

## Just What is Secondhand Smoke?



Secondhand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, pipe, or cigar, and the smoke that is exhaled from the lungs of the smoker.

Secondhand smoke is also called environmental tobacco smoke (ETS); exposure to secondhand smoke is often called involuntary smoking or passive smoking.

## Why Should Parents Be Concerned About Secondhand Smoke?

### ***Effect on Lungs...***

Children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to suffer from pneumonia, bronchitis, and other lung diseases.

### ***Ear Infections...***

Children who breathe secondhand smoke can have more ear infections.

### ***Asthma...***

Children who breathe secondhand smoke can have more asthma attacks and the episodes can be more severe.

Secondhand smoke may also cause thousands of healthy children to develop asthma each year. Infants and very young children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to get lung infections, resulting in thousands of hospitalizations each year.

***Choose not to smoke in your home and  
don't permit others to do so.***



***Choose not to smoke if children are  
present, especially infants and  
toddlers. They are particularly  
susceptible to the effects of passive  
smoking.***

## What Can I Do to Reduce Children's Health Risks from Secondhand Smoke?



### ***Other Places Your Children Spend Time:***

EPA recommends that every organization dealing with children have a smoking policy that effectively protects children from exposure to secondhand smoke.

Find out about the smoking policies of the day care providers, pre-schools, schools, and other care-givers for your children. Help other parents understand the serious health risks to children from secondhand smoke. Work with parent/teacher associations, your school board and school administrators, community leaders, and other concerned citizens to make your child's environment smoke free.

# What Can I Do to Reduce Childrens' Health Risks from Secondhand Smoke?



## ***In Your Home:***

- *Choose not to smoke in your home and don't permit others to do so.*
- *Choose not to smoke if children are present, especially infants and toddlers. They are particularly susceptible to the effects of passive smoking.*
- *Don't allow baby-sitters or others who work in your home to smoke in the house or near your children.*
- *Choose not to smoke in your car.*



## Where Can I get More Information on Secondhand Smoke and Children?

### **Where to Find Free Information:**

National Service Center for  
Environmental Publications (NCEPI)  
<http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom/>  
or call at 1-800-490-9198

Visit EPA's Web Site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/ets.html>

You can also call IAQINFO at:  
**(800) 438-4318** to speak to an  
information specialist, Monday through  
Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern  
time. After hours, you may leave a voice  
message, or you may make inquiries by  
fax (703) 356-5386 or via e-mail:  
[iaqinfo@aol.com](mailto:iaqinfo@aol.com) anytime.

# EPA **Children and Secondhand Smoke**

