

Government urged to pack it in to protect children from tobacco marketing

November 30 2012



Nearly two thirds (63%) of people in the UK back a move to get rid of colourful and slickly designed cigarette packets according to a survey of more than 2000 adults commissioned by Cancer Research UK.

The [survey results](#) are published today (Friday) ahead of Australia's historic step on Saturday when it becomes the first country in the world to put all [tobacco products](#) in standardised packs.

Removing all branding and making all packaging a uniform size, shape and design – leaving only pictures depicting tobacco-induced disease - is under consideration by the government. Health groups are backing the measure as a way to reduce the appeal of cigarettes to children.

Public support is overwhelming on the general issue of reducing the number of young people who start smoking, with 85 per cent of people

backing government action to achieve this.

Parents of children aged four and younger were more likely than adults without children to support the government in taking this action – 93 per cent vs 81 per cent.

Every year [around 157,000 children aged 11-15 start smoking](#) – that's enough to fill 5,200 classrooms or make up nearly 14,000 junior football teams. Preventing young people from being tempted to try smoking is vital as eight out of ten adult smokers start before they turn 19.

Dr Harpal Kumar, Cancer Research UK's [chief executive](#), said: "These results highlight the huge level of public support for standardised packaging, along with the backing for efforts to bring down smoking rates.

"It's important to remember the scale of harm caused by tobacco. It's the single biggest preventable cause of death from cancer - causing more than a quarter of all cancer deaths and killing around six and a half million people in the UK over the last 50 years from cancer and other tobacco related diseases. With so many children starting to smoke each year, the Government must show strong leadership to reduce the deadly lure of [cigarettes](#).

"Smoking causes at least 14 different cancers as well as a long list of other illnesses. So it's vital the [government](#) introduces standardised packaging as soon as possible, giving millions of [children](#) one less reason to start smoking."

More information: [www.cancerresearchuk.org/cance ...
TobaccoAndCancerRisk](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cance...TobaccoAndCancerRisk)

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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