

GET REAL ~ SECONDHAND SMOKE MATTERS



What teens have to say...
about keeping babies safe
from secondhand smoke



For More Information
www.tobaccorealityunfiltered.com
www.smokefreenc.org
www.stepupnc.org

1-800-367-2229

NC Family Health Resource Line

information and support within your reach



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GET REAL

Letters from teens about secondhand smoke, answered by teens who've "Been There, Done That"



Lauren is a teenage mom who smoked when she was pregnant but finally quit so her baby would be healthier. But that wasn't enough. Her mom smoked too.

Lauren and her mom had a long talk about smoking. They both agreed old habits are hard to change. But they didn't agree on what to do. Lauren's mom had to decide:

- Not to smoke around her grandson **or**
- Not see her grandson very much

What happened?

Lauren's mom gets to see her grandson a lot now. She stopped smoking around the baby and when she visits her grandson, she smokes outside.



Daniel was happy when he found out he was going to be a father. He was also worried.

He and his girlfriend had just graduated from high school and gotten married. They didn't have a lot of money and the baby would need things.

The pregnancy was going well but the doctor was worried because Daniel smoked. The doctor said that secondhand smoke could hurt their baby even before she was born.

Daniel wanted to give his baby a good start and said he would not smoke around his wife.

Could he do it?

Yes, Daniel kept his promise and his daughter was born healthy. A few months later, he took the next step and stopped smoking. He has lots more cash now to buy things for the baby.

(Find out how these teens helped other teens)

GRANDMA'S COOL



Caring Mom

Dear Lauren,

My Mom is cool, she takes care of my baby Angel when I'm in school. But my Mom smokes. What can I do to keep my baby safe and not make Mom mad?

Tina



Dear Tina,

Just like you, your Mom wants what is best for Angel. The best thing for your Mom to do is to stop smoking. If she can't quit, ask her not to smoke in the same room as Angel.

Most people will not smoke if you ask them not to. I asked my mom to smoke only on the porch and she did. Share this letter with your Mom and ask her to keep secondhand smoke away from Angel.

—Lauren



Other things Tina's Mom could do

1

Not smoke when she is holding or feeding the baby

2

Wash her hands and face after smoking

3

Not smoke in the car with the baby



Happy Family

GET REAL

Dear Lauren,

My best friend Nikki smokes.

So when I'm around her,

I always stink. I don't want

my baby to smell bad too.

What can I do?

Krystal



Krystal & Nikki

*Things friends can do together
smoke-free.*

1

Go to smoke-free places ... like the mall

2

Eat in the non-smoking section

3

Take a walk



Dear Krystal,

Get real! Tell Nikki how you feel ~ and smell. She's your best friend, she'll understand. Ask her not to smoke around you, in your home or your car. Tell Nikki how her smoking hurts your baby, too.

Secondhand smoke makes it harder for babies to breathe because their lungs are so tiny. Your baby also is more likely to get colds and ear infections that can really hurt. Sick babies tend to be really fussy too ... meaning less sleep for both you and your baby.

– Lauren



Best Friends Again

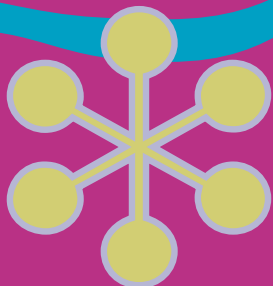
BUTT OUT



Dear Daniel,

I'm five months pregnant and so excited. My boyfriend Martin is happy too. We want our baby to be healthy. But Martin smokes around me. What can I do?

Erica



Having Problems



Worked It Out



Dear Erica,

I am glad that you know secondhand smoke isn't good for your baby. Your baby could be born too early or too small, be unhealthy and stay in the hospital a long time. Secondhand smoke also increases a baby's risk of dying from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Think about when Martin smokes. After eating? While watching TV? Then talk to Martin about his smoking. He may not know what he is doing can hurt your baby.

Let him know that he can help your baby be born healthy and stay healthy. When Martin lights up, ask him to butt out and take his smoking outside. I took a lot of walks before I quit smoking so my daughter would be healthy.

P.S. Don't let the weather be an excuse not to go outside.

— Daniel

What would you tell Erica to say to her boyfriend?

MYTH or REALITY

Clearing the Air

Some common myths about secondhand smoke



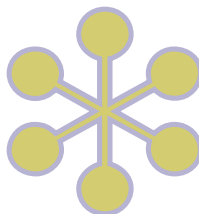
MYTH If I open a window when I smoke, my baby is protected from the smoke.

REALITY Opening a window may help clear the air, but it is not good enough. Scientists found tobacco chemicals in babies' hair and urine even when parents opened windows or used a fan when they smoked.



MYTH Because babies are small, they don't get that much secondhand smoke.

REALITY If you think that the 4,000 chemicals in secondhand smoke is not much, think again. One of those chemicals is carbon monoxide—the same stuff that comes out of a car tailpipe and can kill you. Secondhand smoke makes babies' little lungs work even harder and also increases the chances of bronchitis or pneumonia.



MYTH My baby breathes secondhand smoke only for a short time so it is really not a problem.

REALITY A little or a lot, every time babies breathe secondhand smoke their sensitive lungs absorb tiny particles, nicotine and harmful gases. This can damage their lungs, make them wheeze and make them uncomfortable. Secondhand smoke harms babies and results in more sinus infections, coughs, colds and earaches.



MYTH As children grow, secondhand smoke is less of a concern.

REALITY The test results are in. Kids exposed to secondhand smoke don't do as well in school. It also doubles their risk of getting cavities in their baby teeth. Smoky air causes kids to have less saliva and more cavity-causing acid in their mouths.



No secondhand smoke may also mean fewer:

Sore throats
Itchy eyes
Stuffy noses

Asthma attacks
Trips to the doctor
Medicines