



**COUNTER
TOBACCO**

ADVOCATE AGAINST YOUTH TARGETING

*Do you know what tobacco products and candy
have in common?*

Both are marketed to youth.

***PLAY THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES
to teach kids how tobacco marketing can manipulate
youth into using harmful tobacco products***



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This activity is best suited for

Age Group: 6th - 8th grade

Number of Participants: 2-6 per game

Preparation Time: 1-2 weeks

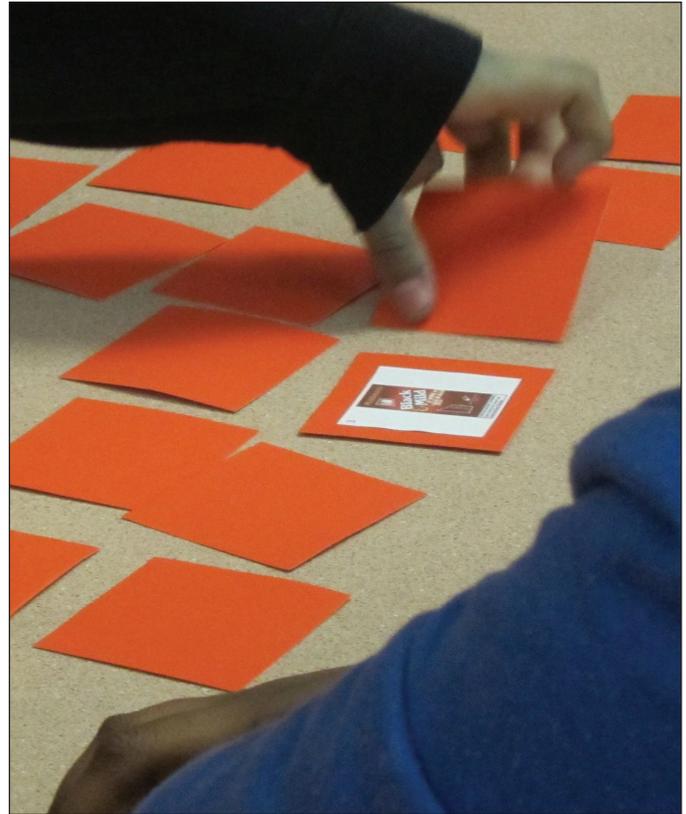
Activity Duration: 1.5-2 hours

Materials: Printed activity materials, poster board, colored pencils/pens/markers, stickers/push pins/glue/tape for visual display

Cost: \$0-\$20

Best suited for: Indoor educational setting (school or youth group)

**This guide is intended for youth group leaders.*



Background: Why is this activity important?

Before starting the activity, be sure to discuss with your group the dangers of tobacco use and the effects of the tobacco industry's presence in the retail environment. Use the following as a guide. Refer to CounterTobacco.org for additional interactive materials to help set the stage of the problem.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States because it may lead to cancer and heart disease. Smoking causes more than 443,000 early deaths per year, amounting to 5.5 million years of potential life lost.^{1,2} Point of sale, or tobacco marketing at retail locations, has been a primary venue for tobacco industry advertising and promotions. Exposure to point of sale advertising and promotions prompts smoking initiation, encourages tobacco use, and undermines quit attempts.^{3,4} Youth are three times more sensitive than adults to tobacco advertising.⁵ Tobacco marketing is also designed to target youth by using imagery that appeals to young children and adolescents.⁶ Specifically, tobacco products are packaged to look similar to products that appeal to youth, such as candy; and products and advertisements are placed where they are highly visible to youth.^{4,6-7} These tactics work: each day, almost 4,000 youth in the United States try their first cigarette and an additional 1,000 youth under age 18 become new, daily smokers.⁸ The purpose of this activity is to teach youth the marketing strategies tobacco companies use to appeal to youth, and how these strategies influence kids to start smoking and take up this dangerous addiction.

What will my youth group be doing during the activity?

Participants will play two indoor games designed to teach them different strategies the tobacco industry uses to target youth and the damaging effects of these strategies. Each game culminates in the production of a visual display that your youth group can use to advocate for stricter tobacco marketing policies using the methods outlined in the Media Advocacy Kit included in this activity guide.

1-2 Weeks Before Event

- Gather the materials for each game and the visual displays. You will need the printed activity materials, poster board, colored pencils/pens/markers, and stickers/push pins/glue/tape. Follow along with the instructions in the following pages to set up each activity.
- Contact local newspapers and news stations to tell them you will be organizing this activity. Invite them to cover your event. (Refer to specific strategies outlined in the Media Advocacy Kit included in this activity.)

Day of Event

- Introduce the activity by discussing the harmful consequences of smoking and tobacco use, the effects of tobacco marketing and advertising in the retail environment, and how tobacco marketing and advertising affects youth. Use the background information on page 1 as a guide.
- Play each game with your group following the instructions on pages 3 and 6.
- Discuss what you learned. Here are some possible discussion questions: What did you learn today? How could these products affect youth? What do you think should be done?
- Use each game to create a visual display illustrating the ways tobacco marketing and advertising target youth. The included examples on pages 3 and 6 may give you ideas of what the display can look like, but your group can use anything you want to create the display. Be creative! To get the group started, instruct your group to create a poster to show their parents or teachers what they learned during the activity.

1-2 Weeks After the Event

- Share your findings with local school boards and policy makers. Use strategies outlined in the Media Advocacy Kit in this activity guide to get started.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if I have more than six youth in my group?

Each game is best suited for two to six youth. Larger groups should be divided into subgroups to complete each game, however, the subgroups may come back together as a larger group to discuss what they learned.

Q: How long will it take to play each game?

Total time may vary, but each game and discussion session should last around 15 minutes and the visual display and debrief discussion should take approximately one hour.

Q: Do I need to play both games?

No, you can choose the game you want to play or the games may be played on different occasions. Together the games teach youth the different ways the tobacco industry targets youth and provide a comprehensive view of the problem.

Q: Do I need to play the games in order?

No, the games can be played in whatever order you choose.

Q: Should I read from the guide to facilitate the discussions?

You can choose to read from the guide or facilitate your own discussion to teach the group the marketing strategies tobacco companies use to appeal to youth and how these strategies influence youth to start smoking.

Q: Do I need access to a color printer for this activity?

Yes, access to a color printer is required for this activity. Three pages of materials for each game will need to be printed in color.

Q: Do we need to have a digital camera(s) and camcorder for this activity?

No, digital or disposable cameras or smartphones with cameras are optional for the activity. However, you may wish to use a camera or camcorder to create a video documenting your activity.

Q: Where can I find more information about point of sale marketing and advertising?

CounterTobacco.org has a lot of great resources to learn more about tobacco marketing and policy solutions.

Ready to start playing? Follow the instructions below to play Memory Match.

What is Memory Match?

Memory Match is designed to teach youth how the tobacco industry packages products to look similar to other products that appeal to youth, such as candy. After playing the game, have a discussion with the group to make sure the youth understand why the tobacco industry is packaging products this way and what the consequences are for their age group.

The following should be discussed with the group: Tobacco marketing is designed to target youth by using imagery that appeals to youth and adolescents. This advertising results in misconceptions about the harmfulness of the products, affects youth's recognition of particular brands, develops positive attitudes about smoking, creates intentions to smoke, and increases smoking behavior.

Use the following questions to facilitate the discussion:

- Why does the tobacco industry package their products to look like candy?
- How do you think youth react when they see this packaging in a store?
- What do you think should be done about this packaging?

Set up Memory Match

Print the pairs of tobacco and candy products on the following pages in color. Cut around each image and paste it to heavy weight paper (such as index cards or construction paper so that you cannot see the image through the back of the paper).

Play Memory Match

1. Show the youth the pairs of cards to make sure they recognize each pair. (Each pair is numbered.) Describe what is in the images: Cigarettes, flavored little cigars, and other tobacco products, such as chewing tobacco and dissolvable tobacco strips and pellets (orbs), that look similar to familiar candy products. Be sure the youth understand that these are all harmful tobacco products that can result in early death.
2. Shuffle the cards and place them face down on a hard surface.
3. Randomly select one participant to go first.
4. Instruct the participant to turn over two cards of his/her choice. If they are a pair, he/she can keep the cards and repeats his/her turn. If they are not a pair, face the cards down. The turn moves to the player sitting clockwise to the participant.
5. Repeat Step 4 until all pairs are matched.
6. Remind the group that there are no winners or losers; the aim of the game is to learn how the tobacco industry targets youth and discuss the consequences of this product packaging.

Build the Visual Display

Instruct the group to build a visual display to show their parents and/or teachers what they learned while playing the game.

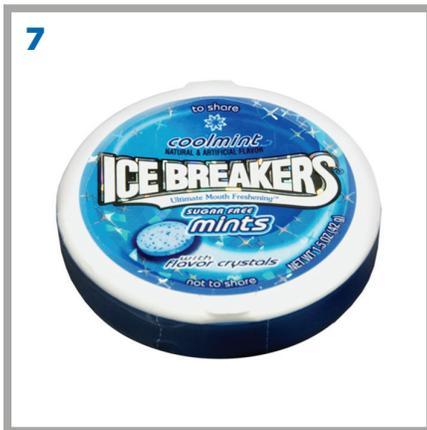
For example, place each pair of tobacco and candy products on a poster board or medium of your choice. Decorate the board however you or the group chooses. The visual display will illustrate the abundance of ways the tobacco industry packages products to appeal to youth. A sample visual display is shown to the right.



GAME 1: MEMORY MATCH



GAME 1: MEMORY MATCH



Ready to start playing? Follow the instructions below to play Spot the Strategy.

What is Spot the Strategy?

Spot the Strategy is designed to help youth recognize and think critically about how and where retailers place tobacco products in their stores. After playing the game, have a discussion with the group about how tobacco products and advertisements are designed to target youth by being placed where they are highly visible and by associating tobacco with youth centric products such as candy. Be sure the youth understand that this practice manipulates youth into falsely thinking tobacco is a fun and harmless product, which in turn leads to tobacco initiation and use.

Use the following questions to facilitate the discussion:

- Why is product placement important?
- Where are the prime locations within a retail store to place a product?
- What are alternative places tobacco products could be stored within a store to reduce their harmful effects on youth?

Set up Spot the Strategy

Print the activity sheet on page 7 in color for each student and provide each student with a pen or pencil.

Play Spot the Strategy

1. Provide each student with the activity sheet.
2. Have the group read each strategy out loud to make sure everyone understands the different strategies. Explain to the group that these are some of the strategies the tobacco industry uses to target youth and to encourage young people to start smoking and use their products.
3. Ask the group to match each marketing strategy with its corresponding image(s): Draw a line from the strategy to an image. Be sure to tell the youth that some images may have more than one corresponding strategy. Youth can work alone, in pairs, or as a group.
4. Provide the correct answers.
5. Discuss the implications of each marketing tactic.

Correct Answers

1. A, C, D
2. B
3. A, C, D
4. A, B
5. E

Build the Visual Display

Instruct the group to build a visual display to show their parents and/or teachers what they learned while playing the game.

For example, place images of tobacco product placement in the retail environment on a poster board or medium of your choice. Decorate the board however you or the group chooses. The visual display will illustrate the various ways retailers place products in their stores to entice youth. A sample visual display is shown to the right.



Strategies

(A) Youth Appeal

Tobacco products or advertisements placed near candy or other products that appeal to youth. Colorful packaging and marketing and cheap prices are often used.

(B) Ad Placement

Tobacco ads placed near ads or products marketed toward youth

(C) Product Placement

Tobacco products placed near candy or other products that appeal to youth

(D) Youth Eye Level

Tobacco products placed at youth eye level

(E) Power Wall

Lining a wall or shelf with tobacco products

1



2



3



4



5



What is media advocacy?

Media advocacy is the strategic use of media to change or advance a social or public policy issue. A media advocacy campaign can exert pressure on policy-makers and can help influence policy change. The three strategies outlined in this Media Advocacy Kit can help you and your youth group gain media attention to advocate for stricter tobacco marketing policies to reduce youth targeted marketing. The following text also provides additional resources on media advocacy techniques: Wallack, L., Woodruff, K., Dorfmann, L., & Diaz, I. (1999). *News for a change: An advocates guide to working with the media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Success Story

Have members of your youth group ever said: “We’re just kids, how can we change anything?” Don’t worry, now you have an answer for them. Youth groups across the country have faced this challenge and made real change in their communities. For example, teens from the group Reality Check examined how the tobacco industry markets to youth at the point of sale, in movies, and on television. They created a visual (the film *Change*, available online at <http://tinyurl.com/ankvu9x>) that they presented to their county board of supervisors to talk about the dangers of tobacco. You can use the strategies described below to create your own success story.

1. Recruit your local newspaper to cover your event

Newspaper coverage can help to raise awareness among your community of youth targeted tobacco marketing. Call your local newspaper and tell them you are organizing an activity to teach youth the tactics the tobacco industry is using to target youth. Invite them to cover your event. A sample email or phone conversation is included below:

“My name is [insert your name] and I am leading a group of enthusiastic young advocates in 6th and 7th grade through an activity that will expose the manipulative tactics the tobacco industry is using to target youth. Did you know youth are three times more sensitive than adults to tobacco advertising? And tobacco marketing is designed specifically to target youth by using imagery that appeals to young children and adolescents. Please join us for this event. You will be able to see how youth react to learning that they are being deceitfully targeted by the tobacco industry. [Be sure to include the details of your event and how you can be reached.]”

2. Write an editorial to your local newspaper

A newspaper editorial or a Letter to the Editor can be a great way to show policy-makers what the key issues are in your community, and raise awareness on the tactics the tobacco industry is using to target youth. A strong editorial tells a personal story and/or relates the story to a current event, explains the problem of youth targeted tobacco marketing, and identifies potential solutions to reduce the impact of marketing. Send the editorial shortly after your event. Write the piece with your youth group and ask them what they think should be included. Be sure to also include quotes and reactions from the youth as they learned of the tactics the tobacco industry uses to target youth. You may also wish to send an image of your visual displays to dramatically illustrate the extent of the problem. A sample editorial is included on the following page.

3. Write a letter to a City Council member

While press coverage is important, a letter to a City Council member can exert pressure on policy-makers and influence policy change. Write a letter with your youth group to one of your City Council members to describe your activity, what the youth learned, how they reacted to learning of the tactics the tobacco industry uses to target youth, and what should be done. Send the letter shortly after your event. Similar to submitting an editorial, consider sending an image of your visual displays to dramatically illustrate the extent of the problem. A sample letter is included on the following page.

What should we advocate for?

Strong editorials and letters to policy-makers identify potential solutions to reduce the impact of marketing. Online resource organizations have explored options for communities and offer a variety of advocacy solutions that might work in your community. The sample editorial and sample letter below refer to product display bans as a potential solution to reduce the impact of marketing, but other solutions might be a better fit for your community. Explore resources available on CounterTobacco.org and ChangeLabSolutions.org to find the best solution for your community.

Sample editorial

Protect our Kids: Stop Youth Targeted Tobacco Marketing

Do you know tobacco marketing is designed to target kids? As a group of 6th and 7th graders, we were angry to learn that the tobacco industry uses marketing strategies to try to get us to use their harmful products. Stricter marketing and advertising policies should be followed to protect us and our peers from Big Tobacco.

Exposure to tobacco marketing and advertising at retail locations has been shown to get people to start smoking, encourage smoking, and make it harder for people who want to quit.^{3,4} Teens are three times more sensitive than adults to tobacco advertising.⁵ Tobacco marketing is also designed to target our age group: tobacco products are packaged to look similar to products that are typically marketed towards kids (such as candy) and products are placed in retail locations where we are likely to see them.^{4,6-7} We created two posters as part of a class project that show how much tobacco marketing targets us. When you look at what we found, we think you will agree how much Big Tobacco is trying to get us to use their harmful products.

These tobacco marketing tactics work: Each day almost 4,000 kids in the United States try their first cigarette and 1,000 more kids under age 18 become new, daily smokers.⁸ Our peers in elementary and middle school are the most vulnerable, since almost 40 percent of smokers try their first cigarette by age 11.⁹

Tobacco product display bans could reduce the harmful effects of tobacco marketing and advertising. Display bans would make smoking less exciting to young people by reducing visibility of tobacco products. *[Insert name of town/city]* needs to follow these recommendations; we want to be able to live, learn, and play in a safe community.

Our parents, families, and teachers work hard to keep us safe every day. Help protect us from Big Tobacco.

Sample letter to a City Council member

Dear Mr./Ms. *[insert Council member name]*,

We are writing to you to tell you how angry we were to learn that the tobacco industry targets youth through marketing and advertising. As a group of 6th and 7th graders at *[specify school]* we completed a project last week that taught us the ways tobacco companies target young people to try to get them to start smoking. For example, tobacco products are packaged to look similar to products that are typically marketed towards kids (such as candy) and products and advertisements are placed where we are likely to see them in retail locations. We created two posters that show you how tobacco companies target us. When you look at what we found, we think you will agree how much Big Tobacco is trying to get us to use their harmful products.

What is being done in *[insert name of town/city]* to protect us from tobacco companies' marketing? Tobacco product display bans could reduce the harmful effects of tobacco marketing and advertising. Display bans would make smoking less exciting to young people by reducing visibility of tobacco products. *[Insert name of town/city]* needs to follow these recommendations; we want to be able to live, learn, and play in a safe community.

Our parents, families, and teachers work hard to keep us safe every day. Help protect us from Big Tobacco.

Sincerely,
[Insert your names]

Refer to CounterTobacco.org for additional resources and to learn more about tobacco marketing and policy solutions.

References

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