

A young boy with dark hair is shown in profile, holding a small white dog. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The boy is looking down at the dog, and the dog is looking towards the camera.

Secondhand smoke causes serious health problems in children, adults and pets

Secondhand smoke is defined as tobacco smoke that is exhaled by smokers or is given off by burning tobacco, and is inhaled involuntarily or passively by someone who is not smoking.

- There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even brief exposure causes damage that can lead to serious disease and death.
- Secondhand smoke contains thousands of chemicals. At least 69 of these chemicals are known to cause cancer.
- Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at a higher risk of health issues, including: sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems, learning disabilities, behavioral problems and more severe asthma.
- One in six Mainers allow smoking in their home, putting tens of thousands of adults and children at risk of being exposed to dangerous secondhand smoke.
- Separating smokers from nonsmokers within a building by using air filters and ventilation systems does not eliminate the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.
- Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25-30% and for developing lung cancer by 20-30%.
- Secondhand smoke poses a significant health risk in outdoor settings. Research finds that smoking within 20 feet of nonsmokers can cause harmful levels of exposure that can be as high outside as they are inside.
- Pets breathe secondhand smoke and, as with humans, exposure is known to cause cancer and illness.

Adopt a 100% smoke-free property policy to fully protect nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke.



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