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UIC IMPACTEEN PROJECT PRESENTS NEW RESEARCH
AT TOBACCO CONFERENCE

Four new studies by researchers from UIC's ImpacTeen Project will be presented during the 11th World Conference on Tobacco OR Health at the Chicago Hilton & Towers, Aug. 6-11.

The international symposium's purpose is to strengthen national, regional, and global leadership networks dedicated to tobacco use prevention and control, and encourage the formation of a network to share information, strategies and research. The conference is hosted by The American Cancer Society, the American Medical Association, and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and is co-sponsored by the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Cancer Institute.

"We look forward to the opportunity to share our research findings at this prestigious forum," said Frank Chaloupka, professor of economics at UIC and director of the ImpacTeen Project. ImpacTeen is part of "Bridging the Gap," a five-year, multi-disciplinary research project involving experts across the country. ImpacTeen is administered by UIC's Health Research and Policy Centers and funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest health philanthropy. Nationally recognized substance abuse researchers with expertise in economics, etiology, epidemiology, law, political science, public policy, psychology, and sociology form the core of ImpacTeen's research team.

The studies to be presented at the conference are the first to investigate the influence certain policies and environmental factors have on youth smoking. The presenters are Dianne C. Barker, MHS (Barker Bi-Coastal Health Consultants, Los Angeles, California); Gary A. Giovino, PhD (Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, New York); Sandy J. Slater, MS (UIC); and Melanie Wakefield, PhD (UIC).

Presentations:

- The 1999 ban on billboard advertising has not deterred the tobacco industry from marketing its products, according to Barker and her colleagues. The study found that compared with the period prior to the nationwide ban on tobacco billboard advertising, the period thereafter showed significant increases in the presence of interior store advertising for tobacco products; the presence and extent of exterior store advertising; the presence of a range of cigarette promotions, including gift-with-purchase, cents-off promotions and multi-pack discounts; and the presence and extent of tobacco-related functional objects.

- A study conducted by Giovino and his colleagues presents findings consistent with the notion that adult smoking directly influences adolescent smoking. Using data collected in 1997 from 24 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, their research found that adolescent and adult smoking were directly related overall; and for males, females, whites and several adult age groups. No relationship was observed between African-American adolescent and adult smoking. The study also found that the relationships observed between adult and adolescent smoking persisted after taking into account factors including price and clean indoor air policies.

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Tobacco conference/p.2

- The study presented by Slater and her colleagues examines how tobacco advertising, promotions and cigarette prices vary with community characteristics. Preliminary results suggest there are differences based on a neighborhood's predominant ethnic representation, income level and age of its residents.
- Wakefield and colleagues report that bans on smoking at home, bans in public places and enforced school smoking bans can reduce teenage smoking in the United States. They suggest that one explanation for this may be that exposure to environmental tobacco smoke during childhood may make children more inclined to take up active smoking in their teenage years by reducing the noxious deterrence of the first cigarette.

Barker, Giovino, Slater and Wakefield will join an estimated 5,000 professionals concerned about the global epidemic of diseases from tobacco use. Presentations on findings from the UIC ImpacTeen research will be on exhibit Wednesday, Aug. 9 at the conference.

Preliminary findings of studies presented by Giovino ("Cigarette Smoking Among Adolescents and Adults in 24 U.S. States and the District of Columbia in 1997-What Explains the Relationship?") and Slater ("The Effect of Community Characteristics on the Tobacco Retail Environment"); and complete text of studies presented by Barker ("Changes at the Point-of-Sale for Tobacco Following the 1999 Tobacco Billboard Ban") and Wakefield ("Do Restrictions on Smoking at Home, at School and in Public Places Influence Teenage Smoking?") can be found under "Papers and Presentations" at <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/impacteen>

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