



American Public Health Association

Working for a Healthier World

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Stanton Glantz, Ph.D.
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Dear Dr. Glantz:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association (APHA), I write today to endorse the four principles of the *Smokefree Movies Project*. APHA is the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association works to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats.

APHA recognizes that smoking in the movies has been rapidly increasing since the 1990's, particularly in youth-rated films, and continues to be a causal fact for children who begin using tobacco according to a growing body of research including the 2006 Surgeon General's Report, "The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke" and recommendations from the recent Institute of Medicine report, "*Ending the Tobacco Problem: A Blueprint for the Nation.*"

We endorse the four principles as follows:

1. **Rate New Smoking Movies R**

Any film that shows or implies tobacco should be rated R. The only exceptions should be when the presentation of tobacco clearly and unambiguously reflects the dangers and consequences of tobacco use or is to represent smoking of a real historical figure.

2. **Certify No Pay-Offs**

The producers should post a certificate in the credits at the end of the movie declaring that nobody on the production received anything of value (cash money, free cigarettes or other gifts, free publicity, interest-free loans or anything else) from anyone in exchange for using or displaying tobacco.

3. **Require Strong Anti-Smoking Ads**

Studios and theaters should require a genuinely strong anti-smoking ad (not one produced by a tobacco company) to run before any film with any tobacco presence, regardless of its MPAA rating.

4. Stop Identifying Tobacco Brands

There should be no tobacco brand identification nor the presence of tobacco brand imagery (such as billboards) in the background of any movie scene.

The evidence is clear and the science is sound – smoking in movies leads to increased acceptability of smoking and smoking behavior, particularly among youth. The increased risk for smoking initiation as a result of exposure to smoking in the movies can be reduced by antismoking advertisements and parental restriction of which movies their children watch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "B".

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (Emeritus)
Executive Director