

# WHAT SAVED SOME KIDS FROM STARTING TO SMOKE IN 2015? TEN BOX OFFICE FLOPS.



**On April 6, 2016, the U.S. CDC posted its annual report on smoking in the movies. Behind the data? Evidence that PG-13 films with smoking may also be unhealthy for a film studio's balance sheet...**

**T**he more smoking that kids see on screen, the more likely they will become addicted smokers. In 2015, nearly half of PG-13 films still featured tobacco imagery, says the CDC's latest tracking report. Overall, there's been no substantial improvement since 2010.

So how could audience exposure to smoking in PG-13 films drop 75 percent in 2015, compared to 2014? Mainly because the amount of smoking in PG-13 films declined by half, back to 2010 levels. But there was another factor: fewer people saw the films.

Over the past five years, the average PG-13 film with smoking has sold 20 percent fewer tickets than a smokefree PG-13 film. In 2015, PG-13 smoking films sold *57 percent fewer tickets*—and one out of three of them just plain flopped (see box). If those ten PG-13 films had performed at par, they would have delivered about a billion more tobacco impressions to domestic audiences.

We shouldn't need a string of box office failures to protect

PG-13 FILMS IN 2015		
	SMOKING	vs. SMOKEFREE
NUMBER OF FILMS	28	31
DOMESTIC GROSS	\$1.6 billion	\$4.2 billion
AVG. PER FILM	\$58 million	\$137 million
TICKETS SOLD	194 million	503 million
AVG. PER FILM	7 million	16 million
PRODUCTION COST	\$1.4 billion	\$2.3 billion
AVG. PER FILM	\$51 million	\$75 million
PRODUCTION COST PER TICKET SOLD	\$7.42	\$4.65
PRODUCTION COST EXCEEDED \$10/TICKET	10 FILMS (36%)	5 FILMS (16%)

DATA | PG-13 films ranked among top 10 in domestic BO in any week of their 2015 release; published production budgets; NATO avg. ticket price; films' tobacco content courtesy of Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down!, a project of Breathe California

kids' health. Yet business as usual isn't working, either. The CDC's report makes clear what won't safeguard kids—and what will:

"[I]ndividual movie company policies alone have not been efficient at minimizing smoking in movies. Movie companies with tobacco depiction policies included tobacco in as many of their youth-rated movies in 2015 as they did in 2010 and each of these movies included nearly as many tobacco incidents, on average..."

"Giving an R rating to future movies with smoking would be expected to reduce the number of teen smokers by nearly 1 in 5 and prevent 1 million deaths from smoking among children alive today."

See CDC's "Smoking in the movies, 2015" at [bit.ly/cdc-filmfacts](http://bit.ly/cdc-filmfacts).

## One little letter **R** will save a million lives.

**Smoking in movies kills in real life.** Smokefree Movie policies—the R-rating, anti-tobacco spots, certification of no payoffs, and an end to brand display—are endorsed by the World Health Organization, American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, American Public Health Association, Breathe California, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Health, New York State Dept. of Health, New York State PTA, Truth Initiative and many others. This ad is sponsored by Smokefree Movies, UCSF School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA 94143-1390.



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