

Funded by the National
Cancer Institute and reported
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peer-reviewed journal of the
American Academy of Pediatrics

NEW SCIENTIFIC REVIEW concludes that R-rating smoking in future movies could avert thousands of early deaths.

PUBLISHED IN *PEDIATRICS*, the first comprehensive review of forty-two studies on films and adolescent smoking estimates that on-screen tobacco imagery will recruit nearly enough new young U.S. smokers this year to replace the 400,000 adults killed by tobacco.

The peer-reviewed paper also projects that policy changes including a voluntary R-rating for future films with smoking “would eventually reduce adolescent exposure (and initiation) by about 60%.”

Assuming that the smokers recruited through this channel progress to addiction at the same rate as other teen smoking initiates, the review concludes that these measures should prevent some 200,000 teens from starting to smoke each year and avert approximately 62,000 premature deaths.

The review finds “strong and consistent empirical evidence” that exposure to smoking images in mainstream films increases

adolescent smoking. Because most smokers are addicted in their teens, reducing teen exposure to on-screen smoking has become a global health imperative.

The American film industry can cut young people’s exposure substantially by keeping tobacco imagery out of future G, PG and PG-13 films. Indeed, public health challenges are rare that can be addressed so quickly and easily with such tremendous public benefit.

THE UNDERSIGNED expect the media corporations engaged in motion picture production and distribution to embrace their social responsibility and immediately adopt science-based policies, including the R-rating of tobacco imagery, to reduce youth exposure and risks to human health.

Given the compelling evidence, any further delay can only mean the *knowing* recruitment of multitudes of new young smokers by this powerful promotional channel.

THIS PUBLIC STATEMENT IS ENDORSED BY:

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The R-rating is also endorsed by the World Health Organization, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Society for Adolescent Medicine, L.A. County Department of Health Services, Americans for Nonsmokers Rights, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and others. This project of the UCSF Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education is supported by the Animatea Fund of the Tides Foundation and other donors. For more information, visit www.smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu or email movies@medicine.ucsf.edu.