



Fact Sheet on Smoke-Free Homes

Second-hand smoke in the home is a major health problem for Canadians, especially families with children.

Here are some Canadian statistics you may not know:

In Canada, 15% of homes have at least one regular smoker.¹

Even in homes where regular smoking does not take place, 14% still allow smoking inside.²

Canadians are concerned about exposing their children to second-hand smoke.³

However, over 350,000 children under 12 and over 600,000 children between 12 and 19 years⁴ are still exposed to second-hand smoke in their homes.⁵

What are the health effects of smoking in the home on children and pets?

Children suffer more than adults from the toxic effects of second-hand smoke, and the home is the greatest source of exposure for children.⁶

Children who live in homes where someone smokes can experience a number of serious health problems including breathing problems, asthma,⁷ ear infections⁸ and even sudden infant death syndrome.⁹

Second-hand smoke can make your child miss school more often¹⁰ and can also make them do less well in school.¹¹

Second-hand smoke can cause leukemia (a type of cancer) in cats,¹² and dogs in smoking households have a greater risk of cancer.¹³ Second-hand smoke also creates asthma and breathing problems in pets.¹⁴

Drifting second-hand smoke is a problem in apartments and multi-unit housing:

Did you know that second-hand smoke from your neighbours can drift through openings designed for electrical wiring, plumbing and ductwork for heating and air conditioning?¹⁵

A Health Canada survey of people living in multi-unit dwellings found that 36% of people who live in multi-unit housing experience smoke seeping or drifting into their personal living space usually through an open window or door from a neighbour's patio, balcony or outdoor common area.¹⁶

Think about it!

The best way to ensure that your children are not exposed to second-hand smoke is to smoke outside with the doors and windows closed.¹⁷ Remember, children should not be left alone.

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