Smoking in movies

THE NUMBERS

Since MPAA-member studios learned that smoking on screen recruits kids to smoke, in December 2003, they have released more than 360 films rated G, PG and PG-13 featuring nearly 9,300 tobacco incidents. Overall, the major studios have delivered 175 billion tobacco impressions to U.S. theater audiences alone. Exposure to the major studios’ kid-rated movies with smoking caused 2.5 million American adolescents to become addicted smokers over the past decade, of whom 800,000 will die from tobacco-induced lung and other cancers, stroke, heart attacks and emphysema.

THE STUDIOS

The CDC reports that R-rating future movies with smoking will save a million kids’ lives. So far, the studios refuse. Given Hollywood’s long, documented history of tobacco deals, the movies’ proven power to sell smoking, and the legal, financial and reputational risks the studios appear ready to take for Big Tobacco’s sake, it’s time to wonder which business the studios are really in. Films recruit nearly 40 percent of all new young smokers. Only the R-rating can set a safe, industry-wide standard.

WHO’S ACCOUNTABLE

Data for top-grossing G/PG/PG-13 movies, 2004-2014. Recruits based on studio’s share of all youth-rated, in-theater impressions. Data updated weekly at smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/whos-accountable. For R-rating details, visit smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/policy-solutions.

One little letter R will save a million lives.

Smoking in movies kills in real life. Smokefree Movie policies—the R-rating, anti-tobacco spots, certification of no payoffs, and an end to brand display—are endorsed by the World Health Organization, American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Americans for Nonsmokers’ Rights, American Public Health Association, Breathe California, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Legacy, Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Health, New York State Dept. of Health, New York State PTA, and many others. This ad is sponsored by Smokefree Movies, UCSF School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA 94143-1394.

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