

### A GUIDE TO RESPONSIBLE RETAILING!

By Jill C. Urie

Did you know that there is a comprehensive system in place to reduce adolescent tobacco use, its cycle of addiction, and the diseases tobacco use causes? This comprehensive approach includes school-based and community prevention programs, public media campaigns, and promotion and enforcement of laws prohibiting sale of tobacco to minors. In addition, all 50 states, most U.S. territories, and hundreds of local governments periodically inspect retailers to enforce compliance with tobacco sales-to-minors laws.

Since tobacco addiction is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States and is responsible for 1,100 premature deaths everyday, the public health community advocates this comprehensive system with the hope that it can make a significant impact on underage tobacco use. The focus on reducing the tobacco use of minors is crucial because today's adolescent user will be tomorrow's victim of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and other tobacco-related disease. Creating a comprehensive plan to combat teen smoking will go a long way to prevent the cycle of tobacco addiction, disease, and premature death tobacco causes.

Responsible retailing is part of the comprehensive system that when properly designed and implemented can contribute to the elimination of sales of tobacco to minors.

This means that, as tobacco vendors, you are a vital part of the comprehensive team to

#### Tobacco vendors:



#### A vital part of the team!

stop the cycle of tobacco addiction among minors.

There is a model of responsible retailing in place to provide tobacco vendors with guidelines on how to best prevent the sale of tobacco to minors. The model of responsible retailing contains three distinct elements:

- **Comprehensive Training of Sales Personnel**

Comprehensive training is at the center of responsible retailing. Businesses should have training procedures for both the training of new employees and the frequent retraining of current employees. These training procedures and policies should help employees verify the age of young customers and help employees refuse the sale of tobacco and other age-restricted products to minors.

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## Responsible Retailing *continued*

- **Policies for Store Managers and Owners**

Store managers and owners have a continuing responsibility to supervise sales personnel, provide safeguards for employees, and establish accountability for compliance with sales-to-minors laws. Without this element of the model, employees are trained but then never provided with the guidance and feedback needed to ensure that training procedures are properly implemented and followed.

- **Active Public Sector Role**

Responsible retailing is driven by aggressive enforcement. Public health and enforcement agencies can help retailers identify resources to create an effective, responsible-retailing program for their business. Tobacco vendors can use resources like [www.preventthesale.com](http://www.preventthesale.com) to learn more about the state law and enforcement requirements, as well as, training tools for employees.

While the model of responsible retailing is just one part of the comprehensive system to eliminate underage tobacco use, its vital role as the first line of defense must not be ignored. Tobacco vendors who initiate responsible retailing for their business will be a great support and an essential part to ending tobacco addiction in minors.

*Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov), Best Practices for Responsible Retailing*

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## Factoids and Statistics

### “A-” Average for August

According to Idaho Code 39-5701 the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare must inspect each business that sells tobacco to ensure that it does not sell tobacco to minors. For August of 2003:

- ❖ 94 Vendors were inspected. \*
- ❖ 9 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month off August 2003 was 90.43%.

\*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

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