

## ***City of Worcester Division of Public Health - Office of Substance Abuse Prevention***

### **We need to protect young people from tobacco industry tactics.**

The tobacco industry is targeting young people in communities throughout Massachusetts, hooking 7,200 Massachusetts youth each year.<sup>[i]</sup> The Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation & Prevention Program (MTCP) works in communities to engage youth in exposing tobacco industry tactics, track new tobacco products aimed at young people, and ensure that tobacco is not sold to minors.

### **The tobacco industry targets young people in Massachusetts.**

The tobacco industry constantly **changes its tactics to get around laws and regulations** that protect young people. The latest tobacco industry tactic is to design new, **low cost, youth-friendly tobacco products – like candy-flavored dissolvable tobacco**. The industry has also adapted its packaging to look like it contains mints, gum or other non-tobacco products.

### **Young people who start smoking face a lifetime of addiction.**

**Nearly all adult smokers started before they were 18.** 7,200 Massachusetts youth become smokers each year. <sup>[ii]</sup>Tobacco is a gateway to other drugs. Young people who smoke are 4 times more likely to use alcohol. They are 26 times more likely to use cocaine.<sup>[iii]</sup> Young peoples' bodies and brains are still growing. **Tobacco use changes the pathways of the brain and interferes with normal development.**<sup>[iv]</sup>

### **We must fight tobacco industry tactics in communities across Massachusetts.**

The Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention program (MTCP) tracks new tobacco products aimed at young people, works with municipalities to ensure that tobacco is not sold to kids, and **engages young people in exposing tobacco industry tactics in their communities**. MTCP is **fighting the tobacco industry's efforts to hook young people** by reducing the industry's influence in neighborhoods, changing social norms, and reducing demand for and access to tobacco. MTCP **engages parents and community members** to work with local government and retailers to reduce the availability and visibility of tobacco products and their advertisements.

---

<sup>[i]</sup> New underage daily smoker estimate based on data from U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services (HHS), "Results from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health," with the state share of national initiation number based on CDC data on future youth smokers in each state compared to national total.

<sup>[ii]</sup> New underage daily smoker estimate based on data from U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services (HHS), "Results from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health," with the state share of national initiation numbers based on CDC data on future youth smokers in each state compared to national total.

<sup>[iii]</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. *Trends in Youth Tobacco Use in Massachusetts, 1993 – 2009* (March 2010), p.4.

<sup>[iv]</sup> Interview of Nora Volkow, M.D., Director of the National Institute of Drugs. Accessed 1/25/10 at [http://www.thechallenge.org/14\\_3\\_interview.html](http://www.thechallenge.org/14_3_interview.html).

---

<sup>iv</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program. Estimated number of deaths and the estimated health care expenditure savings is based on the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) SAMMEC (Smoking-attributable mortality, morbidity and economic costs) model using an estimated current smoking rate of 5% and former smoking rate of 10% for adults, age 35+ in Massachusetts and the number of deaths in Massachusetts in a smoking-attributable diagnosis category.