



American
Heart
Association.



May 12, 2026

Mel Ottenberg
Editor in Chief
Interview Magazine
265 Canal Street
New York, NY 10013

Dear Mr. Ottenberg,

As organizations committed to protecting public health, we write to express disappointment with the recent Interview cover story which contains photos of Hailey Bieber smoking cigarettes. 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.¹ We strongly urge you to eliminate all instances of tobacco and nicotine product depictions in your magazine.

We recognize that Interview is influential among young people, who look to your magazine for cues on what is trending in pop culture and fashion. At a time when smoking rates are at their lowest levels on record, popular media should not encourage cigarettes or nicotine products to make a comeback through celebrity imagery. 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.²⁻⁶ And the more that young people are exposed to this imagery, the more likely they are to begin smoking.⁶ 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.¹

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.^{7,8} For young people who begin smoking, these risks accumulate over a lifetime.⁵ Young people's brains are still developing, making them particularly vulnerable to addictive substances.⁹ 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.^{8,9}

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.^{10,11}

Normalizing tobacco use through celebrity imagery does not reflect progress in culture, art, or self-expression and runs counter to decades of public health progress. Interview 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. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you to provide additional resources on the impact that tobacco imagery can have on audiences 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

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