

Tips to protect parents and kids from tobacco smoke



This year, thank a parent who recently quit smoking.

An estimated 20 percent of adults in the United States smoke cigarettes, and 7 out of 10 of them want to quit. Some adults who have quit smoking are parents, and their efforts to become smoke-free have made them role models for their children as well as other smokers in their families and communities. Did one of your parents quit smoking? If so, click on the following link and honor their decision by sending them an appreciation e-card:

<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/index.asp?category=201>.

Other parents continue to struggle with addiction to tobacco. Let parents who smoke know that they've taken great care of their families and that now you want them to do something important for themselves: quit smoking. Let them know that you are supportive. Smoking cessation treatment and social support derived from family and friends improve cessation rates. Send a supportive e-card that encourages them to quit. And let them know of the tremendous health benefits they will experience after quitting by visiting www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

For women planning to have children, it is important to understand the health risks associated with tobacco use. Smoking increases risk for adverse pregnancy-related health outcomes, including infertility, spontaneous abortion, premature rupture of membranes, low birth weight, neonatal mortality, stillbirth, preterm delivery, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

ALL parents can protect their children from the dangers of secondhand smoke. Many parents already understand that breathing even a small amount of secondhand smoke can be dangerous, and they take steps to keep their children safe. But not everyone knows that there is no safe amount of secondhand

smoke, that tobacco smoke contains a deadly mix of more than 7,000 chemicals (including toxic substances like formaldehyde, arsenic, lead, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, and butane), and that each year more than 300,000 children suffer from infections caused by secondhand smoke (including bronchitis, pneumonia, and ear infections).

The following tips can help all parents protect their children:

- Do not let people smoke around your children, and teach your children about the health risks of tobacco use and secondhand smoke.
- Look for restaurants and other places that do not allow smoking, and let owners of businesses that are not smoke-free know that smoke bothers you and that a "no-smoking" section is not good enough. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings do NOT eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Make sure your children's day care centers and schools are tobacco-free. A tobacco-free campus policy prohibits any tobacco use or advertising on school property by anyone at any time. This includes off-campus school events.
- Make your home and car completely smoke-free. Opening a window does not protect you or your children from secondhand smoke.

More information is just a click or call away. For more on the health consequences of smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke, as well as resources on how to quit, consult the following:

- Secondhand Smoke: What it Means to You at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2006/consumer_summary/index.htm
- How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: What it Means to You at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2006/consumer_summary/index.htm
- Vital Signs: Tobacco Use at <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/TobaccoUse/Smoking/>.

For additional quitting help visit www.smokefree.gov, www.women.smokefree.gov, or call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** (1-800-784-8669).