

## THEY PUT WHAT IN A CIGARETTE?!

### ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

There's a lot more than tobacco in cigarettes, other tobacco products, and secondhand smoke. There are plenty of chemicals, and many of these chemicals can also be found in everyday household products. For this activity, you will create a display that tells others about these ingredients and exposes the truth.

**AGE GROUP:** any age

**NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:** It only takes one, but the more the merrier!

**TIME:** preparation: 3-4 weeks. The activity can take an hour or more.

**RESOURCES:** As many household items as you can find (5 to 15 items.) See below for details.

**COST:** If you can't find any of the ingredients, you may want to buy them. Keep it under \$20.

### Background:

Almost every product has a list of ingredients somewhere on the label. So isn't it strange that there isn't a list of ingredients on a pack of cigarettes? If there were, it would be a really, really long list! Seriously. There are over 4000 chemicals in a single puff of cigarette smoke, and 69 of them are known carcinogens (that means they cause cancer)! No wonder Big Tobacco is ashamed to show what they put in their products. If customers knew the kinds of things they were inhaling everyday, they probably wouldn't smoke anymore. It is definitely time to expose the truth behind these ingredients!



Use the list below to explain to people some of the chemicals that are in tobacco products and secondhand smoke:

- Arsenic:** used in rat poison
- Acetic Acid:** found in vinegar, hair dye, and photo developing fluid
- Acetone:** main ingredient in paint thinner and finger nail polish remover
- Ammonia:** a typical household cleaning fluid
- Benzene:** found in rubber cement
- Butane:** cigarette lighter fluid
- Cadmium:** found in batteries and artist's oil paints
- Carbon Monoxide:** a poisonous gas found in car exhaust, as well as from other sources
- DDT/Dieldrin:** Insecticides
- Formaldehyde:** used to embalm dead bodies. This embalming fluid is often used to preserve small animals in biology classes, so check with your science teacher to find this one.
- Hexamine:** in barbecue lighter fluid
- Hydrazine:** used in jet and rocket fuels
- Hydrogen Cyanide:** used as a poison in gas chambers
- Lead:** a highly poisonous metal that used to be found in some paints
- Napthalenes:** used in explosives, mothballs, and paint pigments
- Nitrobenzene:** a gasoline additive
- Phenol:** used in disinfectants and plastics
- Polonium-210:** a highly radioactive element
- Stearic acid:** found in candle wax
- Toluene:** found in embalmer's glue

So, now that you know all the nasty things mixed into cigarettes, spit tobacco and secondhand smoke, what can you do? Tell everyone else!

### **3 to 4 weeks before the event:**

- Reserve a spot at a community event or schedule a presentation in class, or at a school assembly to showcase your display (local festival, county fair, school health day, etc.).

### **1 to 2 weeks before the event:**

- Recruit volunteers to help gather supplies for the display and participate in the activity.
- Study the list of ingredients in the KBD guide and notice the household products that include these ingredients. Search for these products in your house, and make sure it is okay to use them in your activity. Keep in mind that you can use an empty container, too. If you can't find the products in your house, ask a neighbor or friend if you can borrow them for the activity.
- If supplies still cannot be found, buy a few things at the local hardware or grocery store.
- Make sure you keep these products tightly sealed at all times. After the event return them to where you borrowed them.

### **Event Day:**

- Explain each product to your audience, including the chemicals in it that are also in tobacco products. If you are at a health fair or similar event, set the products on a table with a list of other ingredients that can be found in cigarettes.
- Be prepared to answer questions and back up your research.
- Point out that the label on many of the products has a distinct warning that advises emergency assistance if the product somehow enters the body. Isn't it odd that these poisonous ingredients are inhaled by smokers and those exposed to secondhand smoke everyday?

### **Other ideas:**

- See the "Take it to the Streets" activity on page 68. If these ingredients are shocking to you, others will think so, too. To get the word out, create some flyers, posters, and fact sheets. You can put flyers up around your school or hand them out at an assembly or even a sporting event. Also, think about heading to local hangouts and events to let people know what Big Tobacco has been trying to hide.
- Tobacco ingredient collection competition. Instead of doing a presentation, how about asking your entire school or group to get involved? Have everyone bring in as many of these products as they can (have them label them with their names so you can return them after the event.) Each class can compete to collect the most ingredients. Collect as many of each household product as possible and get permission to display the items in the main hallway of your school, in the school parking lot or at another highly visible location. Just imagine huge piles or bins full of each of the household products listed above – this will create an even harder-hitting visual than a classroom presentation. Remember to keep all products tightly sealed in their original packaging. After all, these are dangerous chemicals! Give out gear or other small prizes to the class or group that brings in the most products. Post signs and banners around your display, hand out flyers – be creative! Keep brainstorming - these are just some suggestions. Come up with your own creative ways to get the word out.

**Interested in more? Check out your KBD CD-ROM and [kickbuttsday.org](http://kickbuttsday.org) to find out more about the fight against tobacco and what youth advocates across the country are doing to take action.**

## LET YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS KNOW YOU THINK BIG TOBACCO SHOULD TELL THE PUBLIC WHAT EXACTLY IS IN THEIR DEADLY PRODUCTS.

**You can take action!** Let your Senators and Representatives know how you feel about these fatal ingredients, and that Big Tobacco is still targeting youth. Send letters urging they do something about it and protect America's youth. You can hold a letter writing campaign at your event.

### HERE'S HOW TO REACH YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS:

Your Representative:	Your Senator:
Office of Representative (Name)	Office of Senator (Name)
United States House of Representatives	United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515	Washington, DC 20515
(202) 224-3121	

Don't know who your Representative is? Go to <a href="http://www.house.gov/writerep/">www.house.gov/writerep/</a>	You can find your Senators listed at <a href="http://www.senate.gov">www.senate.gov</a>
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**Here's an idea:** instead of just showing regular cigarettes, have your coordinator or another adult you work with get candy-flavored cigarettes to show the audience at your event.

What are candy-flavored cigarettes? These are real cigarettes with fruit and candy flavors and names like "Twista Lime," "Midnight Berry," and "Kauai Kolada." The tobacco companies add specific flavors to make these cigarettes smell and taste like fruit and candy, which is just another effort to market to youth.

So, why are candy-flavored cigarettes so important? Well, this summer I visited Capitol Hill with more than 25 other youth advocates from across the country. We all met with our members of Congress to talk about tobacco issues and why the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should regulate tobacco products. I met with a staff member at Senator Hillary Clinton's office and showed her a colorful box of candy-flavored cigarettes. When we showed it to her, she was shocked and surprised by how cool these cigarettes looked. She agreed with us that these products target kids and teens. Many other members of Congress and staff had the same reaction.

Shortly after our visits, Senator Clinton and six other members of Congress signed on as new co-sponsors of legislation that would allow the FDA to regulate tobacco. Our visits were a huge success, and I am confident that our discussion of candy-flavored cigarettes definitely contributed to Senator Clinton's decision.

So, if you organize this event, use candy-flavored cigarettes as a visual to really get the message out on how the tobacco companies target youth and how you should not be manipulated by them. If you want to spread your message even further, have a petition signing or letter writing opportunity at your event. You can then send the petition or letters to your members of Congress too.

Shannon O'Donnell, 17, Rochester, NY

Be sure to check out [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org) for more information about candy-flavored cigarettes and FDA regulation of tobacco.