

## Recent Cigarette Marketing Campaign Targeted Teen Girls, Study Reveals

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**T**he 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) prohibits tobacco industry advertising practices that encourage underage teenagers to smoke, yet new research out of the Moores Cancer Center at the University of California, San Diego has found that a 2007 marketing campaign for Camel brand cigarettes was effective in encouraging young girls to start smoking.

The study, led by John P. Pierce, PhD, professor of Family and Preventive Medicine and director of the Cancer Center's Cancer Prevention and Control Program, will be published March 15 in an early online edition of the scientific journal *Pediatrics*.

The research, part of a national study on parenting practices, involved 1,036 males and females who were 10 to 13 years old when enrolled onto the study. Between 2003 and 2008, scientists conducted five telephone interviews, which included questions about smoking. The fifth interview was conducted after the start of RJ Reynolds' "Camel No. 9" advertising campaign in 2007.

Consistent with earlier research, the new study showed that youth who had never smoked but who reported having a "favorite" cigarette ad at the beginning were 50 percent more likely to initiate smoking. The number of boys with a favorite ad was stable across all five surveys. For girls, however, it was stable across the first four surveys, but by the fifth survey, which took place after the start of the Camel No. 9 campaign, the proportion of girls who reported a favorite ad jumped by 10 percentage points, to 44 percent. The Camel brand accounted almost entirely for this increase.

"In 1998, the Tobacco Industry signed an agreement with State Attorneys General which included a commitment not to target adolescents with advertising. Congressional leaders and others have complained to RJ Reynolds that the Camel #9 campaign violated that agreement," said Pierce. "This national study demonstrated that the Camel No. 9 campaign had a huge impact on young adolescent girls across the country, effectively encouraging them to smoke."

The Camel No. 9 marketing campaign included ads resembling fashion spreads that were placed in five of the top 10 U.S. teen readership magazines, such as *Glamour* and *Vogue*. The campaign

also featured promotional giveaways such as berry lip balm, cell phone jewelry, purses and wristbands.

Co-authors on the paper are Karen Messer, PhD, Lisa E. James, Martha M. White, MS and Sheila Kealey, MPH, all of the Moores UCSD Cancer Center; and Donna M. Vallone, PhD, MPH, and Cheryl G. Heaton, DrPH, both of the American Legacy Foundation, Washington, D.C. This study was funded by the National Cancer Institute, the American Legacy Foundation, and the Tobacco Related Disease Research Program of the University of California.

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Media Contact: Kim Edwards, 619-543-6163, [kedwards@ucsd.edu](mailto:kedwards@ucsd.edu)

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