

Original topic -  
adopting a positive or  
negative viewpoint



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Smoking Indoors Should be Banned Introduction Smoking is now broadly considered as a dangerous activity that can be linked with various health risks, not just for the individual engaged in the action, but additionally for others who are in the surrounding area and therefore are forced to inhale what has been phrased ' second-hand smoke.' Using this rationale, it has been determined in many states, cities and different types of venues, that smoking in public places and public-use locations, such as shopping malls, restaurants, government offices and libraries should be banned. Secondhand smoke causes major health problems, is more dangerous for the non-smoker than smoking is for the smoker, is most dangerous for children and is an infringement on rights, the right to live.

#### Secondhand Smoke, a Health Hazard

The definition of secondhand smoke is smoke that a person inhales due to someone else's who is smoking close to them. While some disagree and say that the hazard from second-hand smoke is negligible, others have identified numerous properties of secondhand smoke that make it more than obvious this type of smoke is even more powerful and therefore more harmful than the smoke the smoker themselves is inhaling into their own lungs. When a smoker inhales through a cigarette filter they are getting only about half of the poisons tar and nicotine that are found in a comparable sized amount of secondhand smoke according to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Despite the fact they are non-smokers, this same report states that roughly " 3, 000 non-smokers a year die from lung cancer caused by secondhand smoke" and another " 37, 000 non-smokers a year die from heart disease attributed to secondhand smoke" (U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1992).

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## Effects are Even Worse for Non-Smokers than Smokers, Especially Children

These figures are verified by other data of the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke, for example, a study demonstrated that women who did not smoke that were married to heavy smoking men suffered twice the risk of developing lung cancer as compared to women married to non-smoking men. Another study performed on workers such as waitresses and bartenders who are repeatedly exposed for an extended period of time to secondhand smoke experienced a 25-75 percent greater possibility of contracting lung cancer, with the odds becoming proportionately higher with the time employed in these types of places. These are studies on adult lungs. Imagine the damage done to smaller, weaker and less developed more susceptible lungs. " Children exposed to high levels of secondhand smoke are susceptible to greater instances of bronchitis, pneumonia and other respiratory infections, chronic ear infections and asthma." (Pisani et al, 2001).

## Secondhand Smoke Infringes Upon Rights

It has been established from the evidence provided by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency children frequently suffer severe harms due to exposure from secondhand smoke. Because smokers today realize the dangers that result when they light a cigarette in a public place, knowing that secondhand infringes on others' right to breathe fresh air, smokers are willfully engaging in an activity that can be described as criminal. Under federal law child neglect is defined as " any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitations; or, an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm" (Larson, 2003).  
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## Conclusion

Though smoking indoors is not yet recognized as crime, it is certainly an infringement on the rights of others. It is apparent that smoking should not be permitted in public places due to additionally harmful effects of non-smokers and especially to children. Banning this obtrusive, inconsiderate behavior forces people to not expose their harmful activity to others and serves to improve the overall health of the country. Some smokers complain that it is their right to smoke but that is like saying because owning and carrying guns are legal it is their right to practice shooting targets at the mall. Both are lethal and have no place in a civilized society.

## References

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