

Youth Smoking

Attorneys general stated in a brief to an Illinois Circuit Court: "Since the MSA was executed, tobacco usage in the United States has declined substantially, and underage tobacco usage has declined by an even greater percentage, reversing a decade of increases."

Response to the attorneys general statement is that despite recent declines in youth smoking prevalence, tobacco control has not solved the youth smoking problem, it has made the problem worse:

1. Today there are about 200,000 *more* youth smokers than before tobacco control interventions began.
2. Current youth smoking prevalence is *double* what it should be had previous trends merely continued.
3. Recent youth smoking declines on sharp cigarette price increases are *less* than the 1970s and 1980s when prices reduced.

The above statement by attorneys general is technically correct as to its precise content, but it is also materially misleading by what it fails to mention. Attorneys general have cherry-picked a short time period that is favorable to their position, but omit disclosing overall period data and trends for youth smoking.

Principal among the attorneys general omissions is that com-

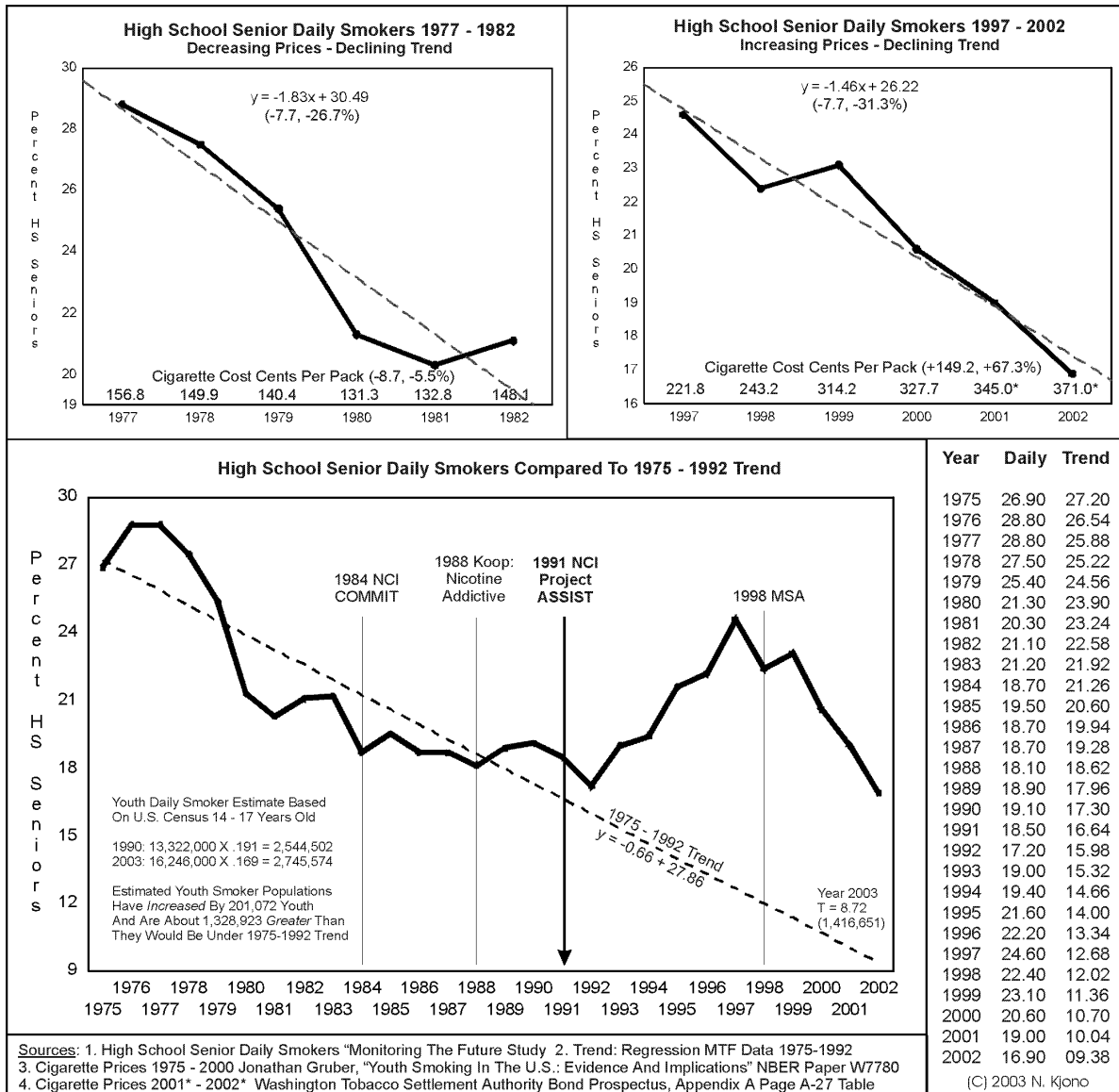
pared to a previous period that was not influenced by tobacco control intervention (1977 to 1982) the present decreasing trend in youth smoking (1997 to 2002)—with a 67 percent *increase* in cigarette cost—is *less* than that two decades ago, when tobacco companies *reduced* cigarette costs 5.5 percent.

Tobacco control intervention 1997 to 2002 produced the same percentage point decline in High School Senior Daily Smokers with a 67 percent increase in the price per pack of cigarettes as occurred 1977 to 1982 with a 5.5 percent *decrease* in cost. Tobacco control interventions under the MSA exploit a new youth cigarette price tolerance that did not exist before anti-tobacco began.

Historic data present a troubling perspective: from 1975 to 1992 the trend for youth daily smokers was -0.66 percent per year, but under Project ASSIST (American Stop Smoking Intervention Study) that trend sharply *reversed* and youth smoking prevalence increased 43 percent 1992 to 1997.

As of 2002 16.9 percent of high school seniors were daily smokers, compared to what should be 9.38 percent under the 1975 to 1992 trend. Since Project ASSIST began in 1991 youth daily smoker populations have *increased* 9.0 percent to 2002.

Based on the data I conclude as a father that youth are not "beneficiaries" of tobacco control intervention, they have been and are being systematically abused and exploited by it.



Adult Tobacco Use

Adult smoking data in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "National Health Interview Surveys" dates back to 1965, immediately after the first U.S. Surgeon General's report that linked smoking to cancer was published.

1. Under Project ASSIST adult Current Smoker prevalence declines leveled off, prevalence *stabilized*.
2. Since Dr. Koop's 1988 report declared nicotine to be addictive Former Smoker percentages have *declined*.
3. Today there are about 2.2 million *more* Current Smokers than before Project ASSIST began in 1991.

Tobacco control has *stabilized* the source consumer base for its pharmaceutical nicotine sponsors' products. By doing so its has increased the alleged costs to society of smoking-related illness.

1965 to 1992 adult Current Smokers declined -0.65 percent per year and Former Smokers increased +0.40 annually. 42.4 percent of adults were Current Smokers in 1965. The year before Project ASSIST began its intervention strategies in 1993 26.5 percent of adults were Current Smokers. 1992 was the year that the two trends would cross over, where there would be more Former Smokers than

Current Smokers. Had those twenty-seven-year trends merely continued, today about 30 percent of the adult population would be Former Smokers and only 18 percent would be Current Smokers.

That trend crossover did not occur. Under Project ASSIST and the MSA 1992 to 2001 the rate of decline in adult Current Smokers reduced to less than half of its preceding trend (-0.31 percent per year versus 1965 to 1992 trend of -0.65) and the Former Smoker trend *reversed* to negative (-0.22 percent per year.) Not only did the rate of decline in Current Smokers reduce by half, but *fewer smokers are now quitting under the MSA* than before tobacco control began.

Comparing nine year periods before and after Project ASSIST yields startling information. 1982 to 1991 adult Current Smokers declined by -0.85 percent per year and Former Smokers increased +0.32 percent per year. During ASSIST and MSA years 1992 to 2001 Current Smoker trend decline is only -0.31 and the Former Smoker trend *reversed* to -0.22.

Today adult prevalence statistics show a *stabilization* of adult smoker populations, restoring a previously-declining nicotine market. That stabilization has occurred *with a 49 percent increase in cigarette cost*, which implies significant adult smoking persistence. States exploit that smoking persistence through MSA payments and new cigarette taxes.

