add your group's info and Web link!

DVD **Danger!** Fact Sheet

Most U.S. movies feature tobacco. From 1999-2006, 36% of G/PG movies, 75% of PG-13 movies and 88% of R-rated movies included smoking imagery.¹

Exposure to on-screen tobacco imagery is a major recruiter of new young smokers. Research in the U.S., Germany, Mexico and New Zealand shows that, after controlling for all other factors, the more smoking kids see on screen, the more likely they are to smoke.²

Movie smoking recruits about 390,000 new teen smokers each year, almost enough to replace all adult U.S. smokers who die from tobacco-related diseases each year.³

In 2008, youth-rated PG-13 movies delivered 65% of all tobacco impressions to theater audiences of all ages.⁴

Kids 6-11 were exposed to 2.4 billion tobacco impressions while teens 12-17 were exposed to 8.8 billion tobacco impressions between 1999 and 2006—in theaters alone.⁵

Feature films are viewed seven times more often on DVD than they are in theaters. This suggests that children and teens may be exposed to about 11 billion tobacco impressions *every year* in theaters and on DVD, combined—and that 80-90% of those tobacco impressions are delivered by DVDs.⁶

DVDs with smoking carry no consumer warning. Only ten out of the 84 kid-rated, top box office movies with smoking released between May 2007 and May 2009 mention tobacco in ratings “fine print.” No film’s rating has been raised because of tobacco content. No rating warns parents that tobacco content is a hazard to kids.⁷

References:

- (1) Polansky JR, Glantz SA. (2007) First-Run Smoking Presentations in U.S. Movies 1999-2006. University of California Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education.
- (2) *New Zealand:* Laugesen M, Scragg R, Wellman RJ, DiFranza JR. (2007) R-rated film viewing and adolescent smoking. *Preventive Medicine* doi:10.1016/j.pmed.2007.07.025. *Germany:* Hanewinkel R, Sargent JD. Exposure to smoking in popular contemporary movies and youth smoking in Germany. *Am J Prev Med* 2007 June; 32(6): 466-473. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2007.02.025. *U.S.:* Charlesworth A, Glantz SA. (2006) Smoking in the movies increases adolescent smoking: A review. *Pediatrics* 116 (6):1516-1528.
- (3) Glantz SA. (2003) Smoking in movies: A major problem and a real solution. *The Lancet* 362(9380):281-285.

State attorneys general began asking the film industry to include strong anti-tobacco spots on DVDs with smoking in 2005. The Weinstein Company began including spots on its DVDs in early 2007. The six major studios (Disney, Fox, Paramount, Sony, Warner Bros., Universal) agreed to include spots on kid-rated DVDs with smoking in 2008.

Leading health groups have asked the largest retailers of DVDs—Best Buy, Blockbuster, Netflix, Target and Wal-Mart—to take three immediate, precautionary steps:

#1 | Apply legible tobacco warning stickers to packages of G, PG and PG-13 DVDs with smoking now in retailer stocks.

#2 | As standard practice, place tobacco content warning posters at checkout; prominently display a regularly updated list of smokefree movies released to video by U.S. studios in the prior 24 months; and include tobacco content of videos with tobacco imagery in print and online product descriptions.

#3 | Retailers should require distributors (the studios’ “home entertainment” divisions) to include legible tobacco warnings on DVD packaging and promotional material, as well as strong anti-smoking PSAs.

More information: www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu

- (4) Titus K, Polansky JR, Glantz SA. (2009) Smoking presentation trends in US movies 1991-2008. University of California, San Francisco Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education.
- (5) Polansky & Glantz (2007).
- (6) US Census Bureau. Statistical abstract of the United States: 2007. Table 1110: Media usage and consumer spending: 1999 to 2009. (Based on Veronis Suhler Stevenson. Communications industry forecast & report, annual. New York.) Adults 18+ surveyed. “Box office” (movies in theaters) vs. “home video” (prerecorded only) projected in 2007, 2008. www.census.gov/compendia/statab/tables/07s1110.xls. Accessed on 30 June 2007.
- (7) Polansky JR, Titus K, Glantz S. (2009) Two years later: Are MPAA’s tobacco labels protecting movie audiences? University of California, San Francisco Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education.



Release

You can — and should — customize this press release. Use local details, new quotes, even cite your state's youth smoking prevalence data. Use facts from the DVDanger "Fact Sheet" to ensure accuracy.

Popular kid-rated DVDs conceal tobacco hazard

DATELINE — Local parents and pediatricians are sounding the alarm on recent kid-rated DVDs with smoking, the vast majority rented and sold with no advance warning to consumers.

Experts estimate that exposure to on-screen smoking could recruit up to 390,000 new teen smokers yearly, of whom 120,000 will eventually die from tobacco-caused diseases. Yet only a handful of recent films disclose their tobacco content in film-ratings, leaving consumers in the dark about the hazard they represent.

"Since May 2007, only ten out of eighty-four top box office, kid-rated movies with smoking has noted the film's smoking content in its rating box," said [LOCAL SPOKESPERSON #1]. "None warns parents that on-screen smoking recruits kids to smoke."

More than two years ago, the film industry group that applies ratings to films announced it was taking smoking into account. But researchers note that no film has been up-rated because of smoking since then and that 88 percent of popular kid-rated films with smoking, rated since the announcement, failed to mention their smoking in rating descriptors.

"The research shows that movies with tobacco may be the single biggest media threat to our kids," said [LOCAL SPOKESPERSON #2]. "The smoking movies at your local video store will be responsible for more preventable deaths than drunk driving, violent crime, drug use and HIV/AIDS combined."

Exposure to on-screen smoking accounts for about half of all new teen smokers recruited each year, experts say. Because households spend seven times as many hours watching movies on DVD as in theaters, according to US census data, DVDs may account for the bulk of the on-screen tobacco influence observed in large-scale studies.

[LOCAL GROUP(S)] are joining parents and health experts across the country to ask the nation's largest DVD retailers to immediately start labeling DVDs with smoking in their online catalogs and on shelves, and to require film studios to include warnings on packaging.

If DVDs with smoking were toys, they would have been recalled by now," "said [LOCAL SPOKESPERSON]. "Labeling toxic content is just common sense. Like lead paint, it also makes sense just to keep the poison out of the product in the first place."

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More information: www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu

DVD Danger! Letter Text

Please preserve the three bulleted "asks." But otherwise, make this letter your own, with local details. Send on your group letterhead to each of the DVD retailer executives listed on the Overview page.

Dear _____:

As you are aware, the U.S. health community is united in seeking an urgent solution to a major public health problem: tobacco imagery on screen that recruits up to half of all new teen smokers in our country each year.

It is unconscionable that the film distributors have so far failed to respond in any substantive way to pleas from parents, appeals from students, petitions from the nation's largest medical and health organizations, and letters from state attorneys general. Each month the film industry delays adopting an "R" rating for future smoking will cost the nation 5,000 additional tobacco deaths.

Because your company is a leading retailer of DVDs, you can easily inform parents about the danger of on-screen tobacco imagery, protect young audiences, and encourage needed change in film distribution. Congruent with the evidence-based policies that leading health authorities advocate for film production and distribution companies, we respectfully ask that you:

- As a provisional measure, immediately apply legible tobacco warning stickers to packages of G, PG and PG-13 DVDs with smoking now in your company stocks.
- As standard practice, place tobacco content warning posters at checkout; prominently display a regularly updated list of *smokefree* movies released to video by U.S. studios in the prior 24 months; and include the tobacco content of videos with tobacco imagery in print and online product descriptions.
- As soon as practical, stipulate that distributors (a) include legible tobacco warnings on future DVD packaging and promotional material, and (b) to include non-discretionary, effective, anti-tobacco spots on new DVD releases with tobacco imagery, regardless of rating.

None of these measures intrude on the actual content of any film, nor do they pull any product off the shelf. We understand that you will want to work from authoritative lists to identify motion picture titles with smoking; develop feasible and effective design and wording for warnings and other customer communications; and minimize logistical issues. National organizations stand ready to assist you.

As members of a community in which you do business, we look forward to your company taking the lead on this serious health challenge. You are in a unique position to protect an entire generation from the nation's #1 killer. Please let us know how you plan to proceed.

Sincerely,

More information: www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu

[Consumer Advisory]



IF THEY WERE TOYS, DVDs WITH SMOKING WOULD HAVE BEEN RECALLED BY NOW.



Movies are a major recruiter of new young smokers. Every year, nearly a billion tobacco impressions bombard young people in movie theaters alone.

DVDs may deliver *seven times more*.

Yet no DVD label warns that smoking in movies hooks 390,000 kids a year.

In fact, ratings on 88% of recent kid-rated movies with tobacco disclose

no toxic tobacco content at all.

The risk to children and teens from exposure to on-screen smoking is so great that health authorities want smoking out of G, PG and PG-13 movies.

Until the film industry adopts that reasonable policy, parents must protect their kids by demanding—at the very least—*advance warning* of toxic tobacco content in kid-rated DVDs.

For a list of DVDs to *watch out for*, and more ways to protect kids, go to the Web site below.

DVDanger!

www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/actnow

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Quarter page
3-1/2 x 5

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Half page
7 x 5

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