

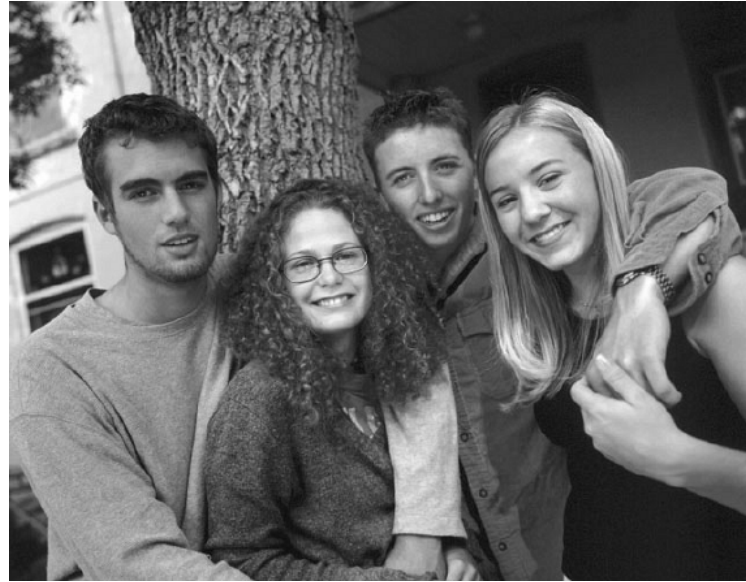


## Tobacco Companies Target Young Adults

### Can you see through the lies?

Young adult and college life has long provided the 18-24 year olds with a smorgasbord of late-night diversions. But now young adults have been flocking to bars, nightclubs and campus parties for a new kind of social event: tobacco-industry-sponsored parties complete with complimentary cigarettes. A new study suggests these parties are a powerful marketing tool that encourages some to start smoking.

Nearly one in 10 college students have gone to an industry-sponsored party, according to an article in the January 2005 edition of the *American Journal of Public Health*. Students at all but one of 119 colleges surveyed have attended the parties. These tobacco bashes often include live music and freebies such as T-shirts.



The article stated that students who did not smoke before college were almost *twice as likely to start* if they attended industry-backed parties that included free cigarettes. The article was based on results from the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Survey, for which nearly 11,000 students were interviewed in 2001. Although the study does not prove that such parties directly led people to smoke, the authors say there might be a strong link.

Tobacco companies agreed not to market to anyone under 18 as part of the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement with 46 state attorneys general. Tobacco companies have since shifted their marketing efforts toward brand-centered social events - marketing to young adults as replacement smokers.

You are too smart to smoke. Really.

Source: *USA Today*: 2004-12-29 Author: Liz Szabo,

This website was made possible by the Division of Public Health's Youth Tobacco Prevention Contract. Funding provided in part by the Delaware Health Fund.