

# HEALTHY BREATHING AT HOME



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

## 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 and e-cigarette smoke contain chemicals, including some that can cause cancer.

### What are E-cigarettes or Vapes?

E-cigarettes produce vapor-containing flavored liquids and nicotine. The vapor is not harmless and can damage children's growing lungs.

### 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, e-cigarettes or vapes, 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.



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness