

Kick Butts Day

Every Year on March 31



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
PROMOTING CARING COMMUNITIES FOR OUR ISLAND'S HEALTHY FUTURE

We've Been Had: Why We Should Kick Butts

The Tobacco Industry

Truly reformed, or too good to be true?

In their own words:

"I do not believe that nicotine is addictive."

Thomas Sandefur, CEO
Brown & Williamson, 1994

"Nicotine is addictive. We are, then, in the business of selling nicotine—an addictive drug effective in the release of stress."

Internal industry document
Brown & Williamson, 1963

For over 40 years, the tobacco industry knew nicotine was addictive. For over half a century, they were aware of the connection between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. But they never informed the public, and continued to sell their deadly products. Until they were sued in the 1990's, and they were forced to make public their secret internal documents.

Tobacco advertising and promotions are a powerful tool to encourage young people to smoke.

- 91% of 6-year-olds are as familiar with Joe Camel as they are with Mickey Mouse. (JAMA, 1991)
- Over 55% of Guam HS students surveyed in 2002 smoke Marlboro, the most heavily advertised brand.

In 1999, the tobacco industry spent ~\$32 million per day for tobacco advertising in the US alone!

When asked why none of them smoked, one RJ Reynolds executive replied:

"Are you kidding? We don't smoke that s____. We reserve that right for the poor, the young, the black and the stupid."

NYT, 1993

What can we do?

The tobacco industry funds many "philanthropic" projects, such as youth smoking prevention programs. But are their interventions effective?

In the industry's own words: "...our objective is... a 'media event' which in itself promises a lot but produces little."

Franklin Dryden, Vice President
Tobacco Institute, 1979

Consider Philip Morris' "Take Time to Talk to Your Kids" brochure—nowhere does it mention the critical effect of non-smoking parents as role models! Do as I say, not as I do?

Don't be duped! Take action and kick butts!

WHO recommends that countries:

1. Support higher taxes on tobacco. Raising prices is the best way to reduce youth smoking. (World Bank, 1999)
2. Refuse tobacco industry funding and sponsorship.
3. Make all public places, and all settings where children and youth are present, tobacco free.
4. Call for a ban on tobacco advertising and marketing.
5. Assist those who want to quit tobacco use through effective cessation services.