

Tobacco-free children

Passive smoking

If your child is in the company of a smoker, then the child is smoking as well. When children breathe in cigarette smoke they are exposed to the same dangerous chemicals as the smoker. This is called passive smoking. You should ask friends and family not to smoke in the presence of your child.

How children are affected

Tobacco smoke impairs lung function and makes the mucous membranes in the respiratory passages more susceptible to infections. This is why children with parents who smoke tend to be more susceptible to respiratory infections, inflammation of the ear and allergies. Passive smoking also aggravates the symptoms of asthma and can cause asthma attacks.

Tobacco smoke can irritate the eyes, cause a hacking cough and headaches. Young children are the most vulnerable, because they are more sensitive and cannot tell people that the smoke is making them feel ill.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is rare, but the risk is twice as high if the mother smoked during her pregnancy and if the new-born baby is exposed to cigarette smoke. The risk also increases if the mother took snuff during her pregnancy.

Breastfeeding

Breast milk contains all the nutrients a baby needs, while also providing protection against infections and allergies. So it is important to continue breastfeeding, even if you smoke or take snuff.

When you use tobacco, the nicotine and other toxins pass through the breast milk and then on to the baby. So the ideal scenario is not to smoke or take snuff at all while breastfeeding.

If you need help...

You can discuss alternative solutions with your child health nurse. You can also get assistance from experienced stop-smoking counsellors if you need help giving up cigarettes or snuff. Ask at your child health clinic!

Call the Stop-smoking helpline on 020 840000. You will be offered free professional and personal support to help you give up cigarettes or snuff. www.slutarokalinjen.org. If you would like to know more about tobacco and its effects, visit www.tobaksfakta.se



ENGELSKA

Tools for changing habits from
Landstinget i Jönköpings län

Children need a smoke-free environment

If you smoke

- Make a habit of smoking outside. It's not enough to smoke in a particular room, or while standing by the extractor fan. Smoke spreads.
- Make your car a smoke-free zone.

Children follow your lead

Your child will follow your example and learn from your behaviour. That applies to tobacco use as well. The risk of young people starting smoking or taking snuff is twice as high if their parents use tobacco. This has been proved by both Swedish and international studies.

Excuses and misconceptions

"I only smoke under the extractor fan so the smoke doesn't spread."

Smoke spreads even if you smoke under the extractor fan. It only takes a few puffs in a room to impair air quality.

"What's the point in letting in air when there's pollution outside that's at least as dangerous as tobacco smoke?"

Not even the air above a busy main road contains as many hazardous substances as tobacco smoke does. So it's always worth letting the smoke out. If you open the windows wide for 10 minutes, all the air in a normal-sized room will be replaced.

"I get into such a bad mood if I can't smoke or take snuff."

As a smoker and snuff-user you will be affected by nicotine cravings every day. When you stop smoking you might suffer withdrawal symptoms initially, but after 3–4 weeks you'll be over the worst.

"I know that my smoking habit isn't good for the children, but there are so many other things that are worse..."

Accidents, illnesses, war – the list is endless. But smoking is something that you can cross off that list in order to make life better for your child and yourself.

Material provided by: Noomi Carlsson, folkhälsoavdelningen, Landstingets kansli,
folkhalsoavdelningen@lj.se, 036 324000

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