WHY HAS SMOKING IN KID-RATED MOVIES DOUBLED SINCE 2010?

You don’t have to work for a tobacco company to serve the tobacco industry.

In 2012, the Surgeon General of the United States concluded that exposure to smoking in movies causes kids to become smokers.

And, as the Surgeon General also reported, US movie and tobacco companies have a long, documented history of collaborating.

This history of collaboration—and the global scientific consensus that exposure to on-screen smoking causes massive harm—sets tobacco apart from other film content already addressed in the MPAA’s ratings.

Big media companies are pushing MORE smoking at young audiences.

Are media companies facing the facts and protecting kids? Among the latest findings on 2012 films just reported by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)* are:

- 100% Increase in tobacco incidents in kid-rated films since 2010
- 56% Tobacco impressions delivered by youth-rated films, 2012

The table shows that most studios added more smoking in 2012. It also shows that the internal policies adopted by some studios to “discourage” tobacco imagery in kid-rated films simply aren’t reliable. For example, from 2006 to 2010, Time Warner reduced its kid-rated smoking by 97%. But in 2012, smoking in its PG-13 films more than tripled—putting Time Warner on top of the smoking charts again.

Big Tobacco lost a federal racketeering case for fraud and marketing to kids. Who’s next?

Tobacco companies have paid millions of dollars to Hollywood for one simple reason: movies sell smoking. The science confirms it: harm to today’s 12-17 year olds is real. Their future health costs alone are projected at $18 billion.

Major movie studios KNOWINGLY harm kids, say 38 state attorneys general.

There’s no PR fix for the film industry’s tobacco problem. It needs to get serious. State and federal health authorities agree. Through the UN’s World Health Organization, there’s also global consensus about what steps to take:

1) Give future movies with tobacco an adult rating (“R” in the US), except depictions of actual people who actually smoked (as in biographical dramas or documentaries) or of the real health consequences of tobacco use.

21) Require credited producers to certify there were no payoffs for tobacco imagery.

31) Show a strong anti-tobacco spot before any production with tobacco imagery, in all media channels, regardless of rating.

41) Keep tobacco branding out of all future film productions.

51) Make future productions with tobacco imagery ineligible for public subsidy.

You decide.