

Engagement with 'Smoking Not Our Future'

Research Facts



Preventing young people from starting smoking is one of the Ministry of Health's three main priorities for tobacco control in New Zealand. The Health Sponsorship Council (HSC) has developed the 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' initiative, which promotes de-normalisation, social disapproval, and supportive quitting messages to young people aged 12 to 24 years, via multiple mediums and promotional activities.

The messages are delivered via the personal testimonies of high-profile celebrities who reflect a variety of media and music genres.

'Smoking Not *Our Future*' was evaluated in 2008 with a nationwide survey of 12 to 24-year-olds, carried out by Research New Zealand for the HSC. Young people who recalled the television commercials (TVCs) when fully prompted with the 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' tagline (88%) were asked a series of questions designed to measure their engagement with the TVCs. The main findings on young people's engagement with 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' are reported here.

Likeable

Findings suggested that 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' engaged young people with most reporting that they liked the TVCs. This finding was consistent across age, gender, ethnicity, and smoking status.

- Four in five (80%) young people could name something that they liked about the TVCs, and three in four (72%) said there was nothing that they did *not* like about the TVCs.
- The most commonly mentioned thing that young people liked about the TVCs was the messages (27%).

Celebrity presence

Findings indicated that the presence of celebrities in 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' enhanced the degree to which young people were engaged with the TVCs, across age, gender, ethnicity, and smoking status.

- The next most commonly mentioned thing that young people liked about the TVCs, after the messages (27%), was having the celebrities and role models (23%).
- More than one-half (56%) of young people reported that people their age were more likely to take notice of the TVCs because of the celebrities. Around one in three (36%) said that it would not make a difference, while less than one in ten (6%) said that people would be less likely to take notice the TVCs because of the celebrities.

(Continued on page 2)

Age relevant

Most young people, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, and smoking status, thought that the people who made the 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' understood people their age.

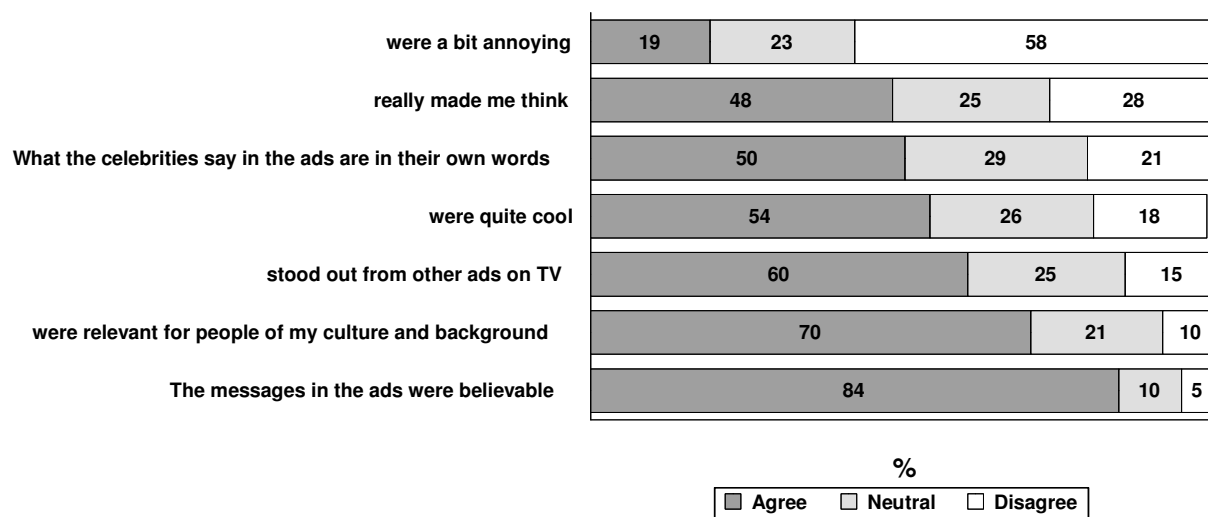
- Most young people thought that the people who made the TVCs understood people their age 'fairly well' (63%) or 'very well' (28%).
- Two-thirds (65%) of young people thought that the TVCs were aimed at people their age.

Engaging

The majority of young people agreed with most of the statements designed to measure how engaged they were with the TVCs. Agreement was similar across age, gender, and ethnicity, with particularly high levels of agreement among Pacific young people for some of the statements.

- Current smokers were more likely to disagree with some of the positive statements about the ads.
- Pacific young people were more likely to agree with five of the six positive statements about the ads.

Agreement with statements about the 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' TVCs



What we have learnt

Results suggested that overall, 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' engaged young people, across age, gender, ethnicity, and to a lesser extent, smoking status. The majority of young people liked the TVCs, and findings suggested that the celebrity presence in the ads enhanced young people's engagement with the TVCs. 'Smoking Not *Our Future*' also seemed to be age-relevant with around two-thirds of young people saying that they thought the ads were aimed at people their age. Finally, there were high levels of agreement with a series of statements designed to measure young people's engagement with the ads.

The full evaluation report can be downloaded from: <http://www.hsc.org.nz/researchpublications.html>

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