



SMOKE FREE VEHICLES



A summary guide for professionals working with parents, families and carers.

The Law

It is **illegal** to smoke inside a vehicle with an under-18 present. Both the driver and the smoker can be fined £50.

The law applies to every driver in England and Wales, including those aged 17 and those with a provisional driving licence.

It applies to any private vehicle with a roof, even if the windows are down, the sunroof is open, or the air conditioning is switched on. It also applies to a person who is smoking whilst sitting in an open doorway of the vehicle or holding a cigarette outside of an open window.

It does not apply to:

A convertible car with the roof completely down, a driver who is 17 years old if they are on their own, or vaping.

Secondhand smoke

This is the smoke from the burning tip of a cigarette and the smoke inhaled and exhaled by the smoker. It contains over 4000 chemicals, many of which are cancer-causing.

80% OF SECONDHAND SMOKE IS INVISIBLE

Smoke particles settle and build up on surfaces, becoming embedded in soft surfaces like upholstery, including children's car seats. They also settle like dust on hard surfaces. The particles are gradually emitted over long periods – this is known as third-hand smoke.

Smoking in a vehicle can generate much higher levels of secondhand smoke due to the smaller space. The levels can remain high long after a cigarette has been put out.

Opening the car windows or switching on the air conditioning does not reduce the harm, and air fresheners only mask the smell, they do not get rid of the chemicals.

The risks to children

Children's bodies are still developing so secondhand smoke is more dangerous for them. Children breathe faster and their airways are smaller, so they breathe more of the harmful chemicals, and it affects them more.

Children exposed to secondhand smoke have increased risk of asthma, ear problems and respiratory infections.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Use the Very Brief Advice (VBA) model to hold a conversation about smoking in vehicles:

ASK:

Open the conversation

Does anyone smoke in their family? Do they know smoking is illegal inside vehicles where an under-18 is present? Do they know about the dangers of secondhand smoke?

ADVISE:

Tell people about the law

Explain the law is important to protect children from secondhand smoke. If their children could be at risk of exposure, explain how they can be protected:

- The best way to protect children from secondhand smoke is to stop smoking.
- If this isn't possible, reduce the exposure by making sure their car is smokefree

ACT:

Provide information

Provide local stop smoking services information if applicable. Pregnant women will be offered stop smoking support through maternity services.

NO AMOUNT OF SECONDHAND SMOKE IS SAFE

Stopping smoking is the best way to protect others from secondhand smoke. You are 3 times more likely to quit with support.

Get in touch with friendly and professional stop smoking advisors for FREE support at:

For Nottinghamshire County residents:

Your Health Notts
0115 772 2515
www.yourhealthnotts.co.uk

For Nottingham City residents:

Thriving Nottingham
0115 648 5724
www.thrivingnottingham.org.uk



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