



Day One Newsletter

Dangers of Secondhand Cigarette Smoke

Everyone has heard or read about the dangers of smoking. The subject has recently been very visible in the news since Peter Jennings, the well-known anchor of ABC World News, died from lung cancer after years of smoking.

Unfortunately, smokers are not the only ones affected by their actions. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has classified secondhand smoke as a Group A carcinogen, a designation which means that there is sufficient evidence that the substance causes cancer in humans. EPA has classified only 15 other pollutants as Group A, including asbestos, radon and benzene. Only secondhand smoke has actually been shown to cause cancer at typical environmental levels.

Cigarette smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals, at least 40 of them are known to cause cancer. These chemicals are of a higher level of concentration in the smoke that comes off of the burning end of the cigarette than in the smoke that is inhaled by the smoker actively smoking a cigarette. Exposure to this secondhand cigarette smoke is especially hazardous to infants and children since they are still developing physically, have higher breathing rates than adults and have little control over their indoor air environments.

Health hazards to infants and children caused by exposure to secondhand smoke include more upper respiratory infections, more ear infections and related hearing problems, more cases of asthma and more severe symptoms in children who already have asthma, and higher rates of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The EPA estimates that every year, between 150,000 and 300,000 children under 18 months of age get bronchitis or pneumonia from breathing secondhand smoke. Children younger than one year of age whose mothers smoked were almost four times as likely to be hospitalized.

An important new study published in the January 2005 issue of Environmental Health Perspectives demonstrates a strong negative relationship between children's exposure to secondhand smoke and their performance on tests measuring reading, math and reasoning skills. This negative impact of secondhand smoke on children's cognitive abilities was evident even at extremely low levels of exposure and held up when other possible explanations (e.g. poverty, parent education, etc.) were controlled.

The message is clear...children must be protected from exposure to secondhand cigarette smoke.

West Virginia
Hospital Association

August 2005

Inside this issue:

Dangers of Secondhand Cigarette Smoke

1

News To Use Protecting Children from Secondhand Cigarette Smoke

2

In Your Home
In Your Car
In Other Public Places

Protecting Children (cont)

3

In Childcare Facilities
**Resources for a
Smoke-Free
Environment**

Information & Reminders

4

Growing Healthy
Children Conference
Day One training
Day One reports

News to Use

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM SECONDHAND CIGARETTE SMOKE

It may feel awkward at first to ask people to not smoke in your home or car. Talk to family and visitors about the health benefits of a smoke-free home and car. Tell them that for the sake of your children's health, you must provide a smoke-free environment. Be understanding, but let them know that cigarette smoke affects everyone, especially infants and children.

IN YOUR HOME:

If someone feels that they must smoke, ask them to do so outside. Show them where they can go outside and provide them with something to put their ashes and butts in.

Display No Smoking signs where they are visible to visitors. Several organizations such as the American Lung Association offer No Smoking posters that are suitable for framing. You can even put your craft skills to work and quilt, cross stitch or paint signs to match the décor of your home.

REMEMBER: IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO MOVE TO ANOTHER ROOM INSIDE, OPEN A WINDOW, TURN ON A FAN, BLOW SMOKE AWAY, OR USE AIR FRESHENERS OR CANDLES.

IN YOUR CAR:

Never allow smoking in your car. Many of us grew up suffering in the back seat of the family car when our parents smoked in the front seat. There is NO way to ventilate a car, even with the windows down, that will protect children from secondhand smoke in a small space such as a car.

Use No Smoking signs or stickers in your car to let passengers know that it is a smoke-free car.

Remove your cigarette lighter from the socket and replace it with a cover bearing the No Smoking symbol.

Put mints, money or other items in your ashtray to reinforce the fact that this is a smoke-free zone.

If you are traveling with someone who must smoke, build in time for periodic stops for them to smoke outside of the car.

IN OTHER PUBLIC PLACES:

Choose to take your children to places that are smoke-free. Give your business to restaurants, places of entertainment and recreation and other facilities that are smoke-free. Explain your choices to your children to help them understand about making healthy environmental choices for themselves.

Make sure that your child's daycare center and others caring for your child provide a smoke-free environment all of the time.

IN CHILDCARE FACILITIES:

Post No Smoking signs throughout the facility, in clear view for staff and parents.

Set a smoke-free policy and provide training to staff that includes information about the health risks of secondhand smoke as well as specifics about the policy.

Provide parents with information about the policy, including reasons for establishing and enforcing the policy. Ask for their support by abiding by the policy. Share information about the health risks of secondhand smoke with them.

Resources for establishing a smoke-free environment

For Child Care Providers:

The ABCs of Secondhand Smoke: Training Module for Child Care Providers produced by Environmental Health Center, a division of the National Safety Council.
1025 Connecticut Avenue, NW #1200
202-293-2270
<http://www.nsc.org/ehc.htm>

For Parents and Families

Secondhand Smoke and Children (English and Spanish)
Protect Your Children: Take the Smoke-free Home Pledge (English and Spanish)
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
IAQ INFO
P.O. Box 37133
Washington, DC 20013-7133
1-800-438-4318 or 703-356-4020
Fax: 703-356-5386
iaqinfo@aol.com

Visit our website at www.wvha.org/day_one for links to more information about secondhand smoke and children.

***To learn more about any tobacco-related issues contact the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free West Virginia at 304-344-9744
www.ctfwv.com***

West Virginia
Hospital Association

100 Association Drive
Charleston, WV 25311

Phone: (304) 344-9744
Fax: (304) 344-9745
E-mail: dayone@wvha.org

SAVE THE DATE!

The West Virginia Children's Health Conference
"Growing Healthy Children"
Conversations about West Virginia's Future

NOVEMBER 10-12, 2005

View the Day One
Newsletter
online and in color at:
[www.wvha.org/
day_one](http://www.wvha.org/day_one)



Building Blocks for a Bright Baby

Embassy Suites, Charleston, WV

With plenary sessions and workshops focusing on:

- Oral Health
- Health and Wellness
- Health Care Access
- Prenatal and Child Health

Conference Co-Chairs

First Lady Gayle Manchin & Dr. Joan Phillips, President, AAP, WV Chapter



Information & Reminders

GROWING HEALTHY CHILDREN CONFERENCE
November 10-12, 2005
Charleston, WV
register online at www.wvhealthykids.org

Day One trainings are being scheduled for the fall. If you are interested in hosting a training or attending a training, contact Cinnie Kittle at ckittle@wvha.org. The training has been approved for 3.6 contact hours for nurses and 3 contact hours for social workers.

NOTE TO PARTICIPATING HOSPITALS:

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PROVIDE THE DAY ONE PROGRAM WITH MONTHLY REPORTS.

QUESTIONS ?

CONTACT CINNY KITTLE ckittle@wvha.org 304-344-9744 or 304-419-0899

This publication has been made possible through support from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.