

# PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE



## World No Tobacco Day 2024 is dedicated to "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference."

Backed by evidence from the [Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023](#), this year's campaign is a call to counter deceptive industry practices that endanger our youth and the worsening global trend of tobacco industry interference in public health policy. SEATCA joins the World Health Organization (WHO) and other public health advocates worldwide to empower the youth, expose industry tactics, and raise public awareness about the need to protect health policies from tobacco industry interference.

## KEY FACTS

*"Today's teenager is tomorrow's potential regular customer." - Philip Morris, 1981*

### Marketing Tactics

The tobacco industry has a long history of targeting children and youth as a key demographic for tobacco products,<sup>1</sup> seeking to attract new, young customers to replace those who quit or die from tobacco-related diseases. The industry targets youths with aggressive marketing strategies, sponsorship of music and sporting events, product placements, flavored products,<sup>2</sup> attractive packaging,<sup>3</sup> and advertisements placed in locations frequented by young people, such as near schools.<sup>4</sup> These tactics aim to normalize tobacco use and make it appealing to children and teenagers.

### Health Risks for Children

Tobacco use and nicotine exposure pose significant health risks for children, including respiratory problems, reduced lung function, long-term addiction, and cognitive and behavioral impairment.<sup>5</sup> Secondhand smoke is also harmful to children's health, increasing their risk of respiratory infections, ear infections, and asthma attacks.<sup>6</sup>

### Tobacco Industry Interference

The range of tobacco industry tactics to interfere in public health policy include lobbying, political funding, creating alliances and front groups, funding research, engaging in so-called corporate social responsibility activities, litigation, smuggling, public relations, advertising, and marketing.

### Impact on Youth Initiation and Addiction

Research has shown that children and adolescents are susceptible to the influence of tobacco marketing and that exposure to tobacco advertising and promotion increases adolescent smoking behavior.<sup>7,8</sup> The developing adolescent brain is also more susceptible to nicotine and developing lifelong addiction.

### Legal and Policy Framework

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) provides a legal framework for governments to implement measures to protect children from tobacco industry interference. These measures include bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship, raising tobacco tax, implementing smoke-free policies, and raising awareness about nicotine addiction, tobacco harms, and tobacco industry interference.



Fcking Clouds Cola



Strawberry Milk



Elf Bar Strawberry Ice



Tiger Pod

Children at risk. These e-cigarettes or toy pods can easily be purchased in the market.

## Actions to Protect Children

### Empower the youth

Children and adolescents should be empowered to resist tobacco industry manipulation through education and awareness programs about nicotine addiction, the dangers of tobacco use, and how the industry deceptively targets youths. Youths should also be involved in the development and implementation of tobacco control policies.

### Expose industry tactics

To safeguard children from the influence of the tobacco industry, we need to shed light on the industry's deceptive tactics aimed young people. By exposing these tactics, we empower communities to recognize and resist the tactics of the tobacco industry.

### Raise public awareness

Raising awareness about tobacco industry interference is crucial to safeguarding children. By educating communities about the deceptive

tactics used by the industry and the harmful effects of tobacco products, we empower parents, educators, and policymakers to take action and create environments that prioritize children's health and well-being.

### Enforce Tobacco Control Policies

Governments must strengthen and enforce existing tobacco control policies and implement new ones to protect children from tobacco industry interference and accelerate the achievement of a tobacco-free world.

### Advocate for Stronger Regulations

Political leaders, civil society organizations, healthcare professionals, researchers, and advocates should continue to push for strong tobacco control regulations and resist tobacco industry interference in policymaking, including rejecting partnerships with and donations from the industry.

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