Combating Teen Smoking
Combating Teen Smoking
Research and Policy Strategies

Peter D. Jacobson  •  Paula M. Lantz
Kenneth E. Warner  •  Jeffrey Wasserman
Harold A. Pollack  •  Alexis A. Ahlstrom

Ann Arbor
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS
Dedication

We dedicate this book to Ted Klein, a friend and colleague who sponsored our work. In 1997, two of the authors (Jacobson and Warner) met with Ted to discuss ways to address teen smoking. At that time, Ted was in the process of selling his public relations business and asked for our input on how to allocate some of his money to achieve his tobacco control goals. After considerable discussion, he provided generous support for a study of teen smoking that resulted in this book. Ted died in June 2000, in time to review the final manuscript but before its publication.

Ted was a wonderful colleague throughout this endeavor. He believed very strongly that both government and private citizens have a social responsibility to discourage kids from smoking, and gave actively of his time and resources to achieve that goal. Ted’s vision was to engage scholars, tobacco control advocates, and public health practitioners in fighting tobacco use. To this effort, as to so much else in his life, Ted brought verve, commitment, ideas, intellectual vision, and a sense that the goal was worthy and achievable. He raised questions, pushed the team to think about how policymakers could use the research, and sought out the opinions of numerous scholars and advocates to make sure the project was going in the right direction.

Ted embodied the essence of humanity—the willingness to devote himself to causes in which he believed deeply. He brought insight, creativity, and dedication to everything he did. Nothing seemed to dis-
courage his elemental optimism. Even though he was in constant pain during the last few years, he never complained or sought sympathy. With him, the next idea, the next goal was what he wanted to discuss—not his illness.

Above all, though, he was a warm and wonderful individual. We are deeply indebted to Ted for his support and for his model of how to live a caring and contributing life.
Preface

Smoking is “cool.” Smoking is glamorous. Addicted to tobacco? Not me. I can quit anytime I want. Health hazards of smoking? Not a problem—I’ll quit long before it harms me. And besides, I’ll be so old by then that it won’t matter anyway. For many adolescents, the future extends no further than the end of the school term. How can they be expected to be concerned with health hazards that may be decades away when they cannot even concern themselves with what to do next summer?

This reasoning seems to be the simplest explanation for why adolescents smoke. For policymakers and health educators, adolescents’ thought processes present a rather amorphous and moving target. What constitutes cool? How can tobacco use be made “uncool”? For researchers, saying that smoking is cool expresses a range of different influences that must be described and studied in much finer detail.

By saying that smoking is cool, adolescents are, at a minimum, suggesting that tobacco use takes place in a social context. Both the decision to initiate smoking and the decision to continue smoking are made with reference to other influences, such as peers, parents, and other family members.

Our goal in this book is to explain what we know about adolescent tobacco use and to address ways of reducing it. The book is written for public officials, tobacco control advocates, and individuals in the community who are interested in reducing adolescent tobacco use. Discouraging youth tobacco use requires both public policy changes and community involvement. Government can take the lead by changing public policy to make it more difficult for adolescents to smoke and can provide financial support for community-based programs and interventions. But it is appropriate that groups and individuals from the community take the lead in defining the problems or issues that are most important in their neighborhoods and social environments and in
designing and implementing the interventions that have the best chance for success. Governmental involvement is necessary, but it is important to stimulate a range of community-based responses that can complement and even inform governmental policies.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank several individuals for making this book possible. First and foremost, we are indebted to Ted Klein for funding our work. Not only did Ted provide the financial backing, but his intellectual support and guidance were an integral part of writing the book.

Ted’s vision was to involve a new generation of scholars, advocates, and public health practitioners in fighting tobacco use. As part of that vision, he provided additional funding so that students at the University of Michigan School of Public Health could participate in the research. To distinguish these students from other research assistants, we have called them Ted Klein scholars. So far, there have been two Ted Klein scholars, Alexis Ahlstrom, M.P.H., one of the authors, and Julie Berson, M.P.H. Fulfilling the idea for this funding, Julie has been working in tobacco prevention at the Karmanos Cancer Clinic in Detroit. We very much appreciate the work she did as a Ted Klein scholar.

We would also like to thank the many people who took time to participate in interviews about the future of tobacco control policy. We have benefited greatly from their insight, and many of their suggestions are incorporated into this book. We also thank Lori Pbert, Ph.D., who reviewed the manuscript and offered many useful suggestions; Unto Pallonen, Ph.D., for sharing his insights on computer systems; Deborah Kleinman, for excellent research assistance on chapter 5; Brenda Payne and Sue Corner, who painstakingly prepared the manuscript; and Stanley Siegelman, who provided expert editorial review.

As part of preparing this book, we convened an advisory panel consisting of Ted Klein, Thomas Houston, M.D., Judith Ockene, Ph.D., and Nancy Rigotti, M.D. We appreciate their involvement and their suggestions for how to think about the challenging issues herein.
Contents

Introduction

PART 1: Adolescent Smoking in Context
1. The Policy Context 25
2. Trends in Youth Smoking 49
3. The Social Context of Adolescent Smoking 79

PART 2: Strategies for Adolescent Smoking Prevention and Control
4. Prevention and Cessation 115
5. Tobacco Marketing and the Potential for Antismoking Mass Media Interventions 151
6. Teenage Smoking Behavior and the Cost of Cigarettes 177
7. Regulating Youth Smoking Behavior 195

Conclusion and Recommendations 227

Bibliography 259
Index 293