



Big Tobacco

Young people are being targeted by the tobacco industry for ongoing profit



What is Big Tobacco?

'Big Tobacco' is a phrase used to refer to the largest global tobacco industry companies.

The tobacco industry includes tobacco manufacturers, wholesale distributors and importers. This also includes 'front groups': affiliated organisations, industry allies and commissioned third parties that benefit from the sale of tobacco products or sponsorship.

Many e-cigarette companies are owned by tobacco companies

Big industry like this is well connected. Many big corporations are interconnected, both among themselves and with other health harmful industries, including the alcohol industry.

What do they do to attract young people?

Although most tobacco advertising is now banned in Scotland, Big Tobacco influence still reaches children and young people:

- **Social Media**

Celebrities or influencers are paid to promote their products. Social media platforms allow users to interact with the marketing features, which increases exposure and influence among children and young people. They also allow marketers to access profile details of users and their friends and effectively target potential customers. Just over 100 hashtags associated with tobacco companies have been viewed more than 25 billion times around the world between 2007-2016.



- **Film and TV**

Product placement is used to show brands or products, with specific promotional aim. Children and young people who watch movies and television shows containing depictions of smoking are at an increased risk of starting to smoke. Exposure to tobacco products or e-cigarette marketing in entertainment media influences children and adolescents' intention to use these products.



- **Flavour**

E-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and shisha are flavoured to appeal to young people. Researchers have identified over 15,000 e-cigarette flavours available (e.g. bubble gum, candy floss). Flavours can lower perception of harmfulness and addictive nature of nicotine products.



Why do they attract young people?

The tobacco industry target young people, because the younger a person is when they start smoking, the harder is it to stop.

Young people = guaranteed customers (profits) for years.

Tobacco is a multi-billion pound industry, with £18 million spent per day on marketing around the world

In Scotland, smoking kills 10,000 people every year. To replace these customers, and the people who quit, the industry needs to recruit thousands of new customers each year to remain as profitable.

Although the majority of young people in Scotland don't smoke, a small proportion of young people do start smoking. This number had been decreasing over the years, but most recent figures show this has stopped decreasing. If young people do smoke, they tend to have their first cigarette at age 13.

What can young people do?

Despite the millions that Big Tobacco spends to try to influence you to smoke, you can:

- Detect when industry is trying to manipulate you.
- Snub their tactics and attempts to entice you into becoming their customer, for example by not liking or sharing their online content, or questioning why characters in film and TV smoke.
- Stand up to them by choosing not to smoke.
- Encourage your friends and family members not to smoke.
- Learn more by checking out these sites:
 - Choices for Life - <https://bit.ly/2Hkzf9g>
 - Be Free - <https://bit.ly/37sevH7>
 - Follow #tobaccoexposed on social media