

Teen Health

Youth Smoking Prevention Campaign Meets Teens On Their Level

(NAPSA)—For many teens, the teenage years are a time of rebellion and experimentation—and smoking is one way teens challenge authority.

The **truth**® youth smoking prevention campaign reaches teens effectively by never telling them what to do—or what not to do—even when it comes to the decision to smoke. Instead, the campaign seeks to become a part of teens' everyday lives through the television programs they watch, the Web sites they visit, and by having a presence at concerts and events where teens naturally gather.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the successful public health campaign—most known for a series of iconic, provocative television ads highlighting tobacco-related information and tobacco industry tactics.

According to research recently published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, **truth** was responsible for 450,000 fewer youth smokers in a four-year period.

Every year, the campaign sends out a team of young adults to travel the country and meet up with teens at concerts, skate-parks, malls and other events. The **truth** crew members create a fun, dynamic atmosphere that makes it easier to discuss tobacco issues in a nonpreachy way. Most tour stops feature the distinctive orange **truth** truck and zone, where teens gather to have fun. In the zone, crew members:

- Hold fashion shows, dance contests and freestyle rap “battles”;
- Teach DJ lessons through “Scratch Academy.” A group of DJs school newcomers on the funda-



truth® crew members in action on the campaign's national tour.

mentals of DJ'ing, scratching and mixing music;

- Play games;
- Distribute **truth** “gear”—fashionable, trendy items like T-shirts, hats and backpacks reflecting tobacco facts.

Every year, the tour reaches more than 500,000 teens in person during the course of its 70-odd-city cross-country tour.

To learn more, visit www.thetruth.com.

SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT YOUTH AND TOBACCO

- Nearly 80 percent of all smokers have their first cigarette before age 18, and nearly 90 percent of all smokers begin before age 20.
- One-third of all smokers began before the age of 14.
- Twenty-seven percent of youths live in a household with at least one smoker.
- Nine times more youths who live with a smoker are exposed to daily secondhand smoke in a room and/or in a car than those who live in a nonsmoker household (40 percent versus 5 percent).

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