

# Protecting children's health

What can you do to protect children from the dangers of secondhand smoke?

- ★ Declare your home smokefree. Ask visitors to smoke outdoors.
- ★ Declare your car smokefree.
- ★ Support your child's school to become totally smokefree.
- ★ When eating out request a non-smoking area. Politely express your preference for a totally smokefree café/restaurant.
- ★ Where possible, support smokefree businesses.
- ★ Have a smokefree policy for your marae or community hall.
- ★ Discourage smokers from smoking indoors, particularly around children.



*Please contact your local Cancer Society for further information. See your white pages in the telephone book.*

## Support smokefree laws

Smokefree laws need to be strengthened so that smoking is banned in all indoor public places and work places. The Smokefree Amendment Bill currently being considered by Parliament looks at extending the smoking ban in a number of areas, including schools. It is proposed that smoking be banned in schools and school grounds, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Cancer Society is fully behind the Smokefree Environments (Enhanced Protection) Amendment Bill. You too can show your support by:

- ★ Writing to your local Member of Parliament and the Minister of Health to express your support for a total ban on smoking in all indoor public places.
- ★ Writing letters to the editor of your newspaper stating your views on making indoor public places smokefree.



Cancer Prevention

## Clear the air for kids!



**Say NO to secondhand smoke**

# Secondhand smoke kills



Every year about **400** people die from inhaling other people's cigarette smoke – that's close to the number of people killed on our roads every year. **Cigarette smoke is New Zealand's leading environmental killer.**

When you breathe in other people's smoke, you are exposed to the same 4000 chemicals as the person smoking the cigarette.

Fatal illnesses linked to secondhand smoke exposure include:

- ★ Heart disease
- ★ Stroke
- ★ Lung cancer

Secondhand smoke is also associated with serious illnesses such as bronchitis and asthma.

## Children most vulnerable

Young children have smaller, more delicate lungs than adults and are therefore more vulnerable when exposed to secondhand smoke.

Exposure to secondhand smoke can lead to a range of childhood illnesses such as:

- ★ Chest illnesses including asthma attacks
- ★ Poor lung function and abnormally slow lung growth
- ★ Pneumonia
- ★ Bronchitis
- ★ Middle-ear infection and glue ear

*About 50 babies die each year from cot death as a result of breathing cigarette smoke in the home.*



## Secondhand smoke is dangerous

A common fallacy:

*“Smoking only hurts the smoker.”*

The more a child is exposed to secondhand smoke, the more likely they are to suffer health problems. Babies who are exposed are more likely to become so ill they have to be admitted to hospital.

The risk of lung cancer and heart disease in later life also increases.

Chemicals in tobacco smoke include:

- ★ Carbon monoxide – this poisonous gas reduces the amount of oxygen carried by the blood.
- ★ Radioactive compounds – these are known to cause cancer.
- ★ Hydrogen cyanide – this kills cilia, the tiny hairs that move together in waves to help keep our lungs clean.