

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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### For Immediate Release



### **Redlands Police Department Takes an Active Role in Protecting Youth**

**Redlands.** Redlands Police Department is to be commended for protecting the health of youth in the city by cracking down on the illegal sales of tobacco to minors.

The Redlands Police Department in collaboration with the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Tobacco Use Reduction Now (TURN) program conducted a decoy operation using undercover trained youth to purchase tobacco from local retailers. Sixty-nine stores were visited and each establishment was 100% in compliance with the law. This was a great improvement from the July 2008 decoy operation where 18% of Redlands' tobacco retailers sold illegally to minors.

According to the 2007 California Health Interview Survey, 4.0% or approximately 9,000 adolescents and teens in San Bernardino County identified themselves as current smokers. This is a decline from the 2005 study where 18,000 or approximately 8.0%, of adolescents identified themselves as current smokers. The decrease in smoking has been attributed to stronger enforcement of local tobacco retailers, education and access to smoking cessation programs.

Combining education and strong enforcement has proven to be an effective equation in reducing youth access to tobacco throughout California. The Redlands Police Department has successfully adopted these strategies to protect youth and decrease the illegal sale of tobacco to minors.

For more information on how you can get involved in protecting the youth in your community from the illegal sales of tobacco, contact TURN at 1 (800) 637-6653.

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