

**In Hollywood, payoffs to push nicotine are out in the open again.**

Tobacco payola began in the 1920s. In the 1930s and 1940s, tobacco companies paid millions of dollars to studios' top stars to push cigarette brands. In the 1980s and 1990s, half of movies targeted for cigarette product placement were kid-rated.

In 1998, a legal agreement barred U.S. tobacco companies from placing their brands in kids' movies. Yet on-screen smoking remains so common, the CDC projects that movies will recruit 6.4 million kids to smoke, of whom two million will die from tobacco-caused diseases.


Now, sellers of *electronic* cigarettes are following Big Tobacco's script. They're acquiring movie industry endorsements and paying to put their brands in movies.\* The trouble is, middle and high school kids are among e-cigarettes' biggest customers. They're more likely

than adult users to be non-smokers. And twice as likely as other non-smoking teens to say they intend to take up regular cigarettes.

Besides the Hollywood glitz factor, scores of e-cigarette flavorings such as chocolate, vanilla, cola and "Gummi Bear" may attract kids. But, just like the regular cigarettes that movies have pushed for decades, it's the powerful nicotine in e-cigarettes that sinks the hook. In or out of Hollywood, it requires no talent to sell an addictive drug.

That's why any nicotine product in a film deserves an R-rating: cigars, cigarettes, smokeless or e-cigs. Producers should also certify that no one associated with the film received any consideration for the product's presence. After all, nothing has really changed except the technology. When movies push nicotine, kids start using.

**One little letter  will save a million lives.**



**He'll be addicted to nicotine before he's ever heard of product placement.**

**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 94143-1390.



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\* **Source:** "Coming soon to theaters near you: E-cigarettes." *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 14, 2014. [on.wsj.com/1vRfUcP](http://on.wsj.com/1vRfUcP)