

## DANGERS OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has declared that tobacco use is the most important single preventable cause of death in the United States and the U.S. Surgeon General has stated that tobacco products, especially cigarettes, are the most important individual health risk in this country. Tobacco products are the most common form of drug addiction. Children are beginning to use tobacco products at younger ages, and, the earlier tobacco use begins, the less likely the user is to quit. Minors have no difficulty purchasing tobacco products even though many states have laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.

A Multi-state Tobacco Settlement\* has greatly affected the tobacco industries ability to market to minors and is the single most groundbreaking document to affect the tobacco industry. The settlement does establish some new restrictions on marketing and advertising, and creates a National Foundation for a public education program and research.

National PTA will participate with other organizations in educating the public about the dangers of tobacco products, their effects on children, and the cost of the use of tobacco products to society as a whole.

National PTA will continue to support legislation that prohibits tobacco companies from targeting youth in the advertising, promotion or marketing of tobacco products, and that prohibits the sale of tobacco products to minors.

National PTA encourages its constituent bodies to support implementation of the restrictions placed on tobacco companies in marketing to minors and other provisions included in the Multi-State Tobacco Settlement.

*\*\*Sources: Multi-state Tobacco Settlement can be obtained from the National Center for Tobacco Free Kids, 1707 L. Street, NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036;  
[www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org)*

Adopted: by the 2001 Board of Directors