

# Youth & Tobacco Fact-Sheet



**F**or more than a decade, African American youth have smoked fewer cigarettes than any other racial and ethnic group.

**I**t's estimated that 947 million packs of cigarettes worth \$1.26 billion are sold illegally to children under 18 every year. These products generate \$221 million in profits for the tobacco industry.

**A**pproximately 60% of smokers begin smoking before the age of 14.

**A**bout 90% of smokers start by the time they are 18. Tobacco companies know that if they don't get kids to smoke while they are young, they most likely never will.

**O**ver 70% of young smokers wish they had never started smoking in the first place.

## Take it from me, stay tobacco-free!

**C**igarette smoking causes more deaths than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, illegal drugs, and fires—combined.

**S**moking can harm a physically active young person.

**A**mong young people, regular smoking is responsible for coughs and an increased frequency of respiratory illnesses.



**T**he World Health Organization has predicted that by the year 2025, 500 million people worldwide will have died from tobacco-related illness. That is like a Titanic sinking every 43 minutes for 27 years.

**T**eens who smoke are 3 times more likely than nonsmokers to use alcohol, 8 times more likely to use marijuana, and 22 times more likely to use cocaine.

**A**n estimated 3,000 kids begin smoking each day.

**C**igarette smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, including arsenic (rat poison), ammonia (toilet cleaner), formaldehyde (used to preserve dead bodies), and hydrogen cyanide (gas chamber poison).

**T**he younger people start smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become addicted to nicotine.

**T**obacco advertising encourages young people to smoke.