



Speaking for Children

What's best for our youngest children is best for everyone!

Keeping children safe from secondhand smoke

Secondhand smoke is not only dangerous—it can be deadly—especially for children. Smoking is responsible for approximately one in five deaths in the United States and secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Smoking is very dangerous to unborn babies. Women who smoke while pregnant are more likely to:

- Lose the baby (miscarriage)
- Have the baby too soon
- Have trouble giving birth
- Have a baby who's stillborn or too small
- Have a baby who dies soon after birth ([Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS](#))
- Have a baby who gets sick a lot or has frequent colds and ear infections

Young children are especially susceptible to risks of second hand smoking since their lungs are still developing. Children who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to suffer from cough, wheeze, phlegm and breathlessness. Exposure to secondhand smoke is responsible for one million additional cases of childhood asthma. The current Surgeon General's Report states that there is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure. Even brief exposures can be harmful to children.

The best thing you can do for your family is to quit smoking.

Why is it important to have smoke-free homes, cars, and public spaces?

To help keep children healthy, California bans adults from smoking in cars with kids present. The Health and Safety Code also guarantees that children and their families can enjoy recreational areas with play equipment designed to be used by children, located on public or private school grounds, or on city, county or state parks, knowing they have a 25 foot clean air zone around the playgrounds and toddler sand box areas.



While it may feel uncomfortable at first to tell people you have decided to make your home smoke-free, remember it is for your child's health. Asking smokers to smoke outside is not about them being smokers. It's about protecting your child. When someone else is smoking in your child's presence, your child is smoking too. Smokers should also be told to wash their hands and face before picking up your child.

Other benefits of a smoke-free home and care:

- Lower risk of fires and accidental burns
- Lower risk of your toddler swallowing a cigarette butt
- Curtains, carpets and walls stay cleaner
- Lower insurance costs

Children learn by watching others

Studies have shown that adult smoking behavior significantly influences youth smoking behavior. When children see adults smoking in their home, at the park, outside their school, library, grocery, or medical home, they see the behavior as acceptable, and studies show that they are more likely to copy that behavior.

Every day in California, nearly 300 children begin smoking. Of those, 200 will go on to become addicted smokers. Half of those children will die prematurely.

The most recent California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), which gathered responses from almost 15,000 Sonoma County students in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11 during the 2005-06 school year, showed that following six years of steadily declining usage rates, Sonoma County high school students now report an increase in regular tobacco use. Nineteen percent of eleventh-graders said they are regular smokers compared to 16% in 2004. Daily tobacco use also increased among ninth-graders, and student perception that frequent use of tobacco use is harmful dropped slightly among students in grades 7 and above.

First 5 Sonoma County encourages parents and guardians of young children to seek help if they are smokers to prevent their children from becoming smokers themselves.

Resources to Help with Smoking Cessation

Below is a list of organizations and/or resources that can help you change your smoking habits:

California Smokers' Helplines

First 5 California and California Smoker's Hotline help families quit smoking through free self-help materials, counseling and listings of resources, including special programs for teens and pregnant women. The Helpline serves callers in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese. Website is in English and Spanish.

www.californiasmokershelpline.org

1-800-No-Butts (66-28887)

1-800-456-6386 (Spanish)

1-800-844-CHEW (2439) (Help with chewing tobacco)

1-800-933-4833 (Hearing impaired)

Nicotine Anonymous Support Groups

Support groups for anyone who wants to quit tobacco or needs support to stay tobacco-free. Groups in English only. Some handouts in Spanish.

www.nica-norcal.org

Petaluma Terry at 664-9335

Santa Rosa Keith at 528-6213

Northern California Center for Well-Being Smoke-Free Babies

Free individual counseling for pregnant women or women who have recently had a baby. Learn how to maintain a smoke-free environment for your baby. Home visits.

575-6043

Classes to quit smoking

Meets 8 times in 7 weeks. Based on the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking® program. Sliding scale. Spanish spoken.

www.norcalwellbeing.org

575-6043

Sonoma County Department of Health Services

Tobacco education and help finding classes to quit tobacco. Spanish spoken.

www.sonoma-county.org/health/prev.

565-6680

Kaiser Permanente

HealthMedia Breathe online quit smoking program

www.kp.org/healthylifestyles, 6-week evening 3-hour cessation planning workshop. Free to members. Fee for non-members.

Santa Rosa 566-5277

Rohnert Park 293-4167

Petaluma 765-3485

FTMC Smoking Cessation Program: 5-week online program as well as "fell off the wagon" support.

<http://www.fisher-titus.com/stopsmoking>

About First 5 Sonoma County

First 5 Sonoma County funds children's health insurance and programs that improve childcare quality, help children succeed in school, and help parents provide safe and nurturing environments for their children. For more information on *First 5 Sonoma County* and its programs, please call 565-6626 or visit www.first5sonomacounty.org