

**New York State  
Smokers' Quitline**

**1-866-NY-QUITS**

**(1-866-697-8487)**

[www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com)

**TTY: 1-800-280-1213**

**FACT SHEET:**

**SECONDHAND  
SMOKE  
IN YOUR HOME**



**Myths...**

- ▶ If I smoke in a different room of my house, my children won't get the harmful effect of secondhand smoke.
- ▶ I can blow the smoke in another direction and it won't bother or harm anyone.
- ▶ An open window will get rid of the dangers of secondhand smoke.
- ▶ Smoking only affects those who smoke.

**Reality...**

- ▶ Ventilation systems in homes cannot filter and circulate air well enough to eliminate secondhand smoke. Everyone in the house is affected by the dangers, including children and pets.
- ▶ Secondhand smoke has been classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a known cause of lung cancer in humans (Group A Carcinogen)
- ▶ Secondhand smoke is known to cause lung cancer deaths in NON-smokers.
- ▶ A person subjected to 8 hours of secondhand smoke inhales the same as 1 pack of cigarettes. Considering that we, and our children, spend more time in our homes than anywhere else, this can be quite unsettling.
- ▶ Infants and young children whose parents (or others within the house) smoke are the most seriously affected by exposure to secondhand smoke. This puts them at higher risk of infections such as colds, pneumonia and bronchitis.
- ▶ Each year 8,000 to 26,000 children will develop asthma as a result of a parent who smokes at least 10 cigarettes per day.
- ▶ Each year 200,000 to 1,000,000 children have their asthma worsened by secondhand smoke.

**Benefits of a Smoke-Free Home...**

- ▶ The greatest benefit of a smoke-free home is that you remove ALL of the dangers of secondhand smoke your family is exposed to.
- ▶ Your children will be healthier and happier.
- ▶ When your home is smoke-free, it will smell much better.
- ▶ Your food will taste and smell better.
- ▶ You will spend less time, energy and money cleaning your curtains, walls, windows and mirrors.
- ▶ Insurance rates may decrease. Call your insurance company for information.
- ▶ Pets will be healthier and happier.
- ▶ If someone absolutely must smoke, ask that person to go outside.

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**S E C O N D H A N D S M O K E I N Y O U R H O M E****Making your home smoke-free...**

- ▶ Do not allow anyone to smoke in your home.
- ▶ If smokers come to visit your home and want to smoke, request that they smoke outside or not at all.
- ▶ If a family member insists on smoking inside, ensure that the area where they smoke is off-limits to children and that it is well ventilated. Open a window or use exhaust fans. Remind them that even with these precautions the dangers of secondhand smoke remain.
- ▶ Don't allow babysitters or others who work in your home to smoke in the house or near children.
- ▶ If you do smoke, the best way to make your home smoke free is to try to stop. If you choose not to stop smoking, only smoke outdoors and away from children.

**Where Children spend time...**

- ▶ To reduce your children's exposure to secondhand smoke, make sure that day care providers, preschools and other caregivers are following local and state laws regarding smoking.
- ▶ Do not smoke in your car when children are present.
- ▶ Insist that babysitters, caregivers, relatives, friends, etc. do not smoke near your children.

**What else to do...**

- ▶ Know the law. New York State has passed the Expanded Clean Indoor Air Act that prohibits smoking from nearly all public places, including restaurants and workplaces.
- ▶ Teach your children by example. Help yourself or others to stop smoking.