

## The Surgeon General Steps Out for Kids

By Cheryl Dudley

### Facts and Stats

#### “B” Average for JULY

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 July 2005:

- ❖ 292 Vendors were inspected.\*
- ❖ 34 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of JULY 2005 was 88%

\*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

### Prevent the Sale Website

[www.preventthesale.com/idaho](http://www.preventthesale.com/idaho)

- Learn about the law
- Take the tobacco quiz
- See what the ID's look like
- Play the Game "Would You Sell to This Person?"

### The Year of the Healthy Child

Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona has labeled 2005 “The Year of the Healthy Child.” His agenda is focusing on improving the overall well-being of the growing child, including the body, mind, and spirit. He has issued several news releases that encourage parents to be conscious of their parenting skills and offering useful tips to improve these skills. On May 31, 2005, which he determined as World No Tobacco Day, he offered these tips to parents to prevent their child’s exposure to tobacco:

1. Stop smoking
2. For your baby’s sake, don’t smoke
3. Don’t allow smoking in your home
4. Don’t smoke while holding a child or while near a child
5. Don’t allow smoking in your vehicle
6. Be sure that schools and child-care facilities are smoke-free
7. Sit in non-smoking sections of restaurants
8. Don’t allow caregivers to smoke around your child
9. Take an active interest in your child’s social life
10. Talk to your child about the dangers of smoking



### New Surgeon General's Report Expands List of Diseases Caused by Smoking

About 12 million people have died from smoking related diseases since the first Surgeon General issued his report in 1964. In the report, it was concluded that smoking was the cause of three serious diseases: bronchitis, cancer of the lung, and cancer of the larynx.

Later reports linked other diseases to smoking. Now the U. S. Surgeon General has issued a new 960-page report that concludes smoking is linked to other serious diseases such as periodontitis, cataracts, pneumonia, cervical cancer, acute myeloid leukemia, abdominal aortic aneurysm, stomach cancer, pancreatic cancer, and kidney cancer.

In spite of the Surgeon General’s warning, it is estimated that another 25 million Americans that are alive today will die from smoking-related diseases. Even knowing the health risks involved, most smokers are unable to overcome the powerful addiction of cigarette smoking.

"We've known for decades that smoking is bad for your health, but this report shows that it's even worse than we knew," Dr. Carmona said on the Coalition for a Healthy Idaho Web site. "The toxins from cigarette smoke go everywhere the blood flows. I'm hoping this new information will help motivate people to quit smoking and convince young people not to start in the first place. We must prevent our youth from taking up this dangerous habit."

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## Surgeon General Steps Out Continued...

### Immediate Benefits of Quitting

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death, killing about 440,000 Americans each year. In terms of years cut short by smoking, men lose 13.2 years of their lives, while women, on average, lose 14.5 years of their lives by smoking. Furthermore, the medical costs associated with smoking reach nearly \$75 billion, while there is about an \$82 billion lost in productivity.

Not surprisingly, the Surgeon General's report concludes that the health of smokers is reduced overall, and that for every premature death from smoking, there are 20 smokers living with smoking-related diseases. Furthermore, smoking low tar or low-nicotine cigarettes does not offer any health benefits. "The science is clear: the only way to avoid the health hazards of smoking is to quit completely or to never start smoking," said Dr. Carmona.

Although quitting smoking is difficult, the immediate effects and long-term benefits are amazing. According to Dr. Carmona, within minutes of the last puff, the body begins to improve itself. Heart rates drop, circulation improves, the risk of heart attack reduces, as well as the risk of cancer and stroke. As a matter of fact, if a person quits smoking at the age of 65, he reduces his risk of dying by a smoking-related disease by 50 percent.

### Finding the Report

The easy-to-read, animated report can be accessed via the Internet. Copies of the full report: "The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General," and related materials are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 1-800-CDC-1311, [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco) and on the surgeon general's Web site at [www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov).

### The Important Role of Tobacco Vendors

From reading the Surgeon General's new report, the importance of preventing the sale of tobacco to minors becomes even more significant. Since most addicted smokers start smoking as teens, imagine the health benefits to society overall if we can restrict the sale of tobacco to our youth – our most valuable asset.

Thanks to you, Idaho is making progress!



Enjoy your summer!

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**Prevent  
the Sale!**

Newsletter for Idaho  
Tobacco Retailers

#### What's Inside:

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- \*The Surgeon General's New Report
- \*Facts and Stats

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