

HEALTHY BREATHING AT HOME



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Health

Tips for Families from the Head Start National Center on Health

Help Prevent Asthma: Keep Your Home Smoke-Free

Why Is It Important?

- Children should be in places that are smoke-free, all of the time.
- Secondhand and thirdhand smoke are triggers for asthma, but you can avoid them.
- Cigarette smoke contains chemicals, including some that can cause cancer.

What Is Asthma?

Asthma is a condition that causes swelling and narrowing of the airways. Asthma can cause chest pains and tiredness, and make people wheeze and cough.

What Is Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke is tobacco smoke in the air. It is the smoke that people breathe in from cigarettes, pipes, and cigars.

What Is Thirdhand Smoke?

Thirdhand smoke is smoke that stays on surfaces and fabric even after someone finishes smoking.



Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

- The most important thing you can do to help a child with asthma is to have a smoke-free home.
- Secondhand smoke is never safe.
- Secondhand smoke can cause infections.
- Because children are smaller and still growing, secondhand smoke is even more dangerous for them than it is for adults.
- Children are in the hospital for asthma more often than for most other health problems.
- Children with asthma miss more days of school than children without asthma.
- If a child has asthma, breathing in secondhand smoke can cause more severe asthma attacks.
- Being near secondhand smoke can cause children without asthma to have asthma-like symptoms.
- Chemicals from tobacco smoke (thirdhand smoke) may stay in the air and on your clothes for days or weeks after a cigarette is put out.
- Thirdhand smoke is never safe.
- Your pediatrician can help you or others quit smoking.