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21/09/2012 16:13

To  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fw: CANCER RESEARCH UK: Launch of the "The Answer is Plain" campaign

**From:** Sarah Woolnough [mailto:Sarah.Woolnough@cancer.org.uk]  
**Sent:** Tuesday 24 April 2012 18:10  
**To:** Mike Richards; [REDACTED]@dh.gsi.gov.uk'  
**Cc:** Harpal Kumar  
**Subject:** CANCER RESEARCH UK: Launch of the "The Answer is Plain" campaign

Dear both

As briefly mentioned today, I wanted to give you advance warning that we are holding a press briefing tomorrow to launch our new campaign (for Thursday), *'The Answer is Plain'*, in support of plain packaging.

We will be publishing peer reviewed research on the role that tobacco marketing plays and a powerful film showing how children respond to current packs. I attach the exec summary of our report for and press release. Our call to action is for people to respond to the consultation in support of plain packaging.

Best wishes  
Sarah

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Tobacco Packaging Report Executive Summary.pdf FINAL plain packaging launch press release.docx

# The packaging of tobacco products

Executive Summary

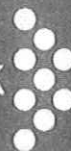
March 2012



The Centre for Tobacco Control Research  
Core funded by Cancer Research UK

Registered charity in England and Wales (1089464)  
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CANCER RESEARCH UK



# The packaging of tobacco products

This new report from the Cancer Research UK Centre for Tobacco Control Research at the University of Stirling considers packaging from a broad marketing perspective, and how it is perceived and used by the tobacco industry. New UK research exploring young people's perceptions of both branded and plain packaging is also presented. The report provides:

1. A summary of the marketing function of packaging for consumer goods, including tobacco products
2. A review of research on tobacco industry documents in respect of tobacco packaging
3. A summary of developments in tobacco packaging in the retail press 2009 – 2011
4. Focus group research exploring young people's perceptions of packaging for consumer products, including tobacco packaging and also plain packaging

## Key findings:

### **Packaging: The multifunctional marketing tool**

Packaging is an effective marketing medium that helps to build consumer relationships through possession and usage. Packaging innovation, design and value packaging are used to promote the product, distinguish products from competitors, communicate brand values and target specific consumer groups. These packaging strategies, together with the visual and structural aspects of packaging design, such as colour, size and shape, influence consumer perceptions and purchase and usage behaviour. They give packaging an important role both at point-of-purchase and post-purchase.

Packaging also has a close relationship with the product. For example both smokers and non-smokers erroneously associate lightly coloured packs with weaker product strength and reduced harm.

### **Packaging: A tobacco industry and retail perspective**

Tobacco packaging has multiple functions for tobacco companies, beyond that of brand identification, navigation and selection. It is used to promote the product using the same strategies employed by other consumer goods manufacturers, specifically packaging innovation, design and value packaging. Packaging is viewed as a key marketing tool for tobacco companies, according to both their own internal documents and also the retail press. Packaging has a wider reach than advertising and is the most explicit link between the company and the consumer.

### **Perceptions of packaging and plain packaging: A focus group study**

Research exploring young people's perceptions of tobacco packaging found that youth appear to be attracted to tobacco packaging design. Branded packaging presented positive user imagery and functional and emotional benefits to young people. Conversely plain cigarette packaging was perceived as unattractive, reduced emotional attachment to the packaging and enforced negative smoking attitudes among young people. Plain packs with different shapes were also found to influence young people's perceptions, suggesting that a standard shaped plain pack is the most effective approach to reducing the ability of packaging to communicate with young smokers and potential smokers.

The full report is available at [www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco)

For more information please contact Robin Hewings, Policy Manager.  
e: [robin.hewings@cancer.org.uk](mailto:robin.hewings@cancer.org.uk) t: 020 3469 8152

# Extracts from research exploring young people's perceptions of plain packaging

## About packaging generally:

*I think the package is a big part of the product... Probably just as important as the product*

(GIRLS, C2DE)

*...something you would use in public.*

*You don't want to have to bring out something ugly*

*If it's too big as well, so you can't carry it around with you*

(GIRLS, ABC1)

## About superslims:

*They'd be easy to hide*

(GIRL, C2DE)

*If any of them are attractive it's that one just because it's kind of perfume shaped*

(GIRL, ABC1)

*They (limited edition pack) look too colourful to be harmful...*

(GIRLS, C2DE)

## About packs of 14:

*I don't know if they are deliberately trying to sell to fourteen year olds, but I think it sort of appeals, because they'll look at it... They are sort of saying it without actually saying it, like subliminally saying you know, fourteen year olds*

(BOY, ABC1)

## About lighter pack colour:

*They look cool, not friendlier, but they don't look as harmful*

*You wouldn't want to get into the strong stuff at the start*

(GIRLS, ABC1)

*See the packets with the white they look a lot less harmful ...*

*Cos it's white, it just looks cleaner*

(BOYS, ABC1)

*The pink just looks really like it would attract teenage girls*

(GIRL, ABC1)

## Emotional responses to packaging:

*It (a particular brand) looks as if you're like more mature. Better and more popular*

(BOY, C2DE)

*It (a different brand) makes me feel quite cool ...It makes you feel stylish and that, kind of upper class*

(BOY, C2DE)

## About plain packs:

*Looks dead cheap ...No one would buy it*

(GIRLS, ABC1)

*You'd feel better about it (smoking) than carrying that brown thing (plain pack)*

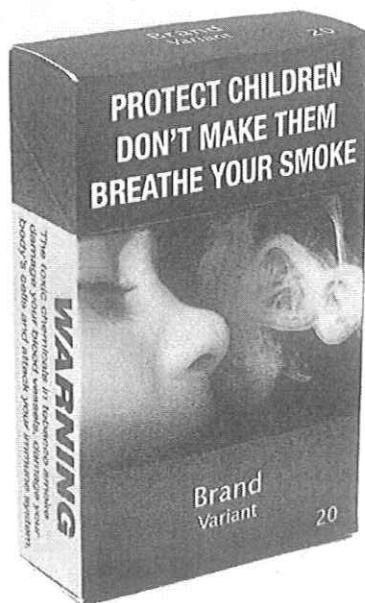
*...To see that (plain pack) you'd think, 'what am I doing, carrying this about?'*

*...Aye, in front of all your pals if you brought it out you wouldn't feel embarrassed, but if you brought that (plain pack) out you'd be pure embarrassed. People who don't smoke would look at you like they were ashamed of you*

(BOYS, C2DE)

*I think that one (plain pack) looks like you'd be more ill if you kept smoking them but they ones (superslims) look like you wouldn't be so unwell if you smoked them for ages*

(GIRL, C2DE)



Some examples of existing packs.

The packaging of tobacco products

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The full report can be downloaded from  
[www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco)



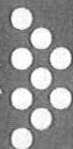
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CANCER RESEARCH UK



**Strict embargo 00.01hrs**

**Thursday 26 April, 2012**

## **NEW REPORT AND FILM REVEAL SHOCKING IMPACT OF TOBACCO PACKAGING ON CHILDREN**

YOUNG people and women are identified as target groups to aim tobacco packaging at according to a new Cancer Research UK report released today (Thursday).

The report – The Packaging of Tobacco Products – is published today alongside a hard-hitting short film that illustrates children's attraction to the slickly designed cigarette packs. The report and film launch Cancer Research UK's The Answer is Plain campaign, which is asking people to sign a petition to remove all branding from tobacco packaging.

The film shows powerful scenes of seven to 10 year olds as they innocently discuss what attracts them to the brightly coloured and attractively designed cigarette packs\*.

Children's reactions to the packs include: "It makes you feel like you're in a wonderland of happiness", "The pictures actually look quite nice. Ice cubes and mint.", "It reminds me of a Ferrari", "Is that the Royal Sign?" and "Yeah. Pink, Pink, Pink".

Jean King, Cancer Research UK's director of tobacco control, said: "This footage provides us with a chilling insight into how powerful branding and marketing can be. Children are drawn to the colourful and slick designs without having a full understanding of how deadly the product is inside the pack.

"It's time to end the packet racket. Our research shows the value attached to packaging by the tobacco industry. And parents know first-hand that children are affected by marketing and branding, and when that marketing is attracting children to cigarettes, we need to give young people one less reason to start smoking."

The new report reviews tobacco industry documents from over the last half century as the future of tobacco packaging is being considered in a Department of Health public consultation.

Several internal tobacco industry documents\*\* describe how packaging has been developed to appeal to new smokers, notably teenagers, through its size, colour and design.

Professor Robert West, Cancer Research UK's director of tobacco research at University College London, said: "The research evidence is compelling that cigarette packaging is attractive to young people. Once the young person tries smoking, nicotine has a chance to do its work in turning him or her into an addict. Only a

quarter of those who smoke for a year succeed in stopping before it starts to take years of their lives\*\*\*.

"Of course we can't be sure how big an effect preventing tobacco companies from using packaging to attract smokers will have, but smoking is so dangerous that even a very small effect would save hundreds if not thousands of lives each year. And when the tobacco companies complain about freedom to promote their 'legal' products, let's remember that if those deadly and addictive products were to be invented today there is no country in the world that would permit them to be sold at all."

The report also shows that some brands of cigarettes are packaged to appeal specifically to women and others to men. Packs developed to target women are often designed to be long and slender, with pale or pastel colours indicating femininity, style, sophistication and attractiveness. Philip Morris's research for the female Virginia Slims brand shows feminine packaging is acknowledged by women to look different from a traditional pack, and easy to carry in a purse\*\*\*\*.

Eight focus groups of around 50 15-year-olds showed clear differences between boys and girls when asked to pick their favourite packs. Girls liked the female oriented Silk Cut and Vogue Superslims which suggests femininity and pleasure, such as perfume, make-up and chocolate.

The boys preferred the Marlboro Bright Leaf, Lambert & Butler and B&H slide packs which suggested maturity, popularity and confidence.

## ENDS

For media enquires contact Paul Thorne in the press office on 020 3469 8352 or, out of hours, on 07050 264 059.

### Notes to editor:

\* The children were first shown cereal boxes and asked for their responses, then shown cigarette boxes and asked for their responses. The answers given were unprompted and unscripted.

\*\* Cummings, K. M., Morley, C. P., Horan, J. K., Steger, C., & Leavell, N-R. (2002). Marketing to America's youth: Evidence from corporate documents. *Tobacco Control*, 11, i5-i17.

\*\*\* West R, Fidler J (2011) Smoking and Smoking Cessation in England 2010. London: Vasco-Graphics. Available from [www.smokinginengland.info](http://www.smokinginengland.info)

\*\*\*\* Carpenter, C. M., Wayne, G., F., & Connolly, G. N. (2005). Designing cigarettes for women: New findings from the tobacco industry documents. *Addiction*, 100, 837-851.



Click here to view or embed the focus group video of primary school children discussing tobacco packaging: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c\\_z-4S8iicc&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_z-4S8iicc&feature=youtu.be)

To download a full copy of *The Packaging of Tobacco Products* visit: [www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/tobacco)

For more information on The Answer is Plain campaign visit [www.theanswerisplain.org](http://www.theanswerisplain.org)

To view a selection of cigarettes packs available in the UK, and see an example of the proposed new packs visit: <http://youtu.be/HEdMNOqPPIs>

The Department of Health consultation on the future of tobacco packaging was launched on Monday 16 April. Details here: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/04/tobacco-packaging-consultation/>

Download a copy of our lung cancer briefsheet: [http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/downloads/product/bs\\_lung.pdf](http://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/downloads/product/bs_lung.pdf)

### **About Cancer Research UK**

- Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research
- The charity's groundbreaking work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives. This work is funded entirely by the public.
- Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival rates in the UK double in the last forty years.
- Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.
- Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to beat cancer.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1861 or visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org).