

Firstname Lastname

Instructor's Name

Course Number

Date

Teenage smoking: Giving adults something to stress about since the 1950 s

Audience: people of teen age and up

Teenage smoking is something that has been going on in the world for more than a while now.

Youthful smoking is widely accepted in many cultures, with the exception of that of the United States. In the more recent years of the United States history, much money has been wasted on researching the effects of smoking and advertising those effects. I believe that there is no warrant for any action to be taken against teenage smoking.

Every year, the controversy of teenage smoking grows more intense in the United States. More and more research is done on the effect nicotine has on the human body, and consequently more money is spent to advertise the advantage to quitting smoking. More facts such as, The average age of first tobacco use is now 11-15 (CDC. 1994), Everyday, 3,000 young people become regular smokers (Pierce, J. JAMA. 1989), More than 3 million American adolescents currently smoke (CDC 1994) come out each year to show that youths are choosing to smoke. The people that believe that teenage smoking should cease all value the same things: safety, personal health, money, and things relating to these. The same is true for those who believe in freedom of choice and teenage smoking, they believe in things such as personal freedom, basic rights, and fun.

The tobacco industry's argument on this issue is that smoking should be a personal choice and allowed for people over the age of 18, if not younger. Never have they stated that they endorse underage smoking, but they have utilized advertisement campaigns that obviously appealed to minors. The tobacco industry seems to value some things that are similar to the values of the founding fathers of the United States. Just like them, the tobacco industry is attempting to give freedom to some of the citizens.

The people who are opposed to teenage smoking hold some other values important. When they argue that smoking is harmful and will eventually lead to cancer and death, they are showing that they value personal health. This is usually associated with someone older than a teenager who has come to realize that they are that much closer to death and would not like to do anything to shorten the time before. Those opposed to teenage smoking also value being informed. Many of their tactics to attempt to stop teenagers from smoking include informing them on the issue. The case is not, however, that teenage smokers are not informed on the issue. For example, the job of the anti-smoking commercial campaign was to inform teenagers on smoking so they would quit, but after its launch, statistics have shown that the amount of people under the age of twenty has gone up (Shelley 4).

With the United States Government on the side of the anti-smoking campaign, many methods of persuasion are made available. One such method is the endorsement of the Surgeon General on the anti-smoking campaign. On every pack of cigarettes made in the United States, there must be printed a warning from the Surgeon General stating in some way that smoking is dangerous and unhealthy. This is an example that the United States government holds personal health as a value. This has to be one of the more effective ways to keep people from smoking due to the respect given to the Surgeon General from the public. This makes the quality of the evidence

given appear even more precise than it would have without the Surgeon General's endorsement, even though it is true both ways. This tactic also makes a few different conjectures, such as, Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health, and It is Unhealthy to Smoke While Pregnant. The United States government generally consists of people over the age of thirty, disassociating them from the topic of teenage smoking and therefore giving them different values and reasons to want to end it. Adults make claims such as, "Most adolescent smokers are addicted to nicotine and report that they want to quit, but are unable to do so; they experience withdrawal symptoms and relapse rates similar to those reported by adults (Elders). Statements such as this show that anti teenage smoking campaign values safety. The campaign focuses on the fact that your body is not safe if you are smoking and neither are you. Valuing these two things shows what the interests of older generation are, and that is life. Life is something that you are given, and will have until you lose it. Enjoyment of life, on the other hand, is something that you must obtain, and smoking is one way that teenagers do so.

Another way in which the Tobacco Companies make smoking seem appealing to teenagers is by having things such as Camel Cash. This is an item that accompanies all packs of cigarettes of the brand Camel. You save up these pieces of paper and eventually redeem them for gifts. It gives people another incentive to purchase cigarettes. Thadd Brengle, nineteen years old and a smoker of three years said, Yeah I save the camel cash up, there is some cool stuff to be won. This shows teenage smokers value such things as instant gratification, money, and material goods. This is something that has been published before and talks mainly about the fact that teenagers will do just about anything that offers gratification at that moment. They do so with no outlook on what the future repercussions will be and with an open mind. By appealing to this, the company is making it seem as if, if you smoke, you will win. This method of advertising is something that

has been considered long and hard by many groups of people, both opposing teenage smoking and those for it. The reason that this is such a debate is due to the fact that the tobacco industry is not allowed to make smoking look appealing to teenagers, yet this type of promotion is something that most people would consider appealing to kids.

I have considered both sides of the argument of teenage smoking. I have researched the effects. I have even listened to what people hold as values and what people consider when making their judgments. Throughout, however, I have smoked. And, yes, I am a teenager. Adults just seem to be too imposing on this issue for my liking. One doesn't see teenagers debating over whether or not adults should do something controversial. This is because teenagers know how to do one thing correctly, that being minding their own business when it comes to judging another age group. Teenagers value things that have to do with enjoyment of life, while adults value things having to do with the extension of life. It seems to me that teenagers have the right idea because you're going to live no matter what, wouldn't you like to say that you at least liked it.

Works Cited

Elders, Perry Eriksen, & Giovino (1994). The Report of the Surgeon General: Preventing

Tobacco Use among Young People.

Shelley, Matt. Our teenagers are smoking. Gilbert Tribune, December 18th 1999, p. 4