

Finding Truth in an Information Overloaded World

By Cheryl Dudley

Facts and Stats

“A” Average for JUNE

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. In JUNE 2007:

- ❖ 296 Vendors were inspected.*
- ❖ 31 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of June 2007 was 90%

*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

Prevent the Sale Web site

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?"

Do you know Idaho's Code?

As a tobacco vendor, it's important that you know Idaho's Code on tobacco. To test your knowledge, mark the following statements True or False, then check your answers on page 2.

1. ___ It is illegal to sell tobacco papers to a person under 18 years of age.
2. ___ It is illegal to sell pipes to a person under 18 years of age.
3. ___ If you sell tobacco to a person under 18 years of age, you may be liable for a fine of \$50.
4. ___ Vendors are notified in advance that an inspection will take place.
5. ___ Cigarettes can be removed from their packaging and sold individually.
6. ___ Smokeless tobacco can be sold to persons age 16 and up.
7. ___ The inspection team includes a minor, unless it is an age restricted business.
8. ___ Persons of all ages must be assisted by a vendor when buying tobacco products.
9. ___ Idaho driver's licenses have a green border around the photo that says "Under 18" if the person is a minor.
10. ___ Most smokers start smoking after 20 years old.

Discerners of Truth

Reading about a jumble of facts and numbers can be confusing at times, and we should all question whether or not the supposed "facts" we hear come from credible sources.

In other words—*are we being told the truth?*

Discerning the truth in a world where we are bombarded with information is a daily task. False statistics and stories can be passed on as fact for decades. I've been guilty of passing on that e-mail about the kidnapped little girl out of Atlanta without checking its credibility, only to check later and find that it has no factual basis at all.

And isn't it disturbing to have read ten years ago that coffee and chocolate were bad, only to recently find out that, in moderation, they are actually good for you? I can only think about all the good stuff I missed out on.

Discerning the truth can sometimes be easy when you use a little common sense, like thinking logically about the article that claims you can lose weight by taking a pill while continuing bad health habits.

In addition to common sense, there are some decent websites like snopes.com that can tell you if that chain e-mail you just received is legitimate or not (before you pass it on to your list of friends and family).

It's good to be a critic. It's good to question what you hear and it's good to take a close look at what's behind the claims that flood our senses daily.

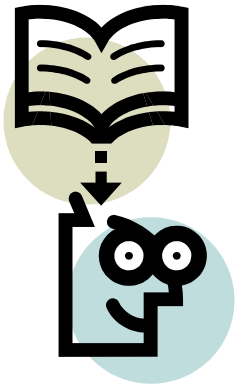
As I conduct research every month to write this newsletter, I come across conflicting statistics. For example, is it 3,000 minors that begin smoking each month (or was that each day?), or has that number decreased, like one site claimed, or is it on the rise, like another article claims?

Discerning Truth Continued ...

One thing I do know for certain and one thing that has never changed: tobacco is bad for you, and it's bad for our youth. (However, did you know that a one time long ago tobacco was thought to be a cure-all for several ailments?) I also know for a fact that you can help prevent the sale of tobacco to minors by determining to say no when they ask.

There's a country western song that says "You've got to stand for something, or you'll fall for anything." It's easy to fall for falsehoods that are propagated through the media in such compelling ways. Sure, the Marlboro Man was handsome, but didn't his smoking give him cancer?

Hang on to the things you know are facts. These are the things we can stand for, like: Tobacco is bad and can kill you. It addicts children. Don't sell it to them. Thank you for making a difference.



Answers to Quiz on Page 1

1. True. Tobacco papers are considered a tobacco product and are illegal to sell to minors.
2. True. Pipes are also a tobacco product and illegal to sell to minors.
3. False. The fine for selling tobacco to a minor is \$100.
4. False. Inspections are conducted without notice to the vendor.
5. False. It is illegal to sell tobacco other than in its original packaging.
6. False. It is illegal to sell smokeless tobacco to a person under 18 years of age.
7. True. The minor in the inspection team attempts to purchase tobacco.
8. True. All tobacco sales are vendor-assisted.
9. True. A green border around the photo means the person is a minor and cannot legally purchase tobacco products.
10. False. Most smokers began smoking before the age of 19, which is the reason your job is so important.

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**Prevent
the Sale!**

Newsletter for Idaho
Tobacco Retailers

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What's Inside:

*Idaho's Code Quiz

*How do I know the truth?