

## Health Canada Research on Warning Message Size – 2008

HIGHLIGHTS FROM RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY CREATEC  
FOR HEALTH CANADA

QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF CANADIAN ADULT SMOKERS,  
YOUTH SMOKERS AND VULNERABLE NON-SMOKERS

EFFECTS OF MODIFIED PACKAGING  
THROUGH INCREASING THE SIZE OF WARNINGS ON  
CIGARETTE PACKAGES

RESULTS SUMMARIZED BY:  
PHYSICIANS FOR A SMOKE-FREE CANADA  
OCTOBER 2008

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Createc / Les Etudes du Marche Createc

### Contract details:

- Title: Effects of modified packaging through increasing the size of warnings on cigarette packages.
- HC-POR-07-47;
- Contract number: H4133-071141/001/CY;
- Contract date: December 31, 2007
- Interviews conducted between February 8 to 24, 2008;

### Full reports available:

- <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poref/health/2008/254-07a-e/report.pdf>
- <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poref/health/2008/254-07-e/report.pdf>

# Methodology

## Adults surveyed

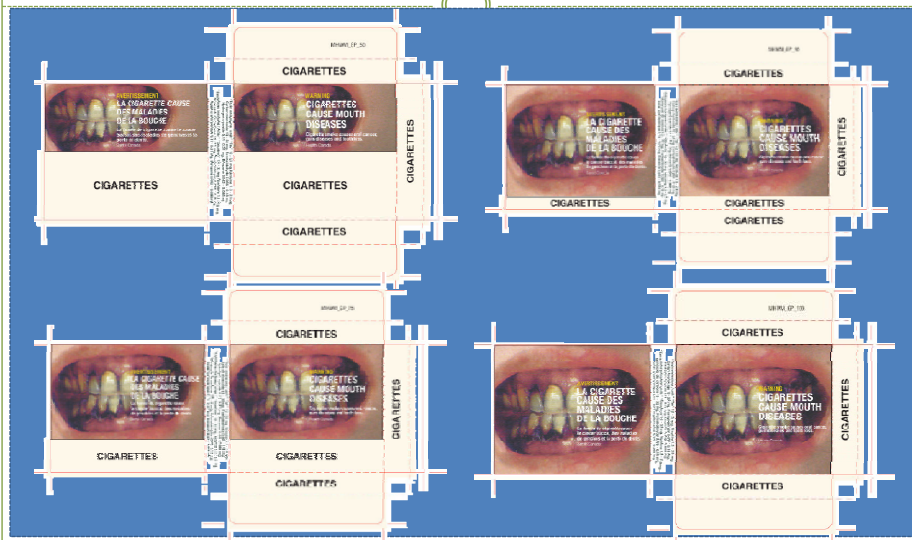
- Shopping mall recruitment
- Face to face interviews
- 730 adults
  - French (n=205)
  - English (n=525)
  - Male (n=373)
  - Female (n=357)
  - Hardcore (HC) (n=358)
  - Potential Quitter (PQ) (n=372)
- 10 communities

## Youth surveyed

- Shopping-mall recruitment
- Face to face interviews
- 746 youth aged 14 to 17
  - Current smokers (n=306)
  - Vulnerable non-smokers (VNS) (n=440)
  - French (n=231)
  - English (n=515)
  - Male (n= 369)
  - Female (n=377)
- 10 communities

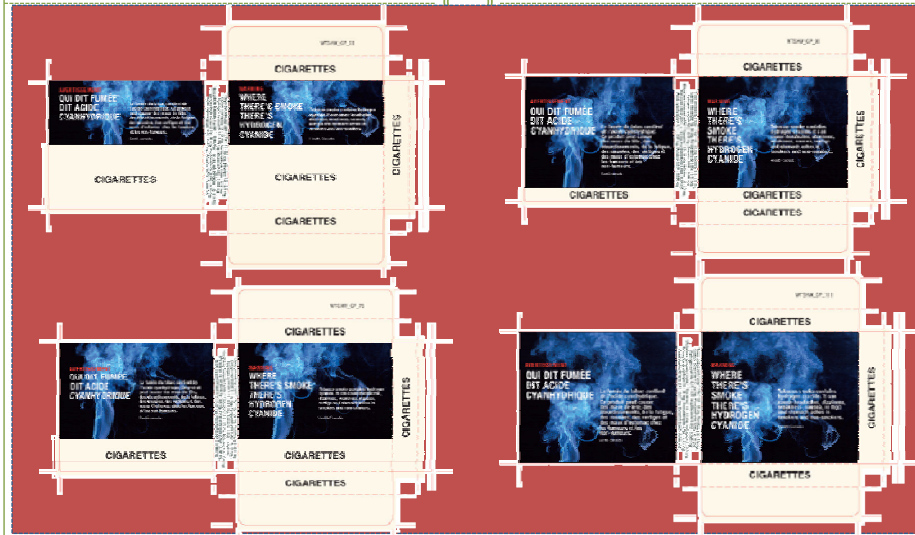
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## Four warning sizes and 2 warning types: 50%, 75%, 90%, 100% were used



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## Unbranded (i.e. plain packages) on 3-dimensional mock-ups



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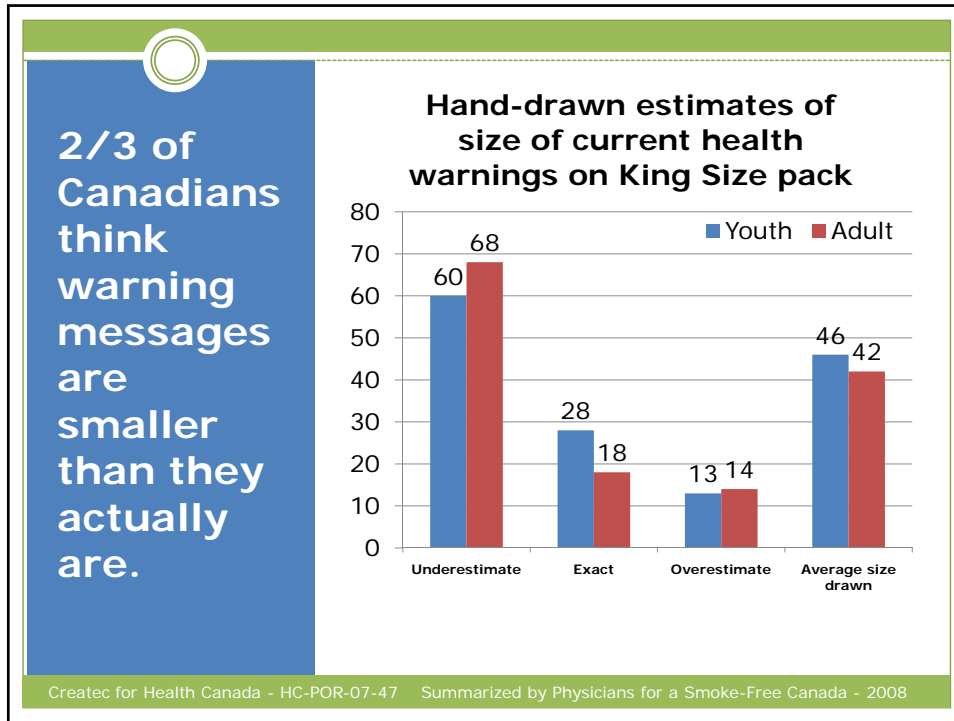
## Findings:

On the current packages, warnings have less impact than branding

"A large majority underestimated the size of the cigarette package.

This suggests that smokers and teenagers believe current cigarette packages give more importance to the brand than to the warning about the health risks of smoking."

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**Current warnings are viewed as somewhat effective**

To what extent are health warnings on each package of cigarettes effective:	Youth Smokers	Youth VNS	Adult HC	Adult PQ
Average rating on the 9 point scale; 1 = not at all; 9 = very much				
In informing the public about the risks of smoking	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.7
In increasing the number of people who disapprove of smoking	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.4
In discouraging people from starting to smoke	4.7	4.5	5.2	5.3
In reinforcing your personal belief in the message conveyed by the warnings	5.6	5.7	4.7	5.4
In increasing the number of smokers who quit smoking	5.1	6.0	4.2	4.8

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Larger warnings are seen as more effective.

Size of warning	50%		75%		90%		100%	
To what extent are health warnings on each package of cigarettes effective:	Average rating on the 9 point scale; 1 = not at all; 9 = very much							
Y = all youth A = all adult	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A
In informing the public about the risks of smoking	5	5.4	5.7	5.8	6.2	6.3	6.7	6.7
In increasing the number of people who disapprove of smoking	4.9	5.3	5.6	5.7	6.0	6.1	6.5	6.4
In discouraging people from starting to smoke	5.2	5.3	5.8	5.7	6.3	6.1	6.7	6.5
In reinforcing your personal belief in the message conveyed by the warnings	5.1	5.0	5.7	5.3	6.1	5.7	6.5	6.0
In increasing the number of smokers who quit smoking	4.7	4.9	5.2	5.2	5.7	5.6	6.0	5.9

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## Larger health warning messages would benefit public health

Results of this experiment showed that any of the three increased size options for warnings on cigarettes packages would make HWMs a more effective vehicle for communicating with teenage smokers and non-smokers and adult smokers than the current size: **larger and more visible warnings are more likely to effectively support efforts against smoking.**

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**90% should be the floor for larger warnings.**

“To achieve significant and substantial generalized effects on most indicators HWMs had to cover at least 90% of the front panel.”



CIGARETTES



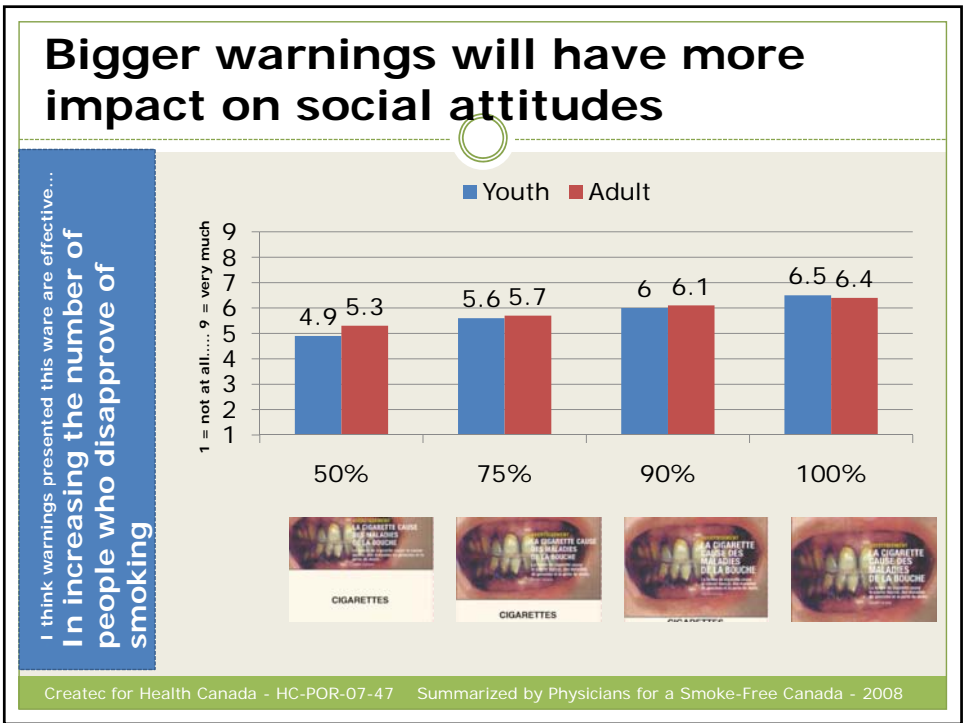
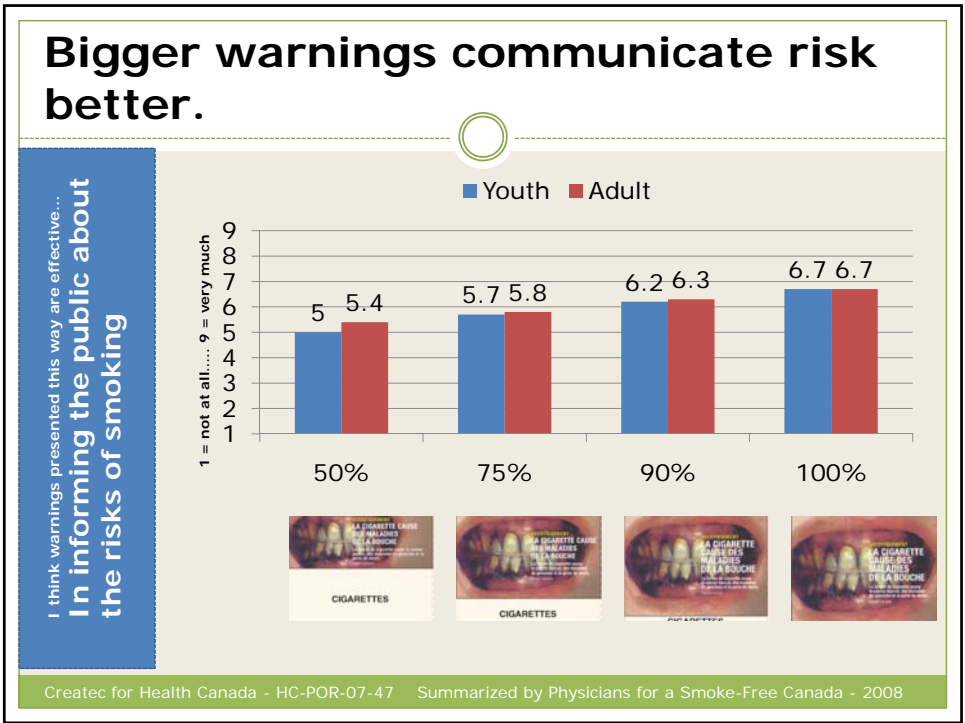
CIGARETTES

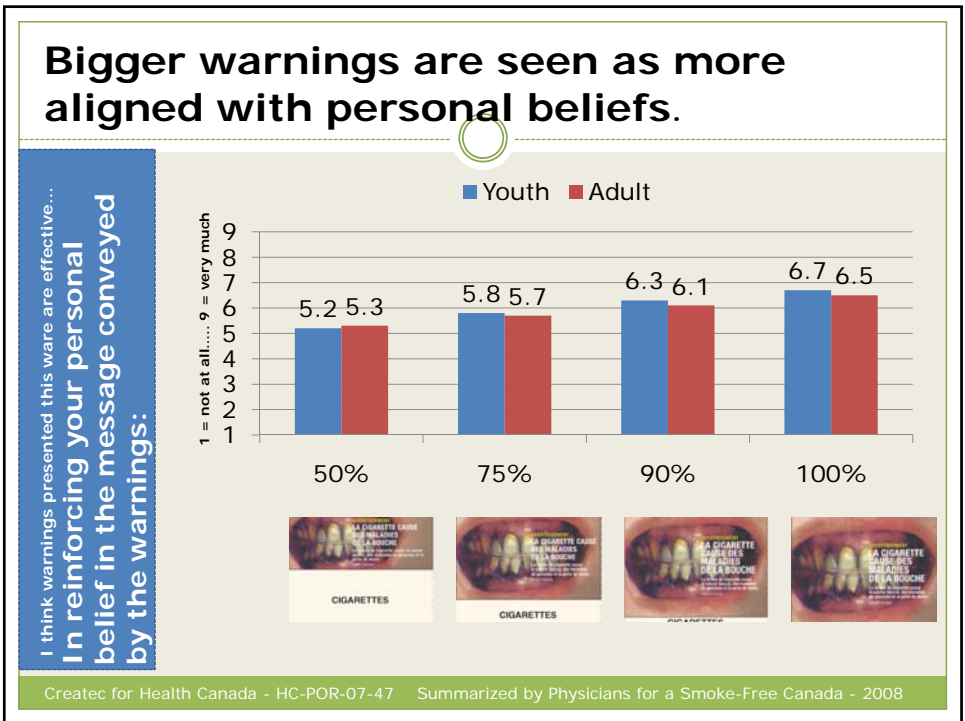
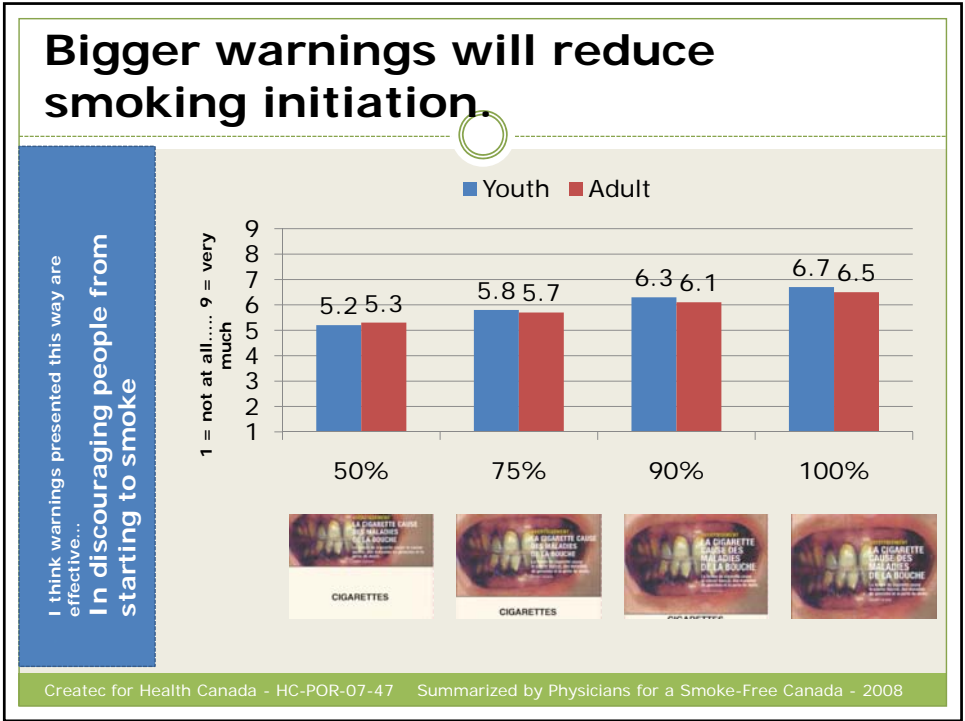
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“Each percent of surface increase with option C (90%) and D (100%) generally delivered more impact than each percent increase from current scenario A (50%) to option B (75%).”

Size of warning	50%	75%	90%	100%
If cigarettes were available only in packages like this one, to what extent do you think it would keep people like you from smoking?				
Business man				
•Youth	4.5	5.4	6.1	6.5
•Adult	4.3	5.0	5.6	6.1
Teenage boy				
•Youth	4.1	4.8	5.5	6.1
•Adult	4.0	4.7	5.2	5.7
Sporty girl				
•Youth	5.9	6.4	7.0	6.3
•Adult	5.8	6.2	6.8	7.1
Biker Man				
•Youth	2.6	2.9	3.4	3.9
•Adult	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.5
Young Woman				
•Youth	5.3	6.0	6.7	7.1
•Adult	5.1	5.7	6.2	6.6
•Fisherman				
•Youth	3.8	3.3	4.9	5.4
•Adult	3.6	4.0	4.5	4.8

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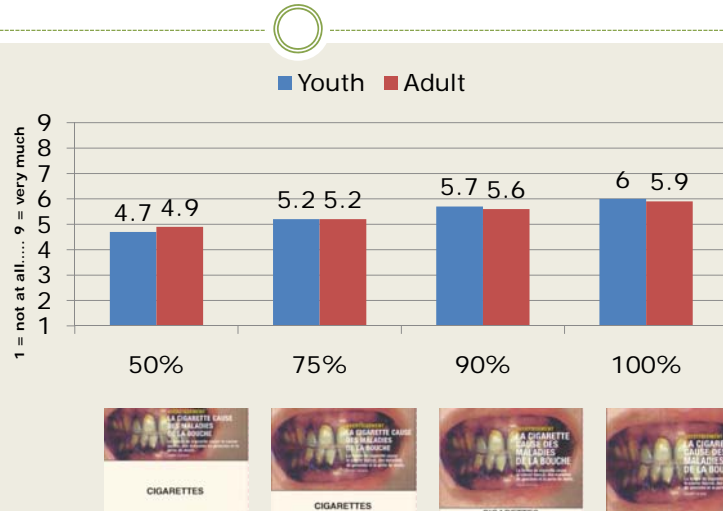






## Bigger warnings will help smokers quit.

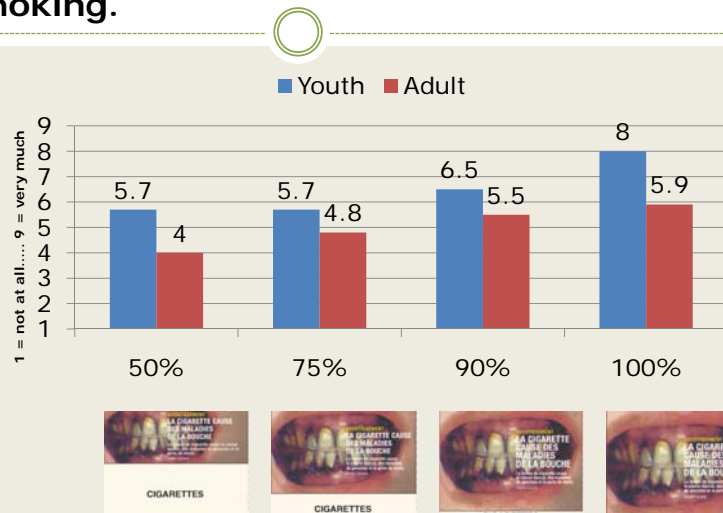
I think warnings presented this way are effective...  
**In increasing the number of smokers who quit smoking**



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## Smokers – and especially youth – think that larger warnings would have a greater impact on their smoking.

If cigarettes were available only in packages like this one,  
**to what extent do you think it would keep people like you from smoking?**

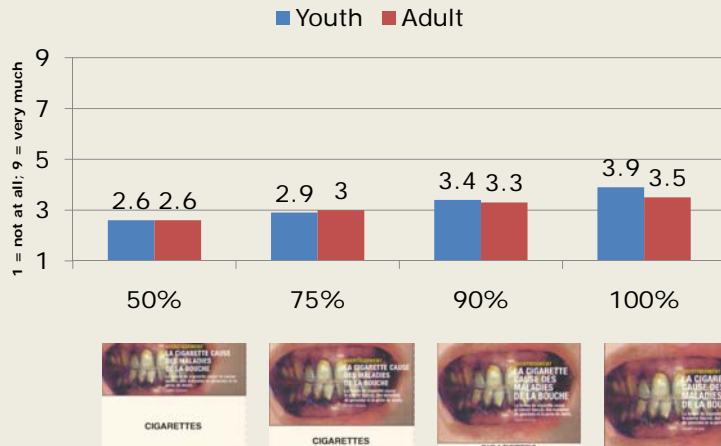


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### Smokers and youth thought that larger warnings would benefit other people – even unlikely ones: “Biker man”



If cigarettes were available only in packages like this one, to what extent do you think it would keep this person from smoking?

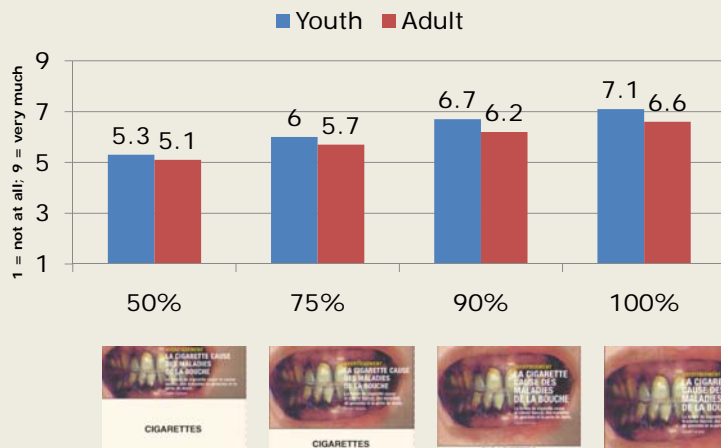


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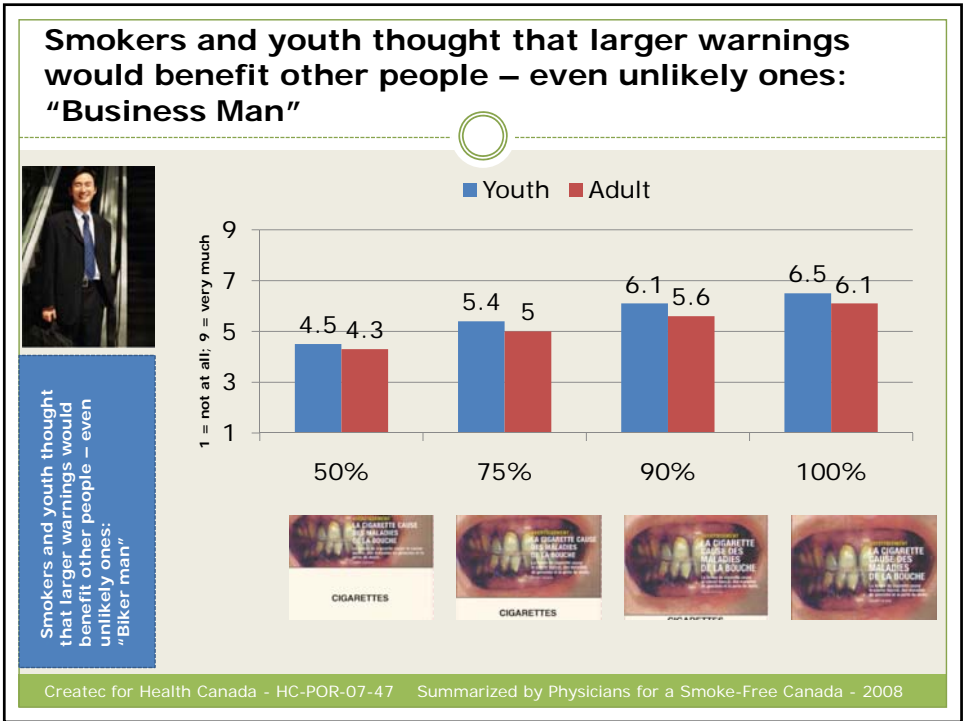
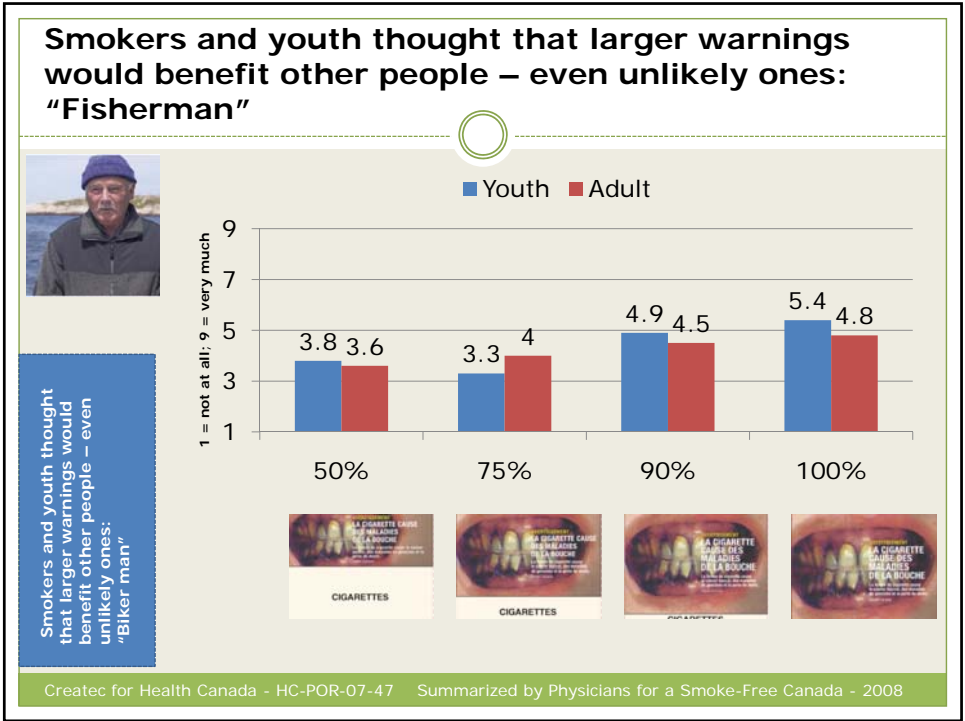
### Smokers and youth thought that larger warnings would benefit other people – even unlikely ones: “Young Woman”

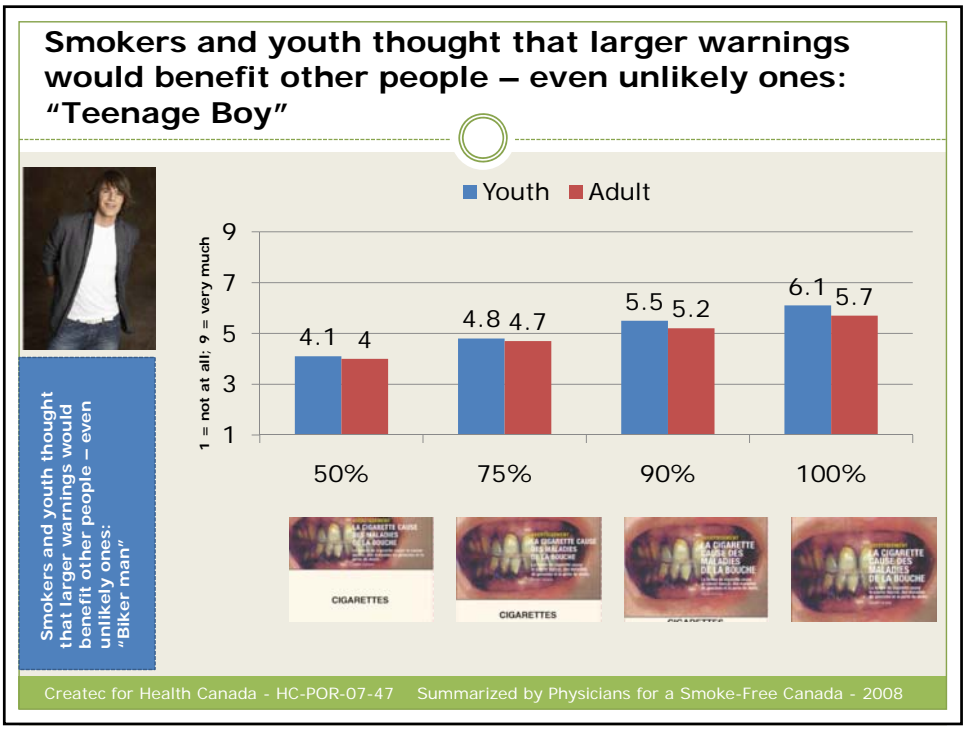
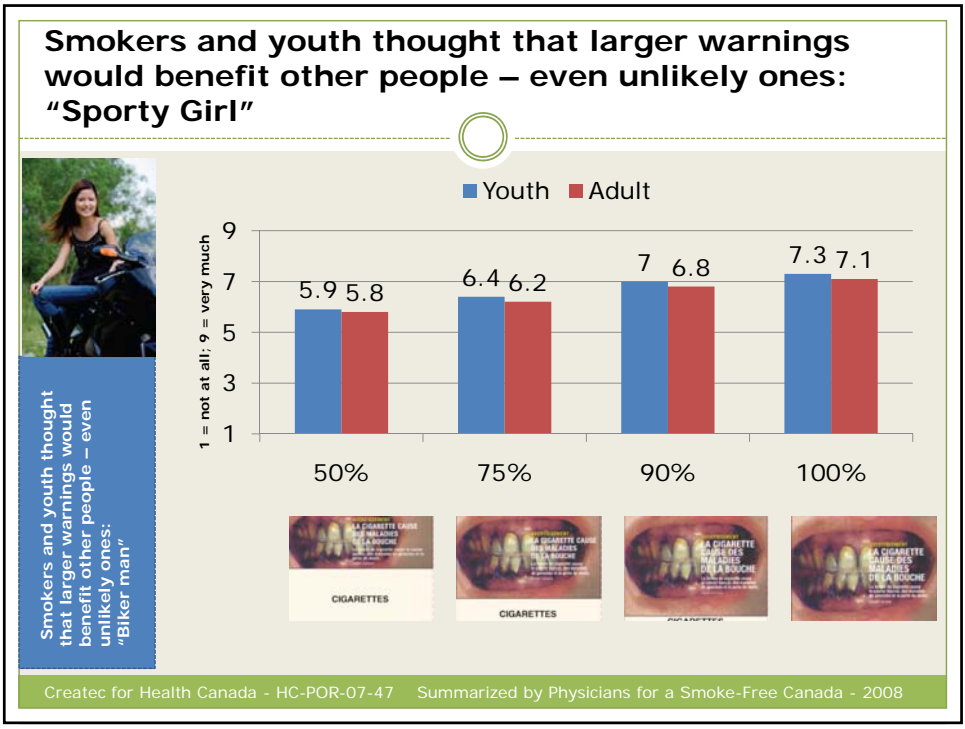


If cigarettes were available only in packages like this one, to what extent do you think it would keep this person from smoking?



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**To affect smoker or product image:  
Go big or go home.**

“Two sets of indicators were less sensitive to warning size increase: smoker image (personality traits) and product image (cigarette attributes).

These image indicators required option D (100%) for being substantially affected.

Increasing the current size of warnings on cigarette packages is not very effective to negatively affect image of smokers or perception of cigarette product attributes, unless HWMs occupy the entire front panel.”

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**100% warnings more likely to have significant effect on smoker image: ● = P < 0.1**

	50 → 75		50 → 90		50 → 100		75 → 90		90 → 100	
Y = youth; A = adult	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A
Risk/prudence	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	
Image conscious/sloppy		●	●	●	●	●				
Not cool/very cool	●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Concerned /selfish	●			●		●		●	●	
Health negligent/conscious				●		●			●	
Higher/lower education				●		●				
Fear/no fear for death			●	●	●	●	●	●		
Financially secure/poor				●		●				
In/not in control of destiny					●	●				
Disciplined/disorganized			●		●	●		●		
Leader/Follower					●	●		●		
Rebellious/Follow the rules					●	●				

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**100% warnings more likely to have significant effect on product image: ● = P < 0.1**

	50 → 75		50 → 90		50 → 100		75 → 90		90 → 100	
	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A
Y = youth; A = adult	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A	Y	A
Lots of taste/not much taste					●				●	
High nicotine/low nicotine	●		●		●					
High quality/low quality standards										
Sold at standard prices/lower prices					●				●	
Low tar/high tar	●		●		●					
Very popular/not very popular	●		●		●				●	
Addictive/not addictive			●		●					
Dangerous/Safe			●		●		●			
Toxic/Non Toxic			●		●					

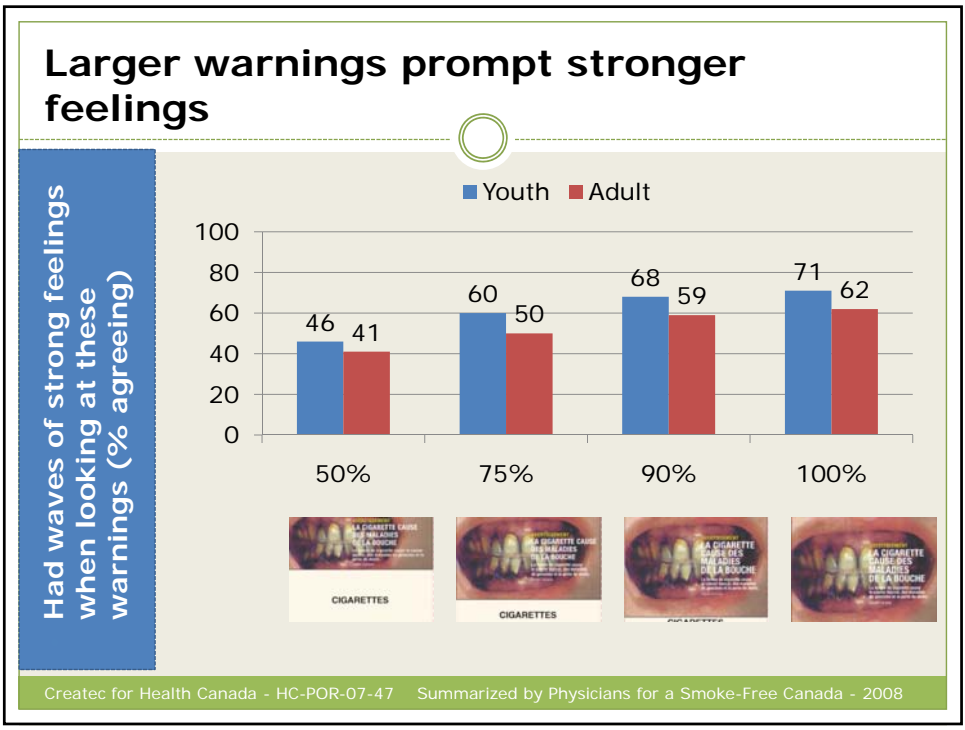
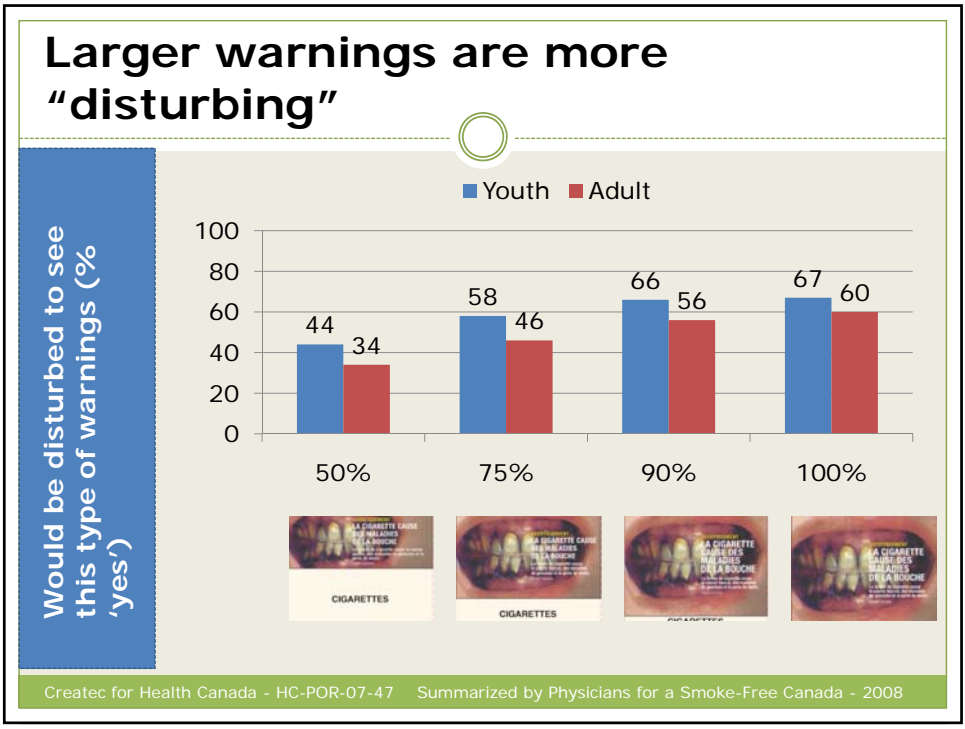
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**Emotional impact increases with size – and .**

“If warnings would occupy the entire surface (option D) of the principal panel, the emotional impact would be quite remarkable.”

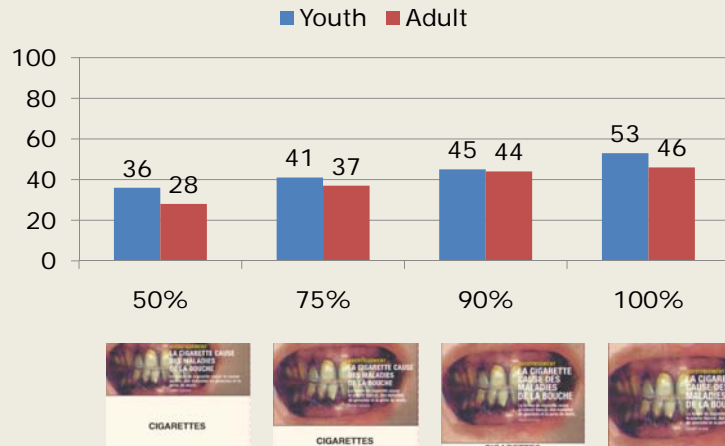
“These findings confirmed findings from previous studies that increasing the size of warnings triggers more intense emotions and reinforces the perceived health risks of smoking without requiring a lot of thinking or even attention to messages.”

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## Larger warnings make it harder to control your feelings.

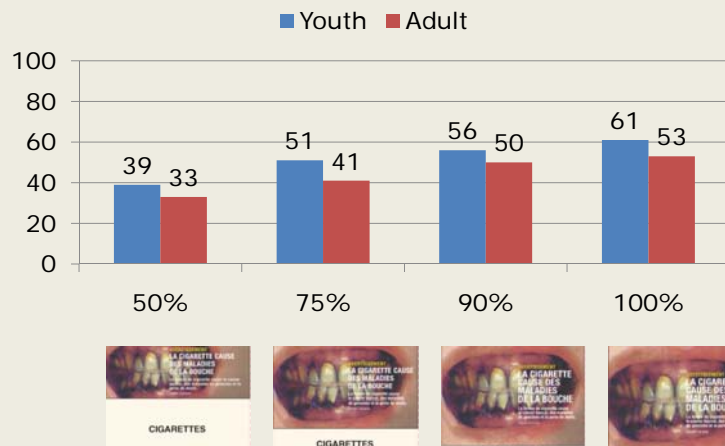
It would be difficult to hide or control your feeling so that nobody would know what you really feel about these warnings



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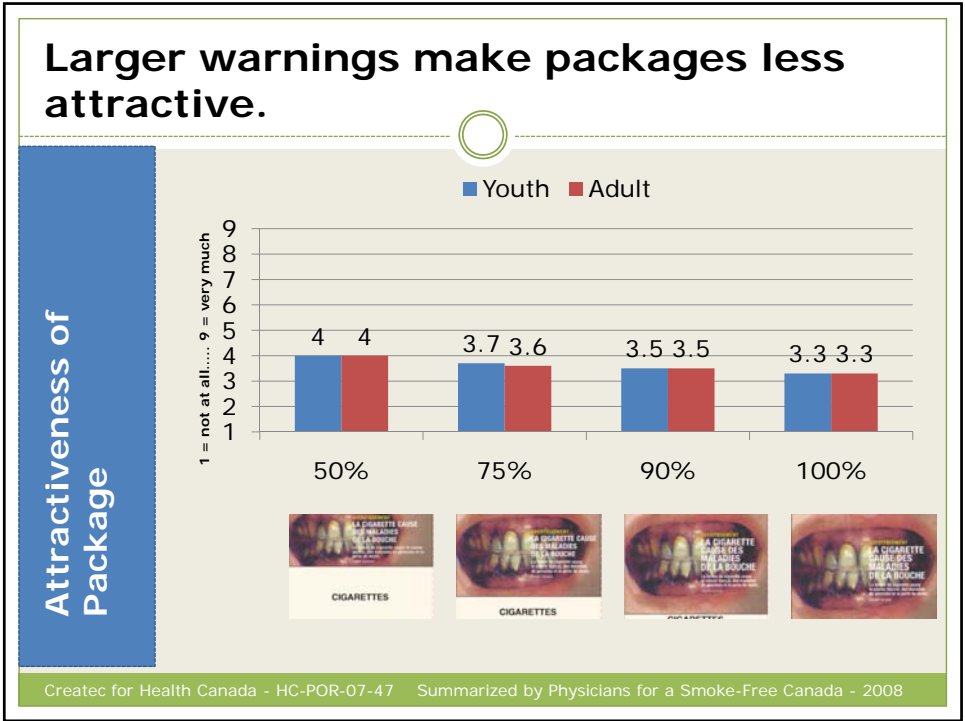
## Larger warnings are more shocking.

These warnings shock you (% agreeing)



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### Createc's conclusions: 90% is the place to start. 100% gives additional benefits

**For teenagers:**

"To achieve substantial effects on most effectiveness indicators, at least option C (90%) was required.

Compared to the current scenario, HWMs with option C [90%] were perceived as substantially more efficient in:

- Convincing various styles of smokers to stay away from smoking;
- Connecting with their emotions and shocking them;
- Making cigarette packages less attractive.

With modified packaging option D (100%) two additional substantial effects were observed. Compared to the current scenario, HWMs with option D [100%] affected substantially several (but not all) attributes of:

- Smoker image;
- Product image.

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**Createc's conclusions: 90% is the place to start. 100% gives additional benefits.**

**For adult smokers:**

"To achieve statistically significant effects on all effectiveness indicators, **at least option C (90%) was required.**

Compared to the current scenario, HWMs with option C were perceived as substantially more efficient in:

- Communicating with the public about the risks of smoking;
- Convincing various styles of smokers to stay away from smoking;
- Connecting with their emotions and shocking them.

With modified packaging option D (100%) one additional substantial effect was observed. Compared to the current scenario, HWMs with option D made cigarette packages less attractive."