



# Adverse Effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke on Children

WHEREAS, environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) from cigarettes, cigars and pipes is composed of more than 3,800 different chemical compounds, 50 of which cause cancer; and

WHEREAS, just a half hour of exposure to secondhand smoke per day can causes heart damage equivalent to that of regularly smoking cigarettes; and

WHEREAS, studies show higher rates of lower respiratory illness, middle ear effusion, and sudden infant death syndrome among children frequently exposed to ETS; and

WHEREAS, when a pregnant woman is exposed to ETS, the nicotine speeds up the heartbeat of the fetus and slows down the growth of the baby's lungs and breathing passages. The carbon monoxide can reduce the oxygen supply to the fetus which leads to lower birth weights; and

WHEREAS, leukemia and lymphoma among adults are significantly related to exposure to maternal passive smoke before ten years of age; and

WHEREAS, among children 3 to 59 months of age, passive smoking is associated with an almost fourfold risk of a serious infectious illness requiring hospitalization. 300,000 cases of lower respiratory tract infections are treated each year in children exposed to second hand smoke; and

WHEREAS, asthma is the most common chronic illness among children, and the Chicago area reports one of the highest asthma rates in the country. Studies have proven that if children with asthma are exposed to less cigarette smoke, their asthmatic symptoms will be less severe. Exposure to tobacco smoke also causes increased disease severity in children with other serious diseases, such as cystic fibrosis; and

WHEREAS, over time, children who are exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to have a lower ability to take in and use oxygen, develop cancers of the lung, and suffer from heart disease and stroke; and

WHEREAS, the majority of habitual smokers begin smoking during childhood, and there is substantial evidence that smoking behavior by adult role models, such as parents, increases the risk that a child will become a smoker; and

WHEREAS, the health care costs of second hand smoke exposure are to be estimated at billions of dollars per year in the United States,

LET IT THEREFORE BE RESOLVED:

That Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago support public policy efforts to improve air quality for children and their families, including a ban on environmental tobacco smoke in all public indoor facilities.