

Secondhand Smoke: Youth Exposure and Rules on Smoking in the Home

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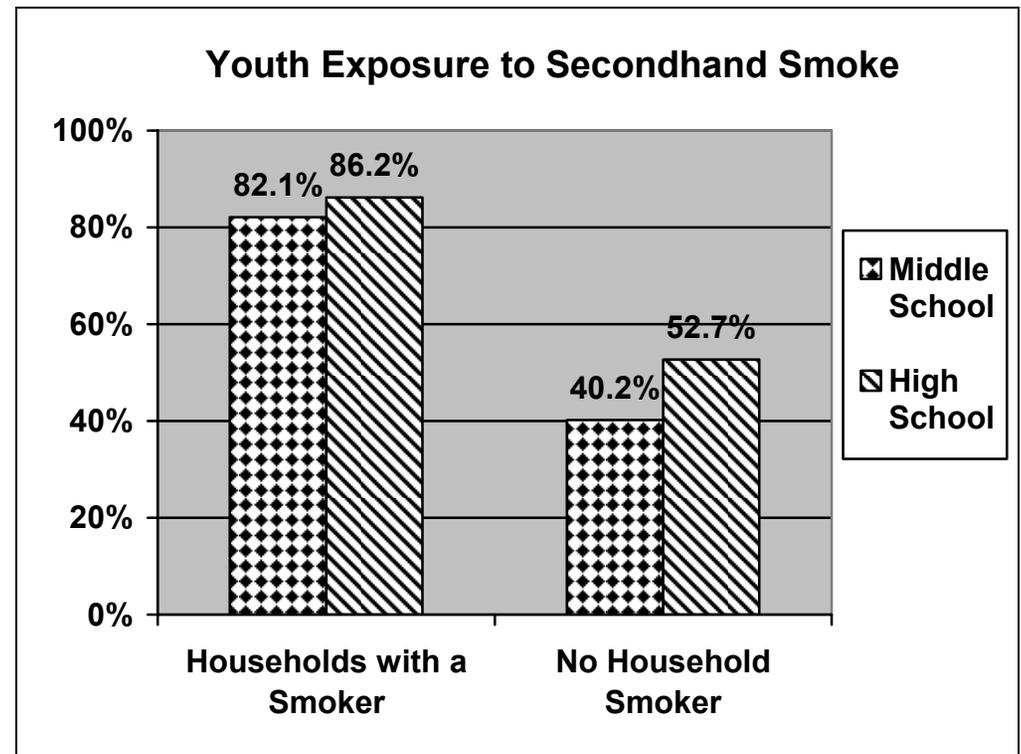


Each year in the United States, 50,000 deaths are attributable to secondhand smoke. Approximately 1,240 of those deaths are to Hoosiers adults from exposure to secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke has been classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a cancer causing substance. In children, secondhand smoke contributes to acute and chronic respiratory illness, asthma, middle ear illnesses, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Indiana Exposure to Second Hand Smoke

According to the 2006 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey:

- Secondhand smoke exposure has decreased since 2000, but those downward trends have recently slowed down.
- More than 80% of middle and high school students who live with smokers reported being exposed to secondhand smoke in a room on at least 1 day in the past week.
- Approximately 75% of middle and high school students who live with smokers reported being exposed to secondhand smoke in a car on at least 1 day in the past week.



Youth exposure to secondhand smoke remains unacceptably high. Some exposure to high school students can be attributed to smoking by their peers; however, it is more likely that adults expose the middle school students to secondhand smoke.

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Household Rules

Although 8 out of 10 Hoosier adults know that exposure to secondhand smoke causes respiratory problems in children, this knowledge has not been fully applied to establishing strict no-smoking rules at home.

- Among households with smokers, the prevalence of smoke-free homes increased nearly 50% (from 29% in 2002 to 42% in 2006).
- Among households with non-smokers, the prevalence of smoke-free homes increased from 81% in 2002 to 89% in 2006.
- 60% of adults in Indiana believed that secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard.
- Hoosier non-smokers were more likely to agree that secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard (66%) compared with Hoosiers who smoke (36%).

What Can You Do?

- If you smoke, quitting will benefit not only your health but the health of your children. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for help.
- Institute and enforce strict no-smoking rules for your home and your car.
- Encourage your children to ask others not to smoke around them.

Prevalence of Smoke Free Homes, 2002 & 2006

