



American  
Heart  
Association.



May 12, 2026

Mark Guiducci  
Global Editorial Director  
Vanity Fair  
1 World Trade Center  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Guiducci,

As organizations committed to protecting public health, we write to express disappointment with the recent Vanity Fair cover photo depicting Kylie Jenner lighting up a cigarette. Influential media like yours should not glamorize a product that remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States and is responsible for more than 490,000 deaths each year.<sup>1</sup> We strongly urge you to eliminate all instances of tobacco and nicotine product depictions in your magazine.

We recognize Vanity Fair is influential among millions of youth and young adults. These readers look to your magazine for information on the latest trends in pop culture, fashion, and current affairs. The valuable information your magazine provides should not be delivered alongside the influence of tobacco imagery. The story Vanity Fair should be featuring is that smoking, in particular, is down to the lowest rates on record. Society should not encourage cigarettes and nicotine products to make a comeback in pop culture. We know the consequences of glamorizing tobacco use, with decades of research consistently showing that exposure to smoking imagery among young people makes them more likely to initiate cigarette smoking and/or use e-cigarettes.<sup>2-6</sup> And the more that young people are exposed to this imagery, the more likely they are to begin smoking.<sup>6</sup> With nearly 90% of adult daily smokers using their first cigarette by the age of 18, ensuring that young people never start using tobacco or nicotine to begin with remains essential.<sup>7</sup>

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death, disease, and disability in the United States and is associated with a wide range of serious health outcomes, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and type 2 diabetes.<sup>7,8</sup> For young people who begin smoking, these risks accumulate over a lifetime.<sup>5</sup> Young people's brains are still developing, making them particularly vulnerable to addictive substances.<sup>9</sup> In addition to these physical health harms, youth tobacco and nicotine use has been associated with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety and can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, mood, learning, and impulse control.<sup>9,10</sup>

It is not only young people who are impacted by images of smoking or vaping in popular culture. For adults of all ages, tobacco imagery may also undermine quit attempts.

Smoking in TV and movies is a common trigger for cravings among people trying to quit, and can create strong urges to smoke among adult smokers after viewing.<sup>11,12</sup>

Normalization of tobacco is not “celebrating the best of global culture”, as your mission statement says,<sup>13</sup> and given its cultural influence, Vanity Fair must cease depicting tobacco and nicotine use and stop glamorizing products that cause so much harm. Depicting popular, young models or other influential people using these products and influencing others to do the same is going backward. Your readers would be better served by “hold[ing] a mirror” to the horrors of tobacco-related disease, addiction, and death and investigating the forces that perpetuate tobacco use. We would be happy to work with you to provide additional resources to understand the impact these images like those in your magazine have and how popular culture can help counter that impact rather than reinforce it.

Signed,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Truth Initiative  
Vital Strategies

## References

1. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2024). *Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disease and Death: Addressing Disparities: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK614484/>
2. *Celebrities Are Making Smoking Cigarettes Cool Again—WSJ*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2026, from <https://www.wsj.com/health/cigarettes-popularity-celebrity-smokers-345a8de3>
3. *From ‘The Materialists’ to ‘The Bear,’ Pop Culture Takes Up Smoking Again—The New York Times*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2026, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/11/movies/smoking-materialists-the-bear-lorde-charli-xcx.html>
4. Hassanein, Z. M., Barker, A. B., Murray, R. L., Britton, J., Agrawal, S., & Leonardi-Bee, J. (2022). Impact of Smoking and Vaping in Films on Smoking and Vaping Uptake in Adolescents: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Health Education & Behavior: The Official Publication of the Society for Public Health Education*, 49(6), 1004–1013. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10901981221086944>
5. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2012). *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
6. Bennett, M., Hair, E. C., Liu, M., Pitzer, L., Rath, J. M., & Vallone, D. M. (2020). Exposure to tobacco content in episodic programs and tobacco and E-cigarette initiation. *Prev Med*, 106169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjpm.2020.106169>
7. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2014). *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
8. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2020). *Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
9. US Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). E-Cigarette use among youth and young adults. A report of the Surgeon General. *Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health*.
10. Lechner, W. V., Janssen, T., Kahler, C. W., Audrain-McGovern, J., & Leventhal, A. M. (2017). Bi-directional associations of electronic and combustible cigarette use onset patterns with depressive symptoms in adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*, 96, 73–78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjpm.2016.12.034>

11. Sargent, J. D., Morgenstern, M., Isensee, B., & Hanewinkel, R. (2009). Movie smoking and urge to smoke among adult smokers. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, 11(9), 1042–1046. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntp097>
12. *For people quitting nicotine, on-screen tobacco use can put a quit attempt at risk.* (n.d.). Retrieved April 14, 2026, from <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/tobacco-pop-culture/people-quitting-nicotine-screen-tobacco-use-can-put-quit>
13. *About Vanity Fair | Vanity Fair.* (n.d.). Retrieved April 20, 2026, from [https://www.vanityfair.com/info/about-vanity-fair?srsId=AfmBOopSMXE\\_gzkbb5GkJJwlgjiALaKOP40c04SS9upcqGw8VUleZF](https://www.vanityfair.com/info/about-vanity-fair?srsId=AfmBOopSMXE_gzkbb5GkJJwlgjiALaKOP40c04SS9upcqGw8VUleZF)