

## Protect Your Loved Ones From Secondhand Smoke (SHS)

***"Scientific evidence indicates that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke."*<sup>1</sup>**

### SECOND-HAND SMOKE

- ⊗ Secondhand smoke (SHS) causes premature death and disease in children and adults who do not smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ There are more than 50 carcinogens (substances that cause cancer) in secondhand smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ Workplace smoking restrictions are effective in reducing exposure and lead to less smoking among workers.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ The home is now becoming the predominant location where children and adults are exposed to SHS.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems cannot control exposure to SHS, and actually can distribute SHS throughout a building.<sup>1</sup>

### SECONDHAND SMOKE IS HARMFUL, ESPECIALLY TO CHILDREN . . .

Children are particularly vulnerable to SHS. Their lungs are still developing; they have higher breathing rates; and they have little control over their indoor environments.

***"Smoking by parents causes respiratory symptoms and slows lung growth in their children."*<sup>1</sup>**

Some effects of secondhand smoke on children:

- ⊗ It increases the risk for low birth weight and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS);<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ For children with asthma, SHS can trigger asthma attacks and make symptoms more severe;<sup>2</sup>
- ⊗ Parental smoking is associated with the prevalence of asthma in children;<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ It can cause lower respiratory illnesses in infants and children and wheezing, cough, phlegm and breathlessness in school age children;<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ It can cause acute and recurring middle ear infections;<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ Exposure to SHS may impact cognitive development of children;<sup>2</sup>
- ⊗ There is some evidence to suggest an association between the risk of childhood cancers and exposure to SHS.<sup>2</sup>

### . . . AND IN ADULTS

- ⊗ Exposure to SHS can cause lung cancer. For those living with a smoker, there is a 20-30% increased risk of lung cancer;<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ SHS has an immediate impact on the cardiovascular system, increasing the risk of coronary heart disease and death.<sup>1</sup>

**MAKE YOUR HOME AND VEHICLES SMOKE-FREE**

- ⊗ Protect children, pregnant women and nonsmoking spouses or other adults by creating a smoke-free home.
- ⊗ Ask family and visitors to respect your smoke-free home by smoking outside.
- ⊗ Remove ashtrays. Put lighters, cigarettes, and matches out of sight.
- ⊗ If you smoke, do it outside. Moving to another room or opening a window does not protect your children and others from SHS. Limit smoking to outings, such as checking the mail or walking the dog.
- ⊗ When you are ready to try to quit call the NYS Smokers' Quitline for help at 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866) 697-4878.

**EVEN MORE REASONS TO MAKE YOUR HOME AND VEHICLE SMOKE-FREE**

- ⊗ Smokers living in a smoke-free home are 4 times more likely to attempt to quit.<sup>1</sup>
- ⊗ Pets exposed to secondhand smoke have higher rates of cancer.
- ⊗ Smoke damages furniture, curtains, rugs and other furnishings.
- ⊗ Cigarette burns cause damage and fires.
- ⊗ Homeowner insurance rates are often lower for smoke-free homes.
- ⊗ Smoke and burns damage the interior of vehicles and reduces their resale value.
- ⊗ If you quit smoking, auto insurance rates are also lower for non-smokers.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke. A report of the Surgeon General – Executive Summary*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Children and secondhand smoke exposure excerpts from the health consequences of involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke: a report of the surgeon general*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007.