

## Saying "No:" Key to Preventing the Sale of Tobacco

By Cheryl Dudley

### Facts and Stats

#### "B-" Average for August

According to Idaho Code 39-5701 the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare must inspect each business that sells tobacco to ensure that it does not sell tobacco to minors. For August 2006:

- ❖ 118 Vendors were inspected.\*
- ❖ 23 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of August 2006 was 81%.

\*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

### Prevent the Sale

#### Go to:

[www.preventthesale.com/idaho](http://www.preventthesale.com/idaho)

- Learn about the law
- Take the tobacco quiz
- See what the ID's look like
- Play the Game "Would You Sell to This Person?"

### \$28 to \$One

Tobacco companies spend approximately \$42 million a day to market their products—a staggering \$15.4 billion annually. At the same time, states are spending a combined amount of \$551 million annually for tobacco prevention.

The bottom line is that the tobacco companies are spending \$28 to market tobacco for every \$1 that states are spending for prevention. This growing gap is putting at risk the nation's progress in reducing smoking in youth.

"The evidence that tobacco prevention programs save lives and money is apparent; what is lacking is the political will to fund these programs," said John L. Kirkwood, President and CEO of the American Lung Association. "Policymakers throughout the country should stop turning a blind eye to the health and economic costs of tobacco use and addiction and join the few states in making a commitment to tobacco prevention programs."

The multi-state tobacco settlement, signed by 46 states and the major tobacco companies on November 23, 1998, requires the tobacco companies to make annual payments to the states as reimbursements for health care costs related to tobacco use. Payments under the settlements were estimated to total \$246 billion over the first 25 years

Tobacco use is the nation's leading preventable cause of death, killing more than 400,000 people and costing more than \$180 billion in health care bills and lost productivity each year.

Nearly 90 percent of all smokers start at or before age 18. Every day in the U.S., another 1,500 kids become regular smokers, one-third of whom will die prematurely as a result.

According to the CDC, while we have made progress in reducing youth smoking in recent years, 21.7 percent of high school students still smoke.

Although we have made major progress in Idaho in reducing the number of minors who start smoking, the battle continues. With reductions in funding for tobacco prevention programs, the importance of vendors preventing the sale of tobacco to minors becomes even more vital.

### The Power of Saying, "No" By Linda D Tillman, PhD

"No" is such a simple word ... only two letters. Yet saying "No" out loud is harder for most people than saying, "I'll be glad to..." (eleven letters) or "When do you need me to..." (seventeen letters)

Most of us said, "No!" quite well when we were two. After all, it's the two-year-old's job to say "No." Our parents expect us to say "No." And it is because of "No" that the year is known as the Terrible Twos.

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## Saying "No" continued ...

Many of us grow up to be people pleasers. The word "No" drops out of our vocabulary, and we substitute lots of ways to be agreeable and keep the other person happy. Saying "No" to authority figures is not expected, but underneath it all we believe that saying "No" can cost us a lot in our adult life.

The unassertive "No" is accompanied by weak excuses and rationalizations. If you lack confidence when you say "No" you may think that you need to support your "No" with lots of reasons to convince the other person that you mean it.

You might even make up an excuse to support your "No." This can backfire if the lie is exposed and again, you will sound ineffective because you need to have an excuse to support your stand.

The assertive "No" is simple and direct. "No, I won't be able to help with that." If you would like to offer an explanation, make it short and simple. "No, I won't be able to help with that," or "No, I can't sell you tobacco products."

As Tobacco Vendors, it's good to have practiced saying "No" in other areas of life so that saying "No" to a minor seeking tobacco becomes easy and routine.

Here are some strategies to make the assertive "No" easier:

1. Use your nonverbal assertiveness to underline the "No." Make sure that your voice is firm and direct. Look into the person's eyes as you say, "No." Shake your head no as you say, "No."

2. Remember that "No," is an honorable response. If you decide that "No," is the answer that you prefer to give, then it is authentic and honest for you to say, "No."

3. If you say, "Yes," when you want to say, "No," you will feel resentful throughout whatever you agreed to do. This costs you energy and discomfort, and is not necessary if you just say, "No" when you need to.

4. Start your sentence with the word, "No." It's easier to keep the commitment to say, "No," if it's the first word out of your mouth.

Let's look at some daily ways you can practice saying, "No," so that it comes more naturally to you. Paulette Dale in her book, *Did You Say Something, Susan?* suggests some simple ways to practice saying "No." Here are some of her suggestions:

Say "No,"

- when you return something to the store;
- to the telemarketer who disturbs your dinner;
- to the perfume demonstrator at the department store;
- to your friend's pets when they jump on you;
- to the minor who asks to buy tobacco from you

Make it a project to say, "No," to something every day. When you do, notice it and give yourself credit for practicing saying such an important two-letter word.

([www.selfgrowth.com/articles/tillman6.html](http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/tillman6.html))

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