



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

30 MAY 2020

DepEd MEMORANDUM
No. **055** s. 2020

**DISSEMINATION AND ADOPTION OF THE THEME OF THE WORLD NO TOBACCO
DAY 2020 FOR THE NATIONAL NO SMOKING MONTH**

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Minister, Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, BARMM
Bureau and Service Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) disseminates and adopts the theme of the **World No Tobacco Day 2020** on May 31, 2020, as announced by the World Health Organization (WHO): **Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use**. The Department of Health (DOH), through its Department Memorandum No. 2020-0209, has localized the theme, *Protektahan ang Kabataang Pilipino sa Impluwensya ng Industriya ng Tabako!* and has enjoined all national government agencies and advocacy partners to take part in the celebration.
2. DepEd enjoins all learners, teaching and nonteaching personnel, officials, and other stakeholders, including parents, youth advocates, local community leaders, local government units, and other external partners to **actively take part in the global campaign**.
3. According to the WHO, the global campaign aims to
 - a. **debunk myths and expose manipulation tactics employed by the tobacco and related industries, particularly marketing tactics targeted at youth**, including through the introduction of new and novel products, flavors and other attractive features;
 - b. **equip young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries' intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products**; and
 - c. empower influencers (in pop culture, on social media, at home, or in the classroom) to **protect and defend youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco**.
4. The theme is aligned with DepEd Order No. 48, s. 2016, titled **Policy and Guidelines on Comprehensive Tobacco Control**, which mandates DepEd to conduct education and information activities to raise awareness and warn against the **tactics of the tobacco industry**—tactics to circumvent tobacco control measures, glamorize smoking, and downplay or deny the addictive, harmful nature of tobacco products—through creative endeavors involving the participation of learners.
5. Even before the unprecedented global crisis that the world is facing now, the global tobacco epidemic has always been a public health concern especially for

developing countries like the Philippines. Amid the nationwide COVID-19 crisis, DepEd recognizes that the global campaign theme is very relevant to the nation at large and in particular to DepEd mandate and stakeholders, especially the learners. **Stepping up tobacco control efforts especially in these crucial times is a necessary health measure that will help fight against COVID-19 more efficiently** in the short run, and help protect the health of the people and the future generation in the long run.

6. To further amplify the key messages of the global campaign (copy enclosed), DepEd shall adopt the same theme in the observance of the **National No Smoking Month for the entire month of June, pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No. 183, s. 1993.**

7. All DepEd offices are enjoined to **conceptualize creative activities**, which will **reach and connect with youth to expose the industries' manipulative tactics to create a new generation of tobacco users and empower youth to stand up to Big Tobacco by dispelling its lies and refusing to use its products.** Activities shall be **conceptualized in consideration of the overall national situation related to COVID-19** and therefore, shall utilize **online and other media platforms** that are accessible to learners who will not be in school during the period of the celebration. It is reiterated that **school-based activities for learners in June are not part of the school calendar** per DepEd Order No. 7, s. 2020 School Calendar and Activities for School Year 2020-2021. Such activities may be **spread out through the month of June** focusing on the different key messages developed for the campaign. **Designated Regional and Schools Division Tobacco Control Coordinators**, per DepEd Memorandum No. 147, s. 2018, are expected to provide the necessary technical support.

8. At the national level, the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division (BLSS-SHD) and the Public Affairs Service (PAS) are tasked to lead the celebration, in coordination with other concerned units, and in consultation with DepEd stakeholders—**especially the youth**—and external partners. The BLSS-SHD and Public Affairs Service shall develop the Department's official collaterals for the campaign.

9. All involved are reminded to be extra **cautious in engaging external partners for the celebration**, and ensure—as it shall be done all year—that **no participation**, directly or indirectly, is entertained, in whole or in part, with **those who represent interest or have affiliation in the tobacco industry**, whether personal, financial or other interest, including but not limited to

- a. having an existing ownership or investment in the tobacco industry;
- b. being a member of the Board of Directors, an officer of the corporation, or a partnership in the tobacco industry; and
- c. receiving any contribution from the tobacco industry.

10. For more information, please contact **Mr. Gian Erik Adao**, Education Program Specialist II, Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division, 3rd Floor, Mabini Building, Department of Education Central Office, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City through email at gian.adao@deped.gov.ph or at telephone number (02) 8632-9935.

11. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.


LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES
Secretary



Encl.:

As stated

References:

DepEd Order Nos. (48, s. 2016; 07, s. 2020)

DepEd Memorandum No. (147, s. 2018)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

CELEBRATIONS AND FESTIVALS

EMPLOYEES

LEARNERS

PROGRAMS

SCHOOLS

TEACHERS

SMMA/APA/MPC/JoBM-DM Dissemination and Adoption of the Theme of the World No Tobacco Day 2020
May 20/26, 2020

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

(Source: WHO)

For decades, the tobacco industry has deliberately employed strategic, aggressive and well-resourced tactics to attract youth to tobacco and nicotine products. Internal industry documents reveal in-depth research and calculated approaches designed to attract a new generation of tobacco users, from product design to marketing campaigns aimed at replacing the millions of people who die each year from tobacco-attributable diseases with new consumers – youth.

In response to the tobacco and related industries' systematic, aggressive and sustained tactics to attract a new generation of tobacco users, World No Tobacco Day 2020 will provide a counter-marketing campaign and empower young people to engage in the fight against Big Tobacco.

The World No Tobacco Day 2020 global campaign will serve to:

- Debunk myths and expose manipulation tactics employed by the tobacco and related industries, particularly marketing tactics targeted at youth, including through the introduction of new and novel products, flavours and other attractive features;
- Equip young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries' intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products; and
- Empower influencers (in pop culture, on social media, in the home, or in the classroom) to protect and defend youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco.

How are tobacco and related industries manipulating youth?

- **Use of flavors that are attractive to youth** in tobacco and nicotine products, like cherry, bubble gum and cotton candy, which encourages young people to underestimate the related health risks and to start using them
- **Sleek designs and attractive products**, which can also be easy to carry and are deceptive (e.g. products shaped like a USB stick or candy)
- **Promotion of products as “reduced harm” or “cleaner” alternatives** to conventional cigarettes in the absence of objective science substantiating these claims
- **Celebrity/influencer sponsorships and brand sponsored contests** to promote tobacco and nicotine products (e.g. Instagram influencers)
- **Point-of-sale marketing at vendor outlets frequented by children**, including positioning near sweets, snacks or soda and providing premiums for vendors to ensure their products are displayed near venues frequented by young people (includes providing marketing materials and display cases to retailers)

- **Sale of single stick cigarettes and other tobacco and nicotine products near schools**, which makes it cheap and easy for school children to access tobacco and nicotine products
- **Indirect marketing of tobacco products** in movies, TV shows and online streaming shows
- **Tobacco vending machines** at venues frequented by young people, covered in attractive advertising and pack displays, and undermining regulations on sales to minors
- **Litigation to weaken all kinds of tobacco control regulations** including warning labels, display at point of sale, and regulations that limit access and marketing to children (specifically provisions to ban the sale and advertising of tobacco products near schools)

Key messages

- Tobacco products kill more than 8 million people every year. To maintain revenue, tobacco and related industries are continuously eyeing for new consumers for their products.
- Tobacco companies spent over 8 billion in marketing and advertising and the world lost 8 million lives from causes related to tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Tobacco and related industries' marketing strategies to children and adolescents include:
 - Over 15,000 flavors, most of which attract children and adolescents
 - Social media influencers and marketing
 - Sponsored events and parties
 - School scholarships
 - Sleek, sexy designs
 - Product placement in entertainment media
 - Free product samples
 - Single stick cigarettes make addiction more affordable
 - Selling products at eye level for children
 - Product placement and advertising near schools
- We want to create a generation that is free from tobacco and second-hand smoke and to reduce if not to eliminate death and diseases brought about the use of such product.
- Break free from the manipulation of tobacco and related industries by raising awareness on how to deal with their ploy and to be informed of the harm caused by consuming their products.
- Tobacco use is responsible for 25% of all cancer deaths globally. Use of nicotine and tobacco products increases the risk of cancer, cardiovascular and pulmonary disease.
- Over 1 million people die from second-hand smoke exposure every year.

- Children and adolescents who use e-cigarettes at least double their chance of smoking cigarettes later in life.
- E-cigarette use increases your risk of heart disease and lung disorders.
- Nicotine in e-cigarettes is a highly addictive substance and can damage children's developing brains.
- Smoking shisha is just as harmful as other forms of tobacco use. Its smoke is toxic and contains substances that can cause cancer.
- Smokeless doesn't mean that it's harmless.
- Smoking is expensive, and you pay for it with your looks and your health. It causes bad breath, yellow teeth, wrinkly skin, unhealthy lungs and a poor immune system.
- Chewing tobacco can cause mouth cancer, tooth loss, brown teeth, white patches and gum disease.
- We encourage everyone to become educated, spread awareness and create a tobacco-free generation.

Tobacco and related industry tactics to attract younger generations

There are 1.3 billion tobacco users worldwide. That number would be even larger if tobacco didn't kill half of its users. Every four seconds, tobacco takes another life. Decades of the tobacco industry's deception and devious tactics have hooked generations of users to nicotine and tobacco, driving this global epidemic. The multi-billion-dollar industry recruits new tobacco and nicotine users to reward investors with as much profit as possible and keep its business alive. Tobacco and related industries have increasingly preyed on children and adolescents, employing advertising tactics and targeting them directly with a new portfolio of products that threaten their health. These industries are moving at a rapid speed to launch existing and new products and use every means to expand their market share before regulations can catch up with them. Tobacco and related industries continue to oppose evidence-based measures, such as increases in excise taxes and comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and have threatened legal actions against governments that try to protect the health of their citizens.

Frequently asked questions

- **How has the tobacco industry previously manipulated people and attracted new users?**

As awareness of the harms of tobacco use grew and global tobacco control efforts intensified over the last decade, social acceptability of tobacco use declined. This catalysed the tobacco industry to revisit old tactics to restore its tarnished reputation and secure a new generation of users.

The tobacco industry has made well-researched, calculated attempts to redesign and rebrand its products to sustain profitability. It introduced cigarette filters and the so-called “light” and “mild” tobacco products as an alternative to quitting, reducing tobacco users’ perceptions of risk and harm, and undermining effective tobacco control policies. Such misleading marketing continues today, with the industry advocating for the harm reduction approach through new products such as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENNDS), commonly referred to as ‘e-cigarettes’, and heated tobacco products (HTPs).

- **How are tobacco and related industries marketing new and emerging products?**

E-cigarettes are often promoted as “reduced risk”, “smoke-free”, “socially acceptable” consumer products. These promotional strategies have the potential to renormalize smoking and drive long-term use of addictive nicotine products which, like tobacco, are undoubtedly harmful to the consumer, under the guise of being a healthier alternative. Tobacco and related industries exploit the fact that the long-term health effects of e-cigarettes have not been established and they are not yet regulated in most countries, enabling them to work around tobacco advertising bans and promote use of their products in smoke-free environments.

Some manufacturers also tend to talk about e-cigarettes with HTPs together, thereby confusing potential consumers, and making it difficult to tell the difference between a tobacco and a non-tobacco product. These social-positioning techniques, coupled with strategic marketing tactics, are particularly effective in targeting children and adolescents and have the potential to sustain nicotine addiction in youth globally.

- **What sponsorship schemes are used to manipulate children and adolescents?**

- **Celebrity and influencer endorsements.** Advertising is increasingly shifting to social media platforms, and the nicotine and tobacco industries are no different. “Influencers” on social media who reach and engage children and adolescents are invited by these industries to serve as “brand ambassadors” or offered financial incentives to promote their products. Social influencers have the potential to give their audiences the impression of more authentic promotion of the products, particularly when posts do not disclose the sponsorship details.

- **Scholarships.** Tobacco and ENDS-related entities have offered scholarships to high school, college and graduate students, some requiring applicants to submit essays on the dangers of tobacco and the potential benefits of ENDS use.

- **School programmes and youth camps.** Tobacco and ENDS-related entities have paid schools for the opportunity to speak in classrooms or after school. They have also sponsored summer camps to spread misconceptions about the risks of ENDS use and market their products under the guise of promoting “safer alternatives” to conventional tobacco products.

- **What advertising tactics are used to target new, young consumers?**
 - **Digital and social media advertising.** With the pervasiveness of smartphones and constant Internet access, nicotine and tobacco companies have strategically used digital and social media platforms to reach younger generations, including through their favourite apps and video games. Social media platforms allow users to interact with the marketing features, which increases exposure and influence among children and adolescents. They also allow marketers to access profile details of users and their friends and effectively target potential customers. Countries that have adopted advertising, promotion and sponsorship bans, but have not explicitly banned cross-border advertising, are susceptible to exposing their youth to digital and social media advertising originating from other countries. Just over 100 hashtags associated with tobacco companies have been viewed more than 25 billion times around the world between 2007-2016.
 - **Attractive displays in retail shops.** Vendors near schools are frequently paid to display nicotine and tobacco products in their retail shops, along with sleek point-of-sale display boards, attractive marketing materials and bright, colourful cases to attract young customers. Modern, attractive retail spaces with a wide variety of products that appeal to youth are also now commonly used to market new and novel products.
 - **Advertising materials and products at eye-level of children.** In many countries, nicotine and tobacco products can be found at children's eye levels and near shops selling toys, electronic gadgets, sweets, snacks or soda.
- **What marketing ploys are used to attract children and adolescents to nicotine and tobacco products?**
 - **Flavours that appeal to youth.** Tobacco products, such as smokeless and water pipe tobacco, are sold in sweet and fruity flavours, which may increase appeal to non-smokers and mask the harsh tobacco taste. To date, researchers have identified over 15,000 e-cigarette flavours available, including flavours proven to appeal to youth, such as cotton candy and gummy bear. Advertisements of flavoured products may enhance appeal and encourage children and adolescents to buy and try nicotine products. The flavours may lower perception of the harmfulness and addictiveness of nicotine products.
 - **Sleek, pocket-sized designs.** ENDS and HTPs are extensively promoted as modern, high-tech and high-end lifestyle products, with minimalist designs, and high-profile product launches that portray them as attractive and harmless products. The sleek designs can be deceptive, available in shapes resembling a USB flash drive, and can be easily concealed in a young person's hand.
 - **Cartoon characters.** Some ENDS-related entities use cartoons and child-friendly imagery, such as unicorns, to brand their products and market sweet flavours.

- **What promotional tactics are used to tempt children and adolescents?**
 - **Product placement in entertainment media, such as television and cinema.** Children and adolescents who watch movies and television shows containing depictions of smoking are at an increased risk of initiating smoking. Exposure to tobacco products or e-cigarette marketing in entertainment media influences children and adolescents' intention to use these products.
 - **Free product samples.** Nicotine and tobacco product samples are distributed in high traffic areas, and particularly venues frequented by youth, such as street corners, shopping malls, festivals and concerts, to attract new consumers. In over 50 countries, at least 10% of students aged 13-15 reported ever being offered a free cigarette by a tobacco company representative.
 - **Merchandise with company logos.** In over 120 countries, at least 1 in 10 students aged 13-15 reported having an object with a tobacco company logo on it.
- **What distribution mechanisms are used to facilitate access to these products?**
 - **Single stick cigarettes.** The sale of cigarettes individually or in small packets increases the affordability and accessibility of tobacco products for school children. Young people that start experimenting with single stick cigarettes do not benefit from exposure to health warnings on cigarette packs. A recent investigation in 45 countries found that students aged 13-15 reported recently purchasing single cigarettes, and in some countries, as many as 80% of students reported purchasing single cigarettes.
 - **Disposable e-cigarettes.** The option to test and toss different flavours of e-liquids, particularly for a low initial cost, has driven use of disposable e-cigarettes among children and adolescents. In some countries, where flavours are banned in refillable cartridge-based e-cigarettes, children and adolescents have turned to disposable e-cigarettes to continue using flavoured products.
 - **Vending machines.** Tobacco vending machines provide young people with easy access to tobacco products without needing to provide a form of identification to verify age. In some countries, tobacco vending machines are placed in areas frequented by youth, such as near schools, with attractive advertising and pack displays.
 - **Internet sales.** Nicotine and tobacco products sold online facilitate sale to minors, particularly where age verification mechanisms are not in place. Online sales also allow children and adolescents to purchase products being sold in other countries where regulations may differ.

FAQ References

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TOBACCO CONTROL AND COVID-19

(Source: WHO)

- The tobacco industry is creating controversy and confusion about the risk of nicotine and tobacco product use and COVID-19. Health experts have warned that smokers with COVID-19 likely suffer more serious conditions that could lead to premature death.
(<https://www.facebook.com/WHO/photos/a.167668209945237/3085570238155005/>)
- Tobacco lobbyists have tried to manipulate COVID-19 policymaking to get tobacco shops listed as 'essential' and offer free delivery of tobacco products to people in quarantine. Smokers likely face more severe symptoms if infected, leading to hospitalizations and premature deaths.
(<https://www.facebook.com/WHO/photos/a.750907108288008/3087623131283049>)

WHO statement: Tobacco use and COVID-19

Tobacco kills more than 8 million people globally every year. More than 7 million of these deaths are from direct tobacco use and around 1.2 million are due to non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

Tobacco smoking is a known risk factor for many respiratory infections and increases the severity of respiratory diseases. A review of studies by public health experts convened by WHO on 29 April 2020 found that smokers are more likely to develop severe disease with COVID-19, compared to non-smokers.

COVID-19 is an infectious disease that primarily attacks the lungs. Smoking impairs lung function making it harder for the body to fight off coronaviruses and other diseases. Tobacco is also a major risk factor for noncommunicable diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease and diabetes which put people with these conditions at higher risk for developing severe illness when affected by COVID-19. Available research suggests that smokers are at higher risk of developing severe disease and death.

WHO is constantly evaluating new research, including research that examines the link between tobacco use, nicotine use, and COVID-19. WHO urges researchers, scientists and the media to be cautious about amplifying unproven claims that tobacco or nicotine could reduce the risk of COVID-19. There is currently insufficient information to confirm any link between tobacco or nicotine in the prevention or treatment of COVID-19.

Nicotine replacement therapies, such as gum and patches are designed to help smokers quit tobacco. WHO recommends that smokers take immediate steps to quit by using proven methods such as toll-free quit lines, mobile text-messaging programmes, and nicotine replacement therapies.

Within 20 minutes of quitting, elevated heart rate and blood pressure drop. After 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in the bloodstream drops to normal. Within 2-12 weeks, circulation improves and lung function increases. After 1-9 months, coughing and shortness of breath decrease.

WHO stresses the importance of ethically approved, high-quality, systematic research that will contribute to advancing individual and public health, emphasizing that promotion of unproven interventions could have a negative effect on health.

SMMA, DM Enclosure to DM-Dissemination and Adoption of the Theme of the World No Tobacco Day 2020
May 20, 2020