



Glamorizing Addiction: The Problem with Smoking in Movies

Tobacco companies spend millions on marketing and advertising. The current trend is to put tobacco imagery into movies, TV, and other media to promote tobacco use and glamorize addiction. Tobacco control organizations have recognized this, and have been advocating for the elimination of tobacco from movies, TV, and other media images that may be seen by children.



Why should movies be smoke free?

Children are impressionable, and often imitate what they see. Smoking in the movies accounts for 37% of all smoking initiation. The 2014 Surgeon General's Report

(https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/50th-anniversary/) found that actions that would eliminate the depiction of tobacco use in movies, which are produced and rated as appropriate for children and adolescents, could have a significant effect on preventing youth from becoming tobacco users.

So, why is smoking still in movies?

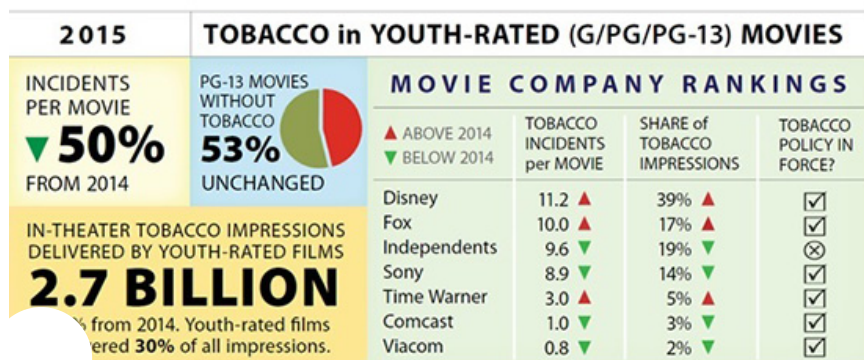
Many movies contain tobacco imagery, even though it may not add anything to the movie itself. This is due to the influence and funding from tobacco companies.

Fast facts:

- In 2016, 26% of all youth-rated movies (G, PG, PG-13) contained tobacco impressions.
- There were 809 tobacco incidents (single use or implied use of a tobacco product, usually smoking) in top-grossing PG-13 movies in 2016. This is an increase of 43% since 2010.
- According to CDC data (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6626a1.htm>), the rate of tobacco incidents in youth-rated movies declined steadily from 2005-2010, but that decline stopped in 2010.

What does the research show?

There is a lot of research that shows the link between smoking in TV or movies and in children, which has caused a lot of action to combat this issue. *See the fact sheet, Smoke-free Movies: Top Numbers* (/SiteCollectionDocuments/SFMhandout.pdf), for more information.



What can be done?

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The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and several collaborating organizations encourage an R rating (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Movie-Ratings-and-What-They-Mean.aspx) for movies containing tobacco imagery—unless it depicts the consequences of tobacco use or depicts historically accurate tobacco use—and that studios certify in the movie credits that no one associated with the film received any sort of compensation for including tobacco imagery in the production.

The World Health Organization (WHO) released a report (http://www.who.int/tobacco/smoke_free_movies/en/) calling for enforceable policies to restrict smoking in movies. Other ways to help combat this problem:

- To stop using brand identifiers in films that include tobacco imagery (i.e., a clearly-marked cigarette package)
- To not offer public subsidies for movies featuring tobacco imagery
- To include strong antitobacco ads that run prior to the start of a film that includes tobacco imagery

Well, parents can't do anything about this... right?

WRONG. Parents can have a big impact! The Smoke Free Movies (<http://smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/take-action/community>) project, based out of the University of California at San Francisco, offers ideas on how to effectively take action—starting at home (<http://smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/take-action/community>).

Additional Information & Resources:

- Smoking in the Media – The Influence on Children (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Smoking-and-the-Media.aspx)
- Movie Ratings and What They Mean (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Movie-Ratings-and-What-They-Mean.aspx)
- Played: Smoking and Video Games (http://www2.aap.org/richmondcenter/pdfs/Played_TruthInitiative.pdf) (Truth Initiative)
- Smoke Free Movies (<http://smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/>) (University of California San Francisco)
- Smoking in the Movies (http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/movies/index.htm) (CDC.gov)

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