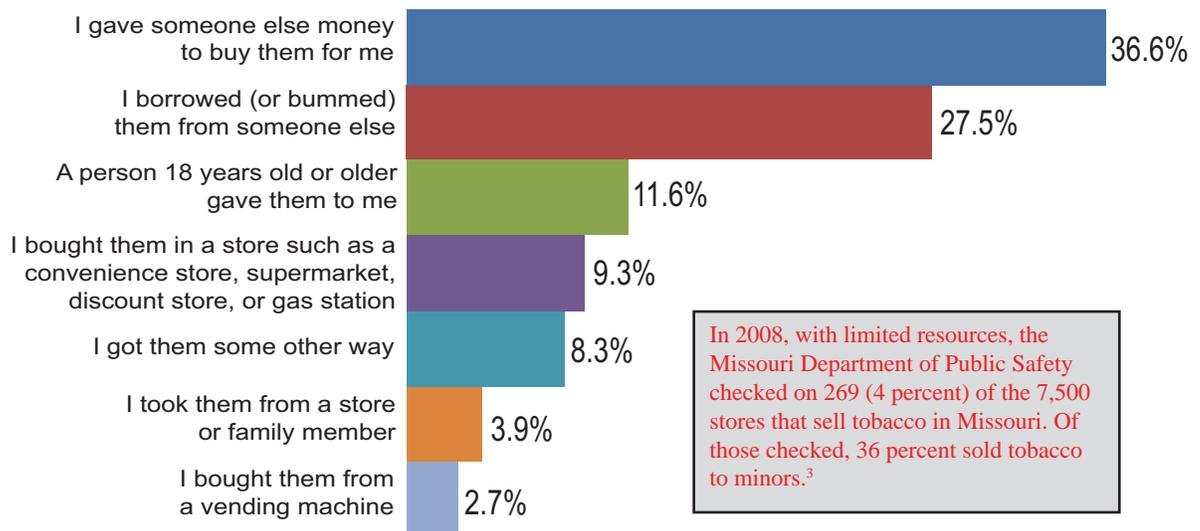


# What is wrong with this picture?

It is against the law for Missouri youth under age 18 to buy or have cigarettes. But, one in four Missourians are regular smokers at age 18.<sup>1</sup>

**Q** How are these minors obtaining cigarettes when it is illegal to sell tobacco products to them?

Here is what the Youth Tobacco Survey tells us!<sup>2</sup>



## What does this picture tell us?

- The majority of youth, about 76 percent were given cigarettes by someone else.
- Although it is illegal, about 10 percent of Missouri youth smokers bought cigarettes from stores.
- Missouri youth are jeopardizing their health by smoking.

## Do we need to worry about this?

**Yes, we do!**

- About 460,000 of today's Missouri youth are projected to start smoking.<sup>4</sup>
- If this continues, 140,000 of these youth will die prematurely from tobacco-related diseases.<sup>4</sup>
- In Missouri, every year over 9,000 people die from smoking-related diseases. Smoking costs Missouri about \$4.6 billion every year.

## What can change this?

- Create tobacco-free environments.
- Raise the price of tobacco products.
- Increase funding for strict enforcement of not selling tobacco products to minors.
- Educate adults/parents that sharing tobacco products with minors is illegal.

Sources:

1. Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2007 County-level Study.

2. 2009 Youth Tobacco Survey (High School), Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

3. Missouri Department of Public Safety. 2008 Annual Report to General Assembly on Tobacco Enforcement.

4. CDC. Projected Smoking-related Deaths Among Youth-United States. Sustaining State Programs for Tobacco Control Data Highlights, 2006.